

EXTENDED VERSION

APOCRYPHA
COMPLETE

SCRIPTURES NOT INCLUDED IN THE ORIGINAL
ETHIOPIAN BIBLE

515
SCRIPTURES

LOST WRITINGS NOT CONSIDERED
INCLUDED IN THE ETHIOPIAN BIBLE

Edward Jones

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Disclaimer:

This book presents a unique selection of sacred texts from the Ethiopian Bible, carefully translated and curated from original manuscripts written in Ge'ez, Hebrew, and other ancient languages. The texts have been organized to provide a comprehensive and accessible resource for readers interested in exploring the rich biblical tradition of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. The author has introduced and commented on the material to offer context and facilitate reflection.

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Introduction

Throughout history, numerous religious and spiritual texts have been forgotten, excluded from official canons, or deliberately concealed due to theological, political, and cultural influences. The **515 apocryphal books** compiled by **Edward Jones** represent a monumental collection of these lost writings—an extraordinary archive of ancient wisdom that offers unique insights into spirituality, history, and mystical traditions.

Though labeled as "apocryphal," these texts are far from insignificant. On the contrary, they preserve **valuable teachings, hidden truths, and alternative narratives** that have shaped human understanding of the divine, the cosmos, and the destiny of the soul. From prophetic visions to historical chronicles, from secret prayers to gospels omitted from official scriptures, every document within this collection expands our perception of religious and spiritual thought.

Edward Jones has undertaken the remarkable task of not only recovering these texts but also meticulously organizing, studying, and presenting them in a way that is accessible to scholars, historians, and those with a deep passion for spiritual exploration. This collection **is not merely a list of forgotten books**—it is an invitation to embark on a profound intellectual and mystical journey, uncovering insights that have been preserved in silence for centuries.

A Journey Through the Lost Scriptures

Among the most significant texts in this collection are the **Apocalypse of Adam**, the **Testament of Abraham**, the **Vision of Ezra**, the **Book of Enoch**, the **Book of Jubilees**, the **Book of Gad the Seer**, the **Book of the Mysteries of the Heavens**, the **Odes of Solomon**, and the famous **Kebra Nagast**, which chronicles the sacred history of the Ethiopian people. Additionally, this compilation includes **apocryphal gospels, letters from early church fathers, liturgical prayers, Gnostic writings, and wisdom texts**, all of which challenge conventional narratives and provide deeper perspectives on faith and spirituality.

These writings explore a vast array of themes:

- **The origins of the world and humanity**, with creation accounts that differ from traditional biblical stories.
- **The lives and teachings of patriarchs and prophets**, revealing details not found in canonical texts.
- **Prophecies and apocalyptic revelations**, presenting mystical visions and predictions about humanity's future.
- **Gnostic and philosophical teachings**, discussing the nature of divine knowledge and the relationship between spirit and matter.
- **Prayers and hymns**, preserved through generations of religious traditions.

The Importance of Apocrypha in Spiritual Research

The term "apocryphal" is often misunderstood, carrying connotations of doubt or inauthenticity. However, its original meaning simply refers to texts that are "hidden" or "reserved" rather than inherently false or misleading. Many of these books were excluded from official canons **not because**

they lacked spiritual value, but because they presented ideas that diverged from dominant theological interpretations.

Despite their exclusion, these writings **continued to influence spiritual thought**, finding a place in alternative traditions and mystical movements that sought deeper understanding beyond institutionalized religion. Engaging with these texts allows readers to **explore new dimensions of faith, question historical assumptions, and appreciate the richness of suppressed traditions**.

A Work of Historical and Spiritual Reconstruction

Edward Jones' dedication to this project stems from his desire to **preserve, study, and make accessible this vast spiritual heritage**. Every text in this collection has been carefully compiled, analyzed, and presented within its historical and theological context, equipping readers with **the necessary tools to approach these writings with understanding and depth**.

This work is intended for all who wish to **look beyond the official narratives**, exploring aspects of religious history that have remained in the shadows yet hold profound wisdom. It is invaluable to scholars of ancient religions, seekers of alternative spirituality, and anyone with an insatiable thirst for knowledge.

Reading through these **515 apocryphal books** is not merely an intellectual pursuit—it is a journey through time and spirit, an opportunity to rediscover forgotten truths and be inspired by voices that sought divine wisdom beyond the confines of history's official records.

Now, the journey begins: are you ready to immerse yourself in these pages and uncover the hidden treasures of apocryphal knowledge?

The Apocalypse of Adam

The revelation which Adam taught his son Seth in the seven hundreth year, saying:

Listen to my words, my son Seth. When God had created me out of the earth, along with Eve, your mother, I went about with her in a glory which she had seen in the aeon from which we had come forth. She taught me a word of knowledge of the eternal God. And we resembled the great eternal angels, for we were higher than the god who had created us and the powers with him, whom we did not know.

Then God, the ruler of the aeons and the powers, divided us in wrath. Then we became two aeons. And the glory in our heart(s) left us, me and your mother Eve, along with the first knowledge that breathed within us. And it (glory) fled from us; it entered into [...] great [...] which had come forth, not from this aeon from which we had come forth, I and Eve your mother. But it (knowledge) entered into the seed of great aeons. For this reason I myself have called you by the name of that man who is the seed of the great generation or from whom (it comes). After those days, the eternal knowledge of the God of truth withdrew from me and your mother Eve. Since that time, we learned about dead things, like men. Then we recognized the God who had created us. For we were not strangers to his powers. And we served him in fear and slavery. And after these things, we became darkened in our heart(s). Now I slept in the thought of my heart.

And I saw three men before me whose likeness I was unable to recognize, since they were not the powers of the God who had created us. They surpassed [...] glory, and [...] men [...] saying to me, "Arise, Adam, from the sleep of death, and hear about the aeon and the seed of that man to whom life has come, who came from you and from Eve, your wife."

When I had heard these words from the great men who were standing before me, then we sighed, I and Eve, in our heart(s). And the Lord, the God who had created us, stood before us. He said to us, "Adam, why were you (both) sighing in your hearts? Do you not know that I am the God who created you? And I breathed into you a spirit of life as a living soul." Then darkness came upon our eyes.

Then the God who created us, created a son from himself and Eve, your mother. I knew sweet desire for your mother, for [...] in the thought of my [...] I knew a sweet desire for your mother. Then the vigor of our eternal knowledge was destroyed in us, and weakness pursued us. Therefore the days of our life became few. For I knew that I had come under the authority of death.

Now then, my son Seth, I will reveal to you the things which those men whom I saw before me at first revealed to me: after I have completed the times of this generation and the years of the generation have been accomplished, then [...] slave [...]. (p.68 blank)

For rain-showers of God the almighty will be poured forth, so that he might destroy all flesh [of God the almighty, so that he might destroy all flesh] from the earth on account of the things that it seeks after, along with those from the seed of the men to whom passed the life of the knowledge which came from me and Eve, your mother. For they were strangers to him. Afterwards, great angels will come on high clouds, who will bring those men into the place where the spirit of life dwells [...] glory [...] there, [...] come from heaven to earth. Then the whole multitude of flesh will be left behind in the waters.

Then God will rest from his wrath. And he will cast his power upon the waters, and he will give power to his sons and their wives by means of the ark along with the animals, whichever he pleased, and the birds of heaven, which he called and released upon the earth. And God will say to Noah - whom the generations will call 'Deucalion' - "Behold, I have protected <you> in the ark, along with your wife and your sons and their wives and their animals and the birds of heaven, which you called and released upon the earth. Therefore I will give the earth to you - you and your sons. In kingly fashion you will rule over it - you and your sons. And no seed will come from you of the men who will not stand in my presence in another glory."

Then they will become as the cloud of the great light. Those men will come who have been cast forth from the knowledge of the great aeons and the angels. They will stand before Noah and the aeons. And God will say to Noah, "Why have you departed from what I told you? You have created another generation so that you might scorn my power." Then Noah will say, "I shall testify before your might that the generation of these men did not come from me nor from my sons. [...] knowledge.

And he will [...] those men and bring them into their proper land, and build them a holy dwelling place. And they will be called by that name and dwell there six hundred years in a knowledge of imperishability. And the angels of the great Light will dwell with them. No foul deed will dwell in their heart(s), but only the knowledge of God.

Then Noah will divide the whole earth among his sons, Ham and Japheth and Shem. He will say to them, "My sons, listen to my words. Behold, I have divided the earth among you. But serve him in fear and slavery all the days of your life. Let not your seed depart from the face of God the Almighty. [...] I and your [...] son of Noah, "My seed will be pleasing before you and before your power. Seal it by your strong hand, with fear and commandment, so that the whole seed which came forth from me may not be inclined away from you and God the Almighty, but it will serve in humility and fear of its knowledge."

Then others from the seed of Ham and Japheth will come, four hundred thousand men, and enter into another land and sojourn with those men who came forth from the great eternal knowledge. For the shadow of their power will protect those who have sojourned with them from every evil thing and every unclean desire. Then the seed of Ham and Japheth will form twelve kingdoms, and their seed also will enter into the kingdom of another people.

Then [...] will take counsel [...] who are dead, of the great aeons of imperishability. And they will go to Sakla, their God. They will go in to the powers, accusing the great men who are in their glory.

They will say to Sakla, "What is the power of these men who stood in your presence, who were taken from the seed of Ham and Japheth, who will number four hundred <thousand> men? They have been received into another aeon from which they had come forth, and they have overturned all the glory of your power and the dominion of your hand. For the seed of Noah through his sons has done all your will, and (so have) all the powers in the aeons over which your might rules, while both those men and the ones who are sojourners in their glory have not done your will. But they have turned (aside) your whole throng."

Then the god of the aeons will give them (some) of those who serve him [...]. They will come upon that land where the great men will be who have not been defiled, nor will be defiled, by any desire. For their soul did not come from a defiled hand, but it came from a great commandment of an eternal angel. Then fire and sulphur and asphalt will be cast upon those men, and fire and (blinding) mist will come over those aeons, and the eyes of the powers of the illuminators will be darkened, and the aeons will not see them in those days. And great clouds of light will descend, and other clouds of light will come down upon them from the great aeons.

Abrasax and Sablo and Gamaliel will descend and bring those men out of the fire and the wrath, and take them above the aeons and the rulers of the powers, and take them away [...] of life [...] and take them away [...] aeons [...] dwelling place of the great [...] there, with the holy angels and the aeons. The men will be like those angels, for they are not strangers to them. But they work in the imperishable seed.

Once again, for the third time, the illuminator of knowledge will pass by in great glory, in order to leave (something) of the seed of Noah and the sons of Ham and Japheth - to leave for himself fruit-bearing trees. And he will redeem their souls from the day of death. For the whole creation that came from the dead earth will be under the authority of death. But those who reflect upon the knowledge of the eternal God in their heart(s) will not perish. For they have not received spirit from this kingdom alone, but they have received (it) from a [...] eternal angel. [...] illuminator [...] will come upon [...] that is dead [...] of Seth. And he will perform signs and wonders in order to scorn the powers and their ruler.

Then the god of the powers will be disturbed, saying, "What is the power of this man who is higher than we?" Then he will arouse a great wrath against that man. And the glory will withdraw and dwell in holy houses which it has chosen for itself. And the powers will not see it with their eyes, nor will they see the illuminator either. Then they will punish the flesh of the man upon whom the holy spirit came.

Then the angels and all the generations of the powers will use the name in error, asking, "Where did it (the error) come from?" or "Where did the words of deception, which all the powers have failed to discover, come from?"

Now the first kingdom says of him that he came from [...]. A spirit [...] to heaven. He was nourished in the heavens. He received the glory of that one and the power. He came to the bosom of his mother. And thus he came to the water.

And the second kingdom says about him that he came from a great prophet. And a bird came, took the child who was born, and brought him onto a high mountain. And he was nourished by the bird of heaven. An angel came forth there. He said to him "Arise! God has given glory to you." He received glory and strength. And thus he came to the water.

The third kingdom says of him that he came from a virgin womb. He was cast out of his city, he and his mother. He was brought to a desert place. He was nourished there. He came and received glory and strength. And thus he came to the water.

The fourth kingdom says of him that he came from a virgin. [...] Solomon sought her, he and Phersalo and Sael and his armies, which had been sent out. Solomon himself sent his army of

demons to seek out the virgin. And they did not find the one whom they sought, but the virgin who was given them. It was she whom they fetched. Solomon took her. The virgin became pregnant and gave birth to the child there. She nourished him on a border of the desert. When he had been nourished, he received glory and power from the seed from which he was begotten. And thus he came to the water.

And the fifth kingdom says of him that he came from a drop from heaven. He was thrown into the sea. The abyss received him, gave birth to him, and brought him to heaven. He received glory and power. And thus he came to the water.

And the sixth kingdom says that [...] down to the aeon which is below, in order to gather flowers. She became pregnant from the desire of the flowers. She gave birth to him in that place. The angels of the flower garden nourished him. He received glory there, and power. And thus he came to the water.

And the seventh kingdom says of him that he is a drop. It came from heaven to earth. Dragons brought him down to caves. He became a child. A spirit came upon him and brought him on high to the place where the drop had come forth. He received glory and power there. And thus he came to the water.

And the eighth kingdom says of him that a cloud came upon the earth and enveloped a rock. He came from it. The angels who were above the cloud nourished him. He received glory and power there. And thus he came to the water.

And the ninth kingdom says of him that from the nine Muses one separated away. She came to a high mountain and spent (some) time seated there, so that she desired herself alone in order to become androgynous. She fulfilled her desire and became pregnant from her desire. He was born. The angels who were over the desire nourished him. And he received glory there, and power. And thus he came to the water.

The tenth kingdom says of him that his god loved a cloud of desire. He begot him in his hand and cast upon the cloud above him (some) of the drop, and he was born. He received glory and power there. And thus he came to the water.

And the eleventh kingdom says that the father desired his own daughter. She herself became pregnant from her father. She cast [...] tomb out in the desert. The angel nourished him there. And thus he came to the water.

The twelfth kingdom says of him that he came from two illuminators. He was nourished there. He received glory and power. And thus he came to the water.

And the thirteenth kingdom says of him that every birth of their ruler is a word. And this word received a mandate there. He received glory and power. And thus he came to the water, in order that the desire of those powers might be satisfied.

But the generation without a king over it says that God chose him from all the aeons. He caused a knowledge of the undefiled one of truth to come to be in him. He said, "Out of a foreign air, from a great aeon, the great illuminator came forth. And he made the generation of those men whom he had chosen for himself shine, so that they could shine upon the whole aeon"

Then the seed, those who will receive his name upon the water and (that) of them all, will fight against the power. And a cloud of darkness will come upon them.

Then the peoples will cry out with a great voice, saying, "Blessed is the soul of those men because they have known God with a knowledge of the truth! They shall live forever, because they have not been corrupted by their desire, along with the angels, nor have they accomplished the works of the powers, but they have stood in his presence in a knowledge of God like light that has come forth from fire and blood.

"But we have done every deed of the powers senselessly. We have boasted in the transgression of all our works. We have cried against the God of truth because all his works [...] is eternal. These are against our spirits. For now we have known that our souls will die the death."

Then a voice came to them, saying "Micheu and Michar and Mnesinous, who are over the holy baptism and the living water, why were you crying out against the living God with lawless voices and tongues without law over them, and souls full of blood and foul deeds? You are full of works that are not of the truth, but your ways are full of joy and rejoicing. Having defiled the water of life, you have drawn it within the will of the powers to whom you have been given to serve them.

"And your thought is not like that of those men whom you persecute [...] desire [...]. Their fruit does not wither. But they will be known up to the great aeons, because the words they have kept, of the God of the aeons, were not committed to the book, nor were they written. But angelic (beings) will bring them, whom all the generations of men will not know. For they will be on a high mountain, upon a rock of truth. Therefore they will be named "The Words of Imperishability and Truth," for those who know the eternal God in wisdom of knowledge and teaching of angels forever, for he knows all things."

These are the revelations which Adam made known to Seth, his son, And his son taught his seed about them. This is the hidden knowledge of Adam, which he gave to Seth, which is the holy baptism of those who know the eternal knowledge through those born of the word and the imperishable illuminators, who came from the holy seed: Yesseus, Mazareus, Yessedekus, the Living Water.

The Testament of Abraham

1. It came to pass, when the days of the death of Abraham drew near, that the Lord said to Michael: Arise and go to Abraham, my servant, and say to him, You shall depart from life, for lo! The days of your temporal life are fulfilled: so that he may set his house in order before he die.

2. And Michael went and came to Abraham, and found him sitting before his oxen for ploughing, and he was exceeding old in appearance, and had his son in his arms. Abraham, therefore, seeing the archangel Michael, rose from the ground and saluted him, not knowing who he was, and said to him: The Lord preserve you. May your journey be prosperous with you. And Michael answered him: You are kind, good father. Abraham answered and said to him: Come, draw near to me, brother, and sit down a little while, that I may order a beast to be brought that we may go to my house, and you

may rest with me, for it is toward evening, and in the morning arise and go wherever you will, lest some evil beast meet you and do you hurt. And Michael enquired of Abraham, saying: Tell me your name, before I enter your house, lest I be burdensome to you. Abraham answered and said, My parents called me Abram, and the Lord named me Abraham, saying: Arise and depart from your house, and from your kindred, and go into the land which I shall show unto you. And when I went away into the land which the Lord showed me, he said to me: Your name shall no more be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham. Michael answered and said to him: Pardon me, my father, experienced man of God, for I am a stranger, and I have heard of you that you went forty furlongs and brought a goat and slew it, entertaining angels in your house, that they might rest there. Thus speaking together, they arose and went towards the house. And Abraham called one of his servants, and said to him: Go, bring me a beast that the stranger may sit upon it, for he is wearied with his journey. And Michael said: Trouble not the youth, but let us go lightly until we reach the house, for I love your company.

3. And arising they went on, and as they drew near to the city, about three furlongs from it, they found a great tree having three hundred branches, like to a tamarisk tree. And they heard a voice from its branches singing, Holy are you, because you have kept the purpose for which you were sent. And Abraham heard the voice, and hid the mystery in his heart, saying within himself, What is the mystery that I have heard? As he came into the house, Abraham said to his servants, Arise, go out to the flocks, and bring three sheep, and slay them quickly, and make them ready that we may eat and drink, for this day is a feast for us. And the servants brought the sheep, and Abraham called his son Isaac, and said to him, My son Isaac, arise and put water in the vessel that we may wash the feet of this stranger. And he brought it as he was commanded, and Abraham said, I perceive, and so it shall be, that in this basin I shall never again wash the feet of any man coming to us as a . And Isaac hearing his father say this wept, and said to him, My father what is this that you say? This is my last time to wash the feet of a stranger? And Abraham seeing his son weeping, also wept exceedingly, and Michael seeing them weeping, wept also, and the tears of Michael fell upon the vessel and became a precious stone.

4. When Sarah, being inside in her house, heard their weeping, she came out and said to Abraham, Lord, why is it that you thus weep? Abraham answered, and said to her, It is no evil. Go into your house, and do your own work, lest we be troublesome to the man. And Sarah went away, being about to prepare the supper. And the sun came near to setting, and Michael went out of the house, and was taken up into the heavens to worship before God, for at sunset all the angels worship God and Michael himself is the first of the angels. And they all worshipped him, and went each to his own place, but Michael spoke before the Lord and said, Lord, command me to be questioned before your holy glory! And the Lord said to Michael, Announce whatsoever you will! And the Archangel answered and said, Lord, you sent me to Abraham to say to him, Depart from your body, and leave this world; the Lord calls you; and I dare not, Lord, reveal myself to him, for he is your friend, and a righteous man, and one that receives strangers. But I beseech you, Lord, command the remembrance of the death of Abraham to enter into his own heart, and bid not me tell it him, for it is great abruptness to say, Leave the world, and especially to leave one's own body, for you created him from the beginning to have pity on the souls of all men. Then the Lord said to Michael, Arise and go to Abraham, and lodge with him, and whatever you see him eat, eat also, and wherever

he shall sleep, sleep there also. For I will cast the thought of the death of Abraham into the heart of Isaac his son in a dream.

5. Then Michael went into the house of Abraham on that evening, and found them preparing the supper, and they ate and drank and were merry. And Abraham said to his son Isaac, Arise, my son, and spread the man's couch that he may sleep, and set the lamp upon the stand. And Isaac did as his father commanded him, and Isaac said to his father, I too am coming to sleep beside you. Abraham answered him, Nay, my son, lest we be troublesome to this man, but go to your own chamber and sleep. And Isaac not wishing to disobey his father's command, went away and slept in his own chamber.

6. And it happened about the seventh hour of the night Isaac awoke, and came to the door of his father's chamber, crying out and saying, Open, father, that I may touch you before they take you away from me. Abraham arose and opened to him, and Isaac entered and hung upon his father's neck weeping, and kissed him with lamentations. And Abraham wept together with his son, and Michael saw them weeping and wept likewise. And Sarah hearing them weeping called from her bed-chamber, saying, My Lord Abraham, why is this weeping? Has the stranger told you of your brother's son Lot that he is dead? Or has anything else befallen us? Michael answered and said to Sarah, Nay, Sarah, I have brought no tidings of Lot, but I knew of all your kindness of heart, that therein you excel all men upon earth, and the Lord has remembered you. Then Sarah said to Abraham, How dare you weep when the man of God has come in to you, and why have your eyes shed tears for today there is great rejoicing? Abraham said to her, How do you know that this is a man of God? Sarah answered and said, Because I say and declare that this is one of the three men who were entertained by us at the oak of Mamre, when one of the servants went and brought a kid and you killed it, and said to me, Arise, make ready that we may eat with these men in our house. Abraham answered and said, You have perceived well, O woman, for I too, when I washed his feet knew in my heart that these were the feet which I had washed at the oak of Mamre, and when I began to enquire concerning his journey, he said to me, I go to preserve Lot your brother from the men of Sodom, and then I knew the mystery.

7. And Abraham said to Michael, Tell me, man of God, and show to me why you have come hither. And Michael said, Your son Isaac will show you. And Abraham said to his son, My beloved son, tell me what you have seen in your dream today, and wast frightened. Relate it to me. Isaac answered his father, I saw in my dream the sun and the moon, and there was a crown upon my head, and there came from heaven a man of great size, and shining as the light that is called the father of light. He took the sun from my head, and yet left the rays behind with me. And I wept and said, I beseech you, my Lord, take not away the glory of my head, and the light of my house, and all my glory. And the sun and the moon and the stars lamented, saying, Take not away the glory of our power. And that shining man answered and said to me, Weep not that I take the light of your house, for it is taken up from troubles into rest, from a low estate to a high one; they lift him up from a narrow to a wide place; they raise him from darkness to light. And I said to him, I beseech you, Lord, take also the rays with it. He said to me, There are twelve hours of the day, and then I shall take all the rays. As the shining man said this, I saw the sun of my house ascending into heaven, but that crown I saw no more, and that sun was like you my father. And Michael said to Abraham, Your son Isaac has spoken truth, for you shall go, and be taken up into the heavens, but your body shall remain on earth, until seven thousand ages are fulfilled, for then all flesh shall arise. Now therefore, Abraham,

set your house in order, and your children, for you have heard fully what is decreed concerning you. Abraham answered and said to Michael, I beseech you, Lord, if I shall depart from my body, I have desired to be taken up in my body that I may see the creatures that the Lord my God has created in heaven and on earth. Michael answered and said, This is not for me to do, but I shall go and tell the Lord of this, and if I am commanded I shall show you all these things.

8. And Michael went up into heaven, and spoke before the Lord concerning Abraham, and the Lord answered Michael, Go and take up Abraham in the body, and show him all things, and whatsoever he shall say to you do to him as to my friend. So Michael went forth and took up Abraham in the body on a cloud, and brought him to the river of Ocean.

12. And after Abraham had seen the place of judgment, the cloud took him down upon the firmament below, and Abraham, looking down upon the earth, saw a man committing adultery with a wedded woman. And Abraham turning said to Michael, Do you see this wickedness? But, Lord, send fire from heaven to consume them. And straightway there came down fire and consumed them, for the Lord had said to Michael, do whatever Abraham shall ask you to do for him. Abraham looked again, and saw other men railing at their companions, and said, Let the earth open and swallow them, and as he spoke the earth swallowed them alive. Again the cloud led him to another place, and Abraham saw some going into a desert place to commit murder, and he said to Michael, Do you see this wickedness? But let wild beasts come out of the desert, and tear them in pieces, and that same hour wild beasts came out of the desert, and devoured them. Then the Lord God spoke to Michael saying, Turn away Abraham to his own house, and let him not go round all the creation that I have made, because he has no compassion on sinners, but I have compassion on sinners that they may turn and live, and repent of their sins and be saved.

8. And Abraham looked and saw two gates, the one small and the other large, and between the two gates sat a man upon a throne of great glory, and a multitude of angels round about him, and he was weeping, and again laughing, but his weeping exceeded his laughter seven-fold. And Abraham said to Michael, Who is this that sits between the two gates in great glory; sometimes he laughs, and sometimes he weeps, and his weeping exceeds his laughter seven-fold? And Michael said to Abraham, Do you not know who it is? And he said, No, Lord. And Michael said to Abraham, Do you see these two gates, the small and the great? These are they which lead to life and to destruction. This man that sits between them is Adam, the first man whom the Lord created, and set him in this place to see every soul that departs from the body, seeing that all are from him. When, therefore, you see him weeping, know that he has seen many souls being led to destruction, but when you see him laughing, he has seen many souls being led into life. Do you see how his weeping exceeds his laughter? Since he sees the greater part of the world being led away through the broad gate to destruction, therefore his weeping exceeds his laughter seven-fold.

9. And Abraham said, And he that cannot enter through the narrow gate, can he not enter into life? Then Abraham wept, saying, Woe is me, what shall I do? For I am a man broad of body, and how shall I be able to enter by the narrow gate, by which a boy of fifteen years cannot enter? Michael answered and said to Abraham, Fear not, father, nor grieve, for you shall enter by it unhindered, and all those who are like you. And as Abraham stood and marveled, behold an angel of the Lord driving sixty thousand souls of sinners to destruction. And Abraham said to Michael, Do all these go into destruction? And Michael said to him, Yea, but let us go and search among these souls, if there is

among them even one righteous. And when they went, they found an angel holding in his hand one soul of a woman from among these sixty thousand, because he had found her sins weighing equally with all her works, and they were neither in motion nor at rest, but in a state between; but the other souls he led away to destruction. Abraham said to Michael, Lord, is this the angel that removes the souls from the body or not? Michael answered and said, This is death, and he leads them into the place of judgment, that the judge may try them.

10. And Abraham said, My Lord, I beseech you to lead me to the place of judgment so that I too may see how they are judged. Then Michael took Abraham upon a cloud, and led him into Paradise, and when he came to the place where the judge was, the angel came and gave that soul to the judge. And the soul said, Lord have mercy on me. And the judge said, How shall I have mercy upon you, when you had no mercy upon your daughter which you had, the fruit of your womb? Wherefore did you slay her? It answered, Nay, Lord, slaughter has not been done by me, but my daughter has lied upon me. But the judge commanded him to come that wrote down the records, and behold cherubim carrying two books. And there was with them a man of exceeding great stature, having on his head three crowns, and the one crown was higher than the other two. These are called the crowns of witness. And the man had in his hand a golden pen, and the judge said to him, Exhibit the sin of this soul. And that man, opening one of the books of the cherubim, sought out the sin of the woman's soul and found it. And the judge said, O wretched soul, why do you say that you have not done murder? Did you not, after the death of your husband, go and commit adultery with your daughter's husband, and kill her? And he convicted her also of her other sins, whatsoever she had done from her youth. Hearing these things the woman cried out, saying, Woe is me, all the sins that I did in the world I forgot, but here they were not forgotten. Then they took her away also and gave her over to the tormentors.

11. And Abraham said to Michael, Lord, who is this judge, and who is the other, who convicts the sins? And Michael said to Abraham, Do you see the judge? This is Abel, who first testified, and God brought him hither to judge, and he that bears witness here is the teacher of heaven and earth, and the scribe of righteousness, Enoch, for the Lord sent them hither to write down the sins and righteousnesses of each one. Abraham said, And how can Enoch bear the weight of the souls, not having seen death? Or how can he give sentence to all the souls? Michael said, If he gives sentence concerning the souls, it is not permitted; but Enoch himself does not give sentence, but it is the Lord who does so, and he has no more to do than only to write. For Enoch prayed to the Lord saying, I desire not, Lord, to give sentence on the souls, lest I be grievous to anyone; and the Lord said to Enoch, I shall command you to write down the sins of the soul that makes atonement and it shall enter into life, and if the soul make not atonement and repent, you shall find its sins written down and it shall be cast into punishment. And about the ninth hour Michael brought Abraham back to his house. But Sarah his wife, not seeing what had become of Abraham, was consumed with grief, and gave up the ghost, and after the return of Abraham he found her dead, and buried her.

13. But when the day of the death of Abraham drew near, the Lord God said to Michael, Death will not dare to go near to take away the soul of my servant, because he is my friend, but go and adorn Death with great beauty, and send him thus to Abraham, that he may see him with his eyes. And Michael straightway, as he was commanded, adorned Death with great beauty, and sent him thus to Abraham that he might see him. And he sat down near to Abraham, and Abraham seeing Death sitting near to him was afraid with a great fear. And Death said to Abraham, Hail, holy soul! Hail,

friend of the Lord God! Hail, consolation and entertainment of travelers! And Abraham said, You are welcome, servant of the Most High. God. I beseech you, tell me who you are; and entering into my house partake of food and drink, and depart from me, for since I have seen you sitting near to me my soul has been troubled. For I am not at all worthy to come near you, for you are an exalted spirit and I am flesh and blood, and therefore I cannot bear your glory, for I see that your beauty is not of this world. And Death said to Abraham, I tell you, in all the creation that God has made, there has not been found one like you, for even the Lord himself by searching has not found such an one upon the whole earth. And Abraham said to Death, How dare you lie? For I see that your beauty is not of this world. And Death said to Abraham, Think not, Abraham, that this beauty is mine, or that I come thus to every man. Nay, but if any one is righteous like you, I thus take crowns and come to him, but if it is a sinner I come in great corruption, and out of their sin I make a crown for my head, and I shake them with great fear, so that they are dismayed. Abraham therefore said to him, And whence comes your beauty? And Death said, There is none other more full of corruption than I am. Abraham said to him, And are you indeed he that is called Death? He answered him and said, I am the bitter name. I am weeping....

14. And Abraham said to Death, Show us your corruption. And Death made manifest his corruption; and he had two heads, the one had the face of a serpent and by it some die at once by asps, and the other head was like a sword; by it some die by the sword as by bows. In that day the servants of Abraham died through fear of Death, and Abraham seeing them prayed to the Lord, and he raised them up. But God returned and removed the soul of Abraham as in a dream, and the archangel Michael took it up into the heavens. And Isaac buried his father beside his mother Sarah, glorifying and praising God, for to him is due glory, honor and worship, of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, now and always and to all eternity. Amen.

The Letter of Abgar to Jesus

Abgarus Uchama the toparch to Jesus the good Saviour that hath appeared in the parts (place) of Jerusalem, greeting. I have heard concerning thee and thy cures, that they are done of thee without drugs or herbs: for, as the report goes, thou makest blind men to see again, lame to walk, and cleansest lepers, and castest out unclean spirits and devils, and those that are afflicted with long sickness thou healest, and raisest the dead. And having heard all this of thee, I had determined one of two things, either that thou art God come down from heaven, and so doest these things or art a Son of God that doest these things. Therefore now have I written and entreated thee to trouble thyself to come to me and heal the affliction which I have. or indeed I have heard that the Jews even murmur against thee and wish to do thee hurt. And I have a very little city but (and) comely (reverend), which is sufficient for us both.

The answer, written by Jesus, sent by Ananias the runner to Abgarus the toparch.

Blessed art thou that hast believed in me, not having seen me. For it is written concerning me that they that have seen me shall not believe in me, and that they that have not seen me shall believe and live. But concerning that which thou hast written to me, to come unto thee; it must needs be that I fulfil all things for the which I was sent here, and after fulfilling them should then be taken up

unto him that sent me. And when I am taken up, I will send thee one of my disciples, to heal thine affliction and give life to thee and them that are with thee.

The Apocryphon of Ezekiel

Last weekend, whilst lying in a hotel bed trying to avoid thinking about my future fate and not succeeding in sleeping, I picked up my phone and scrolled through my Pseudepigrapha texts to read some Greek I haven't read before. This is always a good way to kill time in a pinch. I stumbled across what turned out to be a gem of a story: the *Apocryphon of Ezekiel*. There are only a few fragments extant from this work of unknown composition (though probably written sometime in the 50 BC – AD 50 time frame).

The first major chunk of the surviving work is a brilliant little parable. I liked it so much that I spent some time going back through it and decided to translate it. I don't do much translating, so it is always interesting to see how my "translation philosophy" has developed over time. This is not a full blown "normal English" attempt at a translation. In fact, it is pretty "literal" with some of the greater differences smoothed out.

If you are interested in the Greek text, I am not putting it here. It is from recent enough time that it is still under copyright (I'm assuming it is copyrighted). You can get it for free in the Diogenes reader (work number 1161:001).

Without further ado, here is the translation.

"For the dead will rise and those in the graves will rise again," said the prophet. Lest I pass over in silence the things spoken in his own secret book by the prophet Ezekiel concerning the resurrection, I will lay out these things here. For, speaking enigmatically, he said [the following story] concerning the judgement of the righteous, which the soul and body share, "a certain king made everyone in his kingdom soldiers. He did not have any civilians except just two: one lame man and one blind man. Each one sat by himself and lived by himself. Now when the king put on a wedding for his son, he invited everyone in his kingdom to come, but he despised the two civilians, both the lame man and the blind man. Now these two were very upset and they were thinking about getting even with the king.

Now the king had a royal garden, and from a long way off the blind man started talking to the lame man, saying, "How much more would our crumb of bread been among the crowds of those invited to the revelry? Come now, just as he has done to us, let us repay him."

And the other one answered, "How?"

He responded, "Let us go into his royal garden and destroy the garden things (i.e., plants) that are in it.

But (the other) said, "And how can I do that, being lame and not able to cause trouble?"

The blind man answer, "And I myself am able to do anything, not being able to see where I am going? But come now, let us be crafty."

After plucking (long) grass from the neighbor and weaving a rope, he threw it to the blind man. And he said, "Take it and come along the rope to me."

Now when he had done what was urged, when he arrived, he (the lame man) said, "Come, be my feet and carry me and I will be your eyes, guiding you from above to the right or left."

Having done this, they went down into the royal garden. Then, finally, regardless of whether they did wrong or even did no wrong, their footprints were visible in the garden.

Now when the revelers left the wedding and went down into the royal garden, they were surprised to find footprints in the royal garden. They reported this to the king, saying "Everyone in your kingdom is a soldier and no one is a civilian. How, then, are there civilian footprints in your royal garden?"

And he was amazed. And thus, the parable manifestly speaks of that which is hidden, as speaking in riddles to men, but God is ignorant of nothing.

Now the narrative tells how he summoned the lame man and the blind man and asked the blind man, "You did not go down into my royal garden, did you?"

He answered, "Oh, my lord! You see our handicaps; you know that I do not see where I am walking."

Then, coming to the lame man, he asked him, "Did you go down into my royal garden?"

Answering he said, "O Lord, are you trying to embitter my soul regarding my handicap?"

What, then, will the just judge do? Having recognized in what manner both were tied together, he sets the lame man on the blind one and interrogates both of them with the whip and they will not be able to deny it. Each will condemn the other, the lame man saying, "And didn't you pick me up and carry me away?"

And the blind man will say to the lame man, "And you yourself, weren't you my eyes?"

In this way the body is united with the soul and the soul with the body for the judgment of the common work, and the judgment will be complete concerning both, both the body and the soul, of the works which were done, whether good or evil.

The Vision of Ezra

Ezra prayed to the Lord, saying "Grant me courage, O Lord, that I might not fear when I see the judgments of the sinners." And there were granted to him seven angels of hell who carried him beyond the seventieth grade in the infernal regions. And he saw fiery gates, and at these gates he saw two lions lying there from whose mouth and nostrils and eyes proceeded the most powerful flames. The most powerful men were entering and passing through the fire, and it did not touch them. And Ezra said, "Who are they, who advance so safely?" The angels said to him, "They are the just whose repute has ascended to heaven, who gave alms generously, clothed the naked, and desired a good desire."

And others were entering that they might pass through the gates, and dogs were ripping them apart and fire was consuming them. And Ezra said, "Who are they?" The angels said, "They denied the Lord, and sinned with women on the Lord's Day." And Ezra said, "Lord, have mercy on the sinners!"

And they led him lower beyond the fiftieth grade, and he saw in that place men standing in torments. Some were throwing fire in their faces, others, however, were whipping them with fiery scourges. And the earth cried aloud, saying, "Whip them and refuse to have mercy on them, because they worked impiety upon me." And Ezra said, "Who are they, tho are in such torments daily?" The angels said, "They swelled with married women; the married women are those who adorned themselves not for their husbands, but that they might please others, desiring an evil desire." Ezra said, "Lord, have mercy on the sinners!"

And again they brought him to the south, and he saw a fire, and poor ones and also women hanging, and angels were whipping them with fiery clubs. And Ezra said, "Lord have mercy on the sinners! Who are they?" And the angels said, "They dwelled with their mothers, desiring an evil desire." And Ezra said, "Lord, have mercy on the sinners!"

And they led (him) downward in the infernal regions, and he saw a caldron in which were sulfur and bitumen, and it was roiling just like the waves of the sea. And the just were entering, and in the midst of it they were walking over the fiery waves, praising greatly the name of the Lord, just like those who walk over dew of cold water. And Ezra said, "Who are they?" The angels said, "They are the ones who daily were making better confession before God and the holy priests, freely bringing alms (and) resisting sins." And the sinners came, wishing to pass over, and the angels of hell came and submerged them in the fiery stream. And from the fire they cried out, saying, "Lord, have pity on us!" But he did not have pity. A voice was heard, but a body was not seen because of the fire and the anguish. And Ezra said, "Who are they?" The angels said, "They were brought down by lust all their days, they did not receive strangers, they did not give alms; they took unjustly the things of others for them selves; they had an evil desire; therefore, they are in anguish." And Ezra said, "Lord, have mercy on the sinners!"

And he walked as before and he saw in an obscure place and immortal worm, its magnitude he was not able to reckon. And in front of its mouth stood many sinners, and when it drew a breath, like flies they entered into its mouth; then when it exhaled, they all exited a different color. And Ezra said, "Who are they?" And they said, "They were full of every bad thing and they went about without confession or penitence."

And he saw a person witting on a fiery throne, and his counselors stood around him in the fire, and they served him from the fire and out of every side. And Ezra said, "Who is that?" And the angels said, "That man, whose name is Herod, was king for a long time, who, in Bethlehem of Judea, slew the infant males on account of the Lord." And Ezra said, "Lord judge a right judgment!"

And he walked and saw men who were bound and the angels of hell were pricking their eyes with thorns. And Ezra said, "Who are they?" The angels said, "They showed strange paths to those wandering." Ezra said, "Lord, have mercy on the sinners!" And he saw virgins with five-hundred-pound neck irons on, as if near death, coming to the west. And Ezra said, "Who are they?" And the angels said, "They violated their virginity before marriage." And there was a multitude of old men, lying prostrate, and over them molten iron and lead being poured. And he said, "Who are they?" And

the angels said, "They are the doctors of the Law who confuses baptism and the law of the Lord, because they were teaching with words, but they did not spur on to work; and in this they are judged." And Ezra said, "Lord have mercy on the sinners!"

And he saw visions of a furnace, against the setting sun, burning with great fire, into which were sent many kings and princes of this world; and many thousands of poor people were accusing them and saying, "They, through their power. Wounded us and dragged free men into servitude." And he saw another furnace, burning with pitch and sulfur, into which sons were cast who acted wretchedly at the hands of their parents and caused injury by means of their mouth. And he saw in a most obscure place another furnace burning, into which many women were cast. And he said, "Who are they?" And the angels said, "They had sons in adultery and killed them" And those little ones themselves accused them, saying, "Lord, the souls which you gave to us these (women) took away." And he said, "Who are they?" And the angels said, "They killed their sons." And Ezra said, "Lord, have mercy on the sinners!"

Then Michael and Gabriel came and said to him, "Come into heaven!" And Ezra said, "As my Lord lives, I may not come until; I see every judgment of sinners." And they led him downward in to the infernal regions beyond the fourteenth level. And he saw lions and little dogs lying around fiery flames. And the just came through them and they crossed over into Paradise. And he saw many thousands of the just and their habitations were the most splendid of any time.

And after he saw this, he was lifted up into heaven, and he came to a multitude of angels, and they said to him, "Pray to the Lord for the sinners," And they put him down within the sight of the Lord. And he said, "Lord, have mercy on the sinners!" And the Lord said, "Ezra, let them receive according to their works." And Ezra said, "Lord, you have shown more clemency to the animals. Which eat the grass and have not returned you praise, than to us; they die and have no sin; however, you torture us, living and dead." And the Lord said, "In my image I have formed man and I have commanded that they not sin and they sinned; therefore they are in torments. And the elect are those who go into eternal rest on account of confession, penitence, and largesse in almsgiving." And Ezra said, "Lord, what do the just do in order that they may not enter into judgment?" And the Lord said to him "(just as) the servant who performed well for his master will receive liberty, so too (will) the just in the kingdom of heaven." Amen.

The Prayer to Joseph

Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you, God entrusted his only Son;
In you, Mary placed her trust;
With you, Christ became man.

Blessed Joseph, to us, too,
show yourself a father
and guide us in the path of life.

Obtain for us grace, mercy, and courage,
and defend us from every evil. Amen.

Patris corde, December 8, 2020

Year of St. Joseph Prayer

To you, O blessed Joseph (Ad te, beate Ioseph)

To you, O blessed Joseph, do we come in our afflictions, and having implored the help of your most holy Spouse, we confidently invoke your patronage also.

Through that charity which bound you to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God and through the paternal love with which you embraced the Child Jesus, we humbly beg you graciously to regard the inheritance which Jesus Christ has purchased by his Blood, and with your power and strength to aid us in our necessities.

O most watchful guardian of the Holy Family, defend the chosen children of Jesus Christ; O most loving father, ward off from us every contagion of error and corrupting influence; O our most mighty protector, be kind to us and from heaven assist us in our struggle with the power of darkness.

As once you rescued the Child Jesus from deadly peril, so now protect God's Holy Church from the snares of the enemy and from all adversity; shield, too, each one of us by your constant protection, so that, supported by your example and your aid, we may be able to live piously, to die in holiness, and to obtain eternal happiness in heaven. Amen.

Daily prayer recited by Pope Francis

Every day, for more than 40 years, following Lauds, Pope Francis has recited a prayer to Saint Joseph taken from a nineteenth-century French prayer book of the Congregation of the Sisters of Jesus and Mary:

Glorious Patriarch Saint Joseph,
whose power makes the impossible possible,
come to my aid in these times of anguish and difficulty.
Take under your protection the serious
and troubling situations that I commend to you,
that they may have a happy outcome.
My beloved father, all my trust is in you.
Let it not be said that I invoked you in vain,
and since you can do everything with Jesus and Mary,
show me that your goodness is as great as your power.

Amen.

Memorare to St. Joseph

Remember, O most pure spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, my great protector, Saint Joseph, that no one ever had recourse to your protection, or implored your aid without obtaining relief. Confiding

therefore in your goodness, I come before you. Do not turn down my petitions, foster father of the Redeemer, but graciously receive them. Amen.

Daily Novena Prayer to St. Joseph

O Saint Joseph, whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the throne of God, I place in you all my interests and desires.

O Saint Joseph, do assist me by your powerful intercession and obtain for me from your divine Son all spiritual blessings through Jesus Christ, Our Lord, so that having experienced here below your heavenly power, I may offer my thanksgiving and homage to the most loving of fathers.

O Saint Joseph, I never weary of contemplating you and Jesus asleep in your arms. I dare not approach while He reposes near your heart. Hold Him close in my name and kiss His fine head from me, and ask Him to return the kiss when I draw my dying breath. St. Joseph, patron of departing souls, pray for me. Amen.

A Morning Offering through St. Joseph

Receive me, dear and chosen Father, and the offering of every movement of my body and soul, which I desire to present through thee to my blessed Lord.

Purify all! Make all a perfect holocaust! May every pulsation of my heart be a Spiritual Communion, every look and thought an act of love, every action a sweet sacrifice, every word an arrow of Divine love, every step an advance toward Jesus, every visit to Our Lord as pleasing to God as the errands of Angels, every thought of thee, dear Saint, an act to remind thee that I am thy child.

I recommend to thee the occasions in which I usually fail, particularly . . . [Mention these]. Accept each little devotion of the day, though replete with imperfection, and offer it to Jesus, Whose mercy will overlook all, since He regards not so much the gift as the love of the giver. Amen.

Consecration to St. Joseph

O dearest St. Joseph, I consecrate myself to thy honor and give myself to thee, that thou mayest always be my father, my protector, and my guide in the way of salvation. Obtain for me a great purity of heart and a fervent love of the interior life. After thine example, may I do all my actions for the greater glory of God, in union with the Divine Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary! And do thou, O Blessed St. Joseph, pray for me that I may share in the peace and joy of thy holy death. Amen.

Litany of St. Joseph

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father of Heaven, have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.
God the Holy Ghost, have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, One God, have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, pray for us.
St. Joseph, pray for us.
Illustrious son of David, pray for us.
Light of patriarchs, pray for us.
Spouse of the Mother of God, pray for us.
Chaste guardian of the Virgin, pray for us.
Foster father of the Son of God, pray for us.
Watchful defender of Christ, pray for us.
Head of the Holy Family, pray for us.

Joseph most just, pray for us.
Joseph most chaste, pray for us.
Joseph most prudent, pray for us.
Joseph most valiant, pray for us.
Joseph most obedient, pray for us.
Joseph most faithful, pray for us.
Mirror of patience, pray for us.
Lover of poverty, pray for us.
Model of workmen, pray for us.
Glory of home life, pray for us.
Guardian of virgins, pray for us.
Pillar of families, pray for us.
Solace of the afflicted, pray for us.
Hope of the sick, pray for us.
Patron of the dying, pray for us.
Terror of demons, pray for us.
Protector of Holy Church, pray for us.

Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world,
Spare us, O Lord!
Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world,
Graciously hear us, O Lord!
Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world,
Have mercy on us!

V. He made him the lord of His household,
R. And prince over all His possessions.

Let Us Pray

O God, Who in Thine ineffable Providence didst vouchsafe to choose Blessed Joseph to be the spouse of Thy most holy Mother, grant, we beseech Thee, that he whom we venerate as our protector on earth may be our intercessor in Heaven. Who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

The Apocalypse of Sedrach

The Word of the holy and blessed Sedrach concerning love and concerning repentance and Orthodox Christians, and concerning the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Lord give your blessing.

1. Beloved, let us prefer nothing in honour except sincere love: for in many things we stumble every day and night and hour. And for this cause let us gain love, for it covers a multitude of sins: for what is the profit, my children, if we have all things, and have not saving love...

O blessed love, supplier of all good things. Blessed is the man who has gained the true faith and sincere love, according as the Master said, there is no greater love than this that a man should lay down his life for his friend. John 15:13.

2. And invisibly he received a voice in his ears: Come hither, Sedrach, since you wish and desirest to converse with God and ask of him that he may reveal unto you whatever you wish to ask. And Sedrach said: What, Sir? And the voice said to him: I was sent to you to raise you here into heaven. And he said: I desired to speak mouth to mouth with God: I am not fit, Sir, to come into heaven. And stretching out his wings he took him up and he came into heaven to the very flame, and he set him as high as the third heaven, and in it stood the flame of the divinity.

3. And the Lord says to him: Welcome, my beloved Sedrach: What suit have you against God who created you, that you said, I desired to speak face to face with God? Sedrach says to him: Yea, verily, the son has a suit with the Father: my Lord, why did you make the earth? The Lord says to him: For man's sake. Sedrach says: And why did You make the sea? Why did You scatter every good thing on the earth? The Lord says to him: For man's sake. Sedrach says to him: If you did these things, why will You destroy him? And the Lord said: Man is my work and the creature of my hands, and I discipline him as I find good.

4. Sedrach says to him: Chastisement and fire are your discipline: they are bitter, my Lord: it were well for man if he had not been born: why then did you make him, my Lord? Why did you weary your undefiled hands and create man, since you did not intend to have mercy on him? God says to him: I made Adam the first creature and placed him in Paradise in the midst of the tree of life and said to him: Eat of all the fruits, but beware of the tree of life: for if you eat of it, you shall die the death. But he transgressed my commandment, and being beguiled by the devil ate of the tree.

5. Sedrach says to him: Of your will Adam was beguiled, my Lord: You command your angels to make approach to Adam, and the first of the angels himself transgressed your commandment and did not make approach to him, and You banished him, because he transgressed your commandment and did not make any approach to the work of your hands: if you loved man, why did You not slay the devil, the worker of unrighteousness? Who is able to fight an invisible spirit?

And he enters like smoke into the hearts of men and teaches them every sin: he fights against you, the immortal God, and what can wretched man then do to him? But have mercy, O Lord, and stop the chastisements: but if not, count me also with the sinners: if you will have no mercy on the sinners, where are your mercies, where is your compassion, O Lord?

6. God says to him: Be it known unto you that I ordered all things to be placable to him: I gave him understanding and made him the heir of heaven and earth, and I subjected all things to him, and every living thing flees from him and from before his face: but he, having received of mine, became alien, adulterous, and sinful: tell me, what father, having given his son his portion, when he takes his substance and leaves his father and goes away and becomes an alien and serves an alien, when the father sees that the son has deserted him, does not darken his heart, and does not the father go and take his substance and banish him from his glory because he deserted his father? And how have I, the wonderful and jealous God, given him everything, and he having received these things has become an adulterer and a sinner?

7. Sedrach says to him: You, O Lord, created man. You knew of what sort of mind he was and of what sort of knowledge we are, and you make it a cause for chastisement: but cast him forth; for shall not I alone fill up the heavenly places? But if that is not to be so save man too, O Lord. He failed by your will, wretched man. Why do you waste words on me, Sedrach? I created Adam and his wife and the sun and said: Behold each other how bright he is, and the wife of Adam is brighter in the beauty of the moon and he was the giver of her life. Sedrach says: but of what profit are beauties if they die away into the earth? How did you say, O Lord, You shall not return evil for evil? How is it, O Lord? The word of Your divinity never lies, and why do You retaliate on man? Or do you not in so doing render evil for evil? I know that among the quadrupeds there is no other so wily and unreasonable as the mule. But we strike it with the bridle when we wish: and you have angels: send them forth to guard them, and when man inclines towards sin, to take hold of his foot and not let him go whither he would.

8. God says to him: If I catch him by the foot, he will say, You have given me no joy in the world. But I have left him to his own will because I loved him. Wherefore I sent forth my righteous angels to guard him night and day. Sedrach says: I know, O Lord, that of all your creatures You chiefly loved man, of the quadrupeds the sheep, of woods the olive, of fruits the vine, of flying things the bee, of rivers the Jordan, of cities Jerusalem. And all these man also loves, my Lord. God says to Sedrach: I will ask you one thing, Sedrach: if you answer me, then I may fitly help you, even though you have tempted your creator. Sedrach says: Speak. The Lord God says: Since I made all things, how many men were born and how many died, and how many are to die and how many hairs have they? Tell me, Sedrach, since the heaven was created and the earth, how many trees grew in the world, and how many fell, and how many are to fall, and how many are to arise, and how many leaves have they? Tell me, Sedrach, since I made the sea, how many waves arose and how many fell, and how many are to arise, and how many winds blow along the margin of the sea? Tell me, Sedrach, from the creation of the world of the æons, when the air rained, how many drops fell upon the world, and how many are to fall? And Sedrach said: You alone know all these things, O Lord; you only understand all these things: only, I pray you, deliver man from chastisement, and I shall not be separated from our race.

9. And God said to his only begotten Son: Go, take the soul of Sedrach my beloved, and place it in Paradise. The only begotten Son says to Sedrach: Give me the trust which our Father deposited in the womb of your mother in the holy tabernacle of your body from a child. Sedrach says: I will not give you my soul. God says to him: And wherefore was I sent to come hither, and you plead against me? For I was commanded by my Father not to take your soul with violence; but if not, (then) give me your most greatly desired soul.

10. And Sedrach says to God: And whence do You intend to take my soul, and from which limb? And God says to him: Do you not know that it is placed in the midst of your lungs and your heart and is dispersed into all your limbs? It is brought up through the throat and gullet and the mouth and at whatever hour it is predestined to come forth, it is scattered, and brought together from the points of the nails and from all the limbs, and there is a great necessity that it should be separated from the body and parted from the heart. When Sedrach had heard all these things and had considered the memory of death he was greatly astounded, and Sedrach said to God: O Lord, give me a little respite that I may weep, for I have heard that tears are able to do much and much remedy comes to the lowly body of your creature.

11. And weeping and bewailing he began to say: O marvellous head of heavenly adornment: O radiant as the sun which shines on heaven and earth: your hairs are known from Teman, your eyes from Bosor, your ears from thunder, your tongue from a trumpet, and your brain is a small creation, your head the energy of the whole body: O friendly and most fair beloved by all, and now falling into the earth it must become forgotten. O hands, mild, fair-fingered, worn with toil by which the body is nourished: O hands, deftest of all, heaping up from all quarters you made ready houses. O fingers adorned and decked with gold and silver (rings): and great worlds are led by the fingers: the three joints enfold the palms, and heap up beautiful things: and now you must become aliens to the world. O feet, skilfully walking about, self-running, most swift, unconquerable: O knees, fitted together, because without you the body does not move: the feet run along with the sun and the moon in the night and in the day, heaping up all things, foods and drinks, and nourishing the body: O feet, most swift and fair runners, moving on the face of the earth, getting ready the house with every good thing: O feet which bear up the whole body, that run up to the temples, making repentance and calling on the saints, and now you are to remain motionless. O head and hands and feet, until now I have kept you. O soul, what sent you into the humble and wretched body? And now being separated from it, you are going up where the Lord calls you, and the wretched body goes away to judgment. O body well-adorned, hair clothed with stars, head of heavenly adornment and dress: O face well-anointed, light-bringing eyes, voice trumpet-like, tongue placable, chin fairly adorned, hairs like the stars, head high as heaven, body decked out, light-bringing eyes that know all things — and now you shall fall into the earth and under the earth your beauty shall disappear.

12. Christ says to him: Stay, Sedrach; how long do you weep and groan? Paradise is opened to you, and, dying, you shall live. Sedrach says to him: Once more I will speak unto you, O Lord: How long shall I live before I die? And do not disregard my prayer. The Lord says to him: Speak, O Sedrach. Sedrach says: If a man shall live eighty or ninety or an hundred years, and live these years in sin, and again shall turn, and the man live in repentance, in how many days do you forgive him his sins? God says to him: If he shall live an hundred or eighty years and shall turn and repent for three years and do the fruit of righteousness, and death shall overtake him, I will not remember all his sins.

13. Sedrach says to him: The three years are a long time, my Lord, lest death overtake him and he fulfil not his repentance: have mercy, Lord, on your image and have compassion, for the three years are many. God says to him: If a man live an hundred years and remember his death and confess before men and I find him, after a time I will forgive all his sins. Sedrach says again: I will again beseech your compassion for your creature. The time is long lest death overtake him and snatch him suddenly. The Saviour says to him: I will ask you one word, Sedrach, my beloved, then you shall ask me in turn: if the man shall repent for forty days I will not remember all his sins which he did.

14. And Sedrach says to the archangel Michael: Harken to me, O powerful chief, and help me and be my envoy that God may have mercy on the world. And falling on their faces, they besought the Lord and said: O Lord, teach us how and by what sort of repentance and by what labour man shall be saved. God says: By repentances, by intercessions, by liturgies, by tears in streams, in hot groanings. Do you not know that my prophet David was saved by tears, and the rest were saved in one moment? You know, Sedrach, that there are nations which have not the law and which do the works of the law: for if they are unbaptized and my divine spirit come unto them and they turn to my baptism, I also receive them with my righteous ones into Abraham's bosom. And there are some who have been baptized with my baptism and who have shared in my divine part and become reprobate in complete reprobation and will not repent: and I suffer them with much compassion and much pity and wealth Romans 2:4 in order that they may repent, but they do the things which my divinity hates, and did not hearken to the wise man asking (them), saying, we by no means justify a sinner. Do you not most certainly know that it is written: And those who repent never see chastisement? And they did not hearken to the Apostles or to my word in the Gospels, and they grieve my angels, and verily they do not attend to my messenger in the assemblies (for communion) and in my services, and they do not stand in my holy churches, but they stand and do not fall down and worship in fear and trembling, but boast things which I do not accept, or my holy angels.

15. Sedrach says to God: O Lord, You alone are sinless and very compassionate, having compassion and pity for sinners, but your divinity said: I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. And the Lord said to Sedrach: Do you not know, Sedrach, that the thief was saved in one moment to repent? Do you not know that my apostle and evangelist was saved in one moment? *Peccatores enim non salvantur*, for their hearts are like rotten stone: these are they who walk in impious ways and who shall be destroyed with Antichrist. Sedrach says: O my Lord, You also said: My divine spirit entered into the nations which, not having the law, do the things of the law. So also the thief and the apostle and evangelist and the rest of those who have already got into your Kingdom. O my Lord; so likewise do You pardon those who have sinned to the last: for life is very toilsome and there is no time for repentance.

16. The Lord says to Sedrach: I made man in three stages: when he is young, I overlooked his stumblings as he was young: and again when he was a man I considered his purpose: and again when he grows old, I watch him till he repent. Sedrach says: O Lord, You know and understandest all these things: but have sympathy for sinners. The Lord says to him: Sedrach, my beloved, I promise to have sympathy and bring down the forty days to twenty: and whosoever shall remember your name shall not see the place of chastisement, but shall be with the just in a place of refreshment and rest: and if anyone shall record this wonderful word his sins shall not be reckoned against him for ever and ever. And Sedrach says: O Lord, and if anyone shall bring enlightenment to your servant, save him, O Lord, from all evil. And Sedrach, the servant of the Lord, says: Now take

my soul, O Lord. And God took him and placed him in Paradise with all the saints. To whom be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

The Book of Eldad and Modad

Eldad and Medad are the protagonists of a cryptic episode in the portion of Behaalotecha:

Now two men remained in the camp; the name of one was Eldad and the name of the second was Medad, and the spirit rested upon them. They were among those written, but they did not go out to the tent, but prophesied in the camp.

The lad [Gershom, son of Moses¹] ran and told Moses, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp!"

Joshua, the son of Nun, Moses' servant from his youth, answered and said, "Moses, my master, imprison them!"²

Moses said to him, "Are you zealous for my sake? If only all the L-rd's people were prophets, that the L-rd would bestow His spirit upon them!"³

This story demands context (when and how did this episode take place?), biographical information (who were Eldad and Medad?), and explanation (what they were prophesying?), which will help us understand Joshua's frantic reaction.

After the desert-weary Jews complained twice in quick succession about their travels and travails, Moses turned to G-d and cried out: "Alone I cannot carry this entire people, for it is too hard for me."⁴

G-d then told Moses that he would now share the load of leading the nation:

Assemble for Me 70 men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the people's elders and officers, and you shall take them to the Tent of Meeting, and they shall stand there with You. I will come down and speak with you there, and I will increase the spirit that is upon you and bestow it upon them. Then they will bear the burden of the people with you so that you need not bear it alone.⁵

The Talmud tells us what happened next (we'll paraphrase):

When G-d said to Moses, "Gather for Me 70 men of the Elders of Israel," Moses responded, "How shall I do it? If I select six from each of the 12 tribes, there will be a total of 72, which will total to two extra. But if I select five from each tribe, there will be a total of 60, lacking 10. However, if I select 6 from this tribe and five from that tribe, I will bring about envy between the tribes!"

What did he do? He selected six from each tribe and he brought 72 slips. On 70 of them he wrote "Elder," and he left two slips blank. He mixed them and placed them in the box. He then said to the 72 chosen candidates: "Come and draw your slips." Everyone whose hand drew up a slip that said "Elder" was now appointed as one of the 70 sages.

During this whole saga, Eldad and Medad, who were chosen by their tribes to represent them, didn't come forward, as they said: "We are not fitting for that level of greatness; we are not worthy of being appointed for that level of greatness; we are not deserving of being appointed among the Elders."

G-d said: "Since you have made yourselves humble, I will add greatness to your greatness."

And what is the greatness that He added to them? asks the Talmud. All the other elders who were given prophecy at that time prophesied for a period of time and then stopped, but Eldad and Medad prophesied and did not stop.⁶

But when these two humble sages suddenly started spewing prophecy around the Jewish camp, Moses' loyal student Joshua suggested to Moses that they be locked up. What could they have possibly been saying that would cause such a reaction?

What Was Their Prophecy?

The Talmud brings three traditions:

1. They said that "Moses will die, and Joshua will bring the Jewish people into Land of Yisrael."
2. They prophesied about the story of the quail that followed immediately after this episode, saying, "Arise quail, arise quail," and indeed then the quail came.⁷
3. They were prophesying regarding the war of Gog and Magog, which will precede the arrival of Moshiach.

The commentary of Yonatan ben Uziel tells us that each one shared a separate prophecy.⁸ Eldad shared the prophecy that Moses would die and Joshua would lead the nation to the Holy Land, whereas Medad said that the quail would arise and overtake the Jewish camp and cause havoc, as we indeed read later on in the chapter.⁹ They both prophesied together regarding the war of Gog and Magog and the End of Days.

Who Were They?

Who were these two mysterious figures and what was their lineage?

The Midrash¹⁰ says that their real names were Elidad,¹¹ the son of Chislon, chieftain of the tribe of Benjamin,¹² and Kemuel, the son of Shiphtan, chieftain of the tribe of Ephraim.¹³ These two figures ended up leading their respective tribes into the Holy Land. Unlike the rest of the 70 sages, who passed on before entering the land, these two sages merited to see the land due to their humility.¹⁴

Yonatan ben Uziel¹⁵ tells us that when Moses' father, Amram, divorced his mother, Yocheved,¹⁶ she married a man named Elizaphan ben Parnach, Nasi of the tribe of Zevulun. They had two children together, Eldad and Medad, after which she remarried her first husband¹⁷ and went on to have her youngest son Moses. In short, Moses shared a mother with Eldad and Medad.

The biblical commentator the Rosh¹⁸ agrees that they were Moses' half-brothers, but he argues that they shared a father, not a mother.¹⁹

Moses' Response

Based on all the above, we now have a greater appreciation for Moses' piety and lofty nature when he told Joshua, "Are you zealous for my sake? If only all the L-rd's people were prophets, that the L-rd would bestow His spirit upon them!" Even though these prophecies (at least according to the first opinion) were hurtful to him, he nevertheless wished prophecy upon all the nation, and allowed them to continue prophesying around the camp.

Our sages tell us that this wish of Moses for all the Jews to become prophets will be realized in the messianic era.²⁰ In the words of the prophet Joel, "I will pour My Spirit upon all flesh. Your sons and daughters will prophesy."²¹

May this be materialized in our time, amen!

The Testament of Job

Greek apocryphal book, containing a haggadic story of Job. It was first published by Angelo Mai in the seventh volume of the "Scriptorum Veterum Nova Collectio" (pp. 180-191, Rome, 1833), and was translated in Migne's "Dictionnaire des Apocryphes" (ii. 403), but remained unnoticed by critics until Montague Rhodes James, in his notes to the "Testament of Abraham" (in "Texts and Studies," p. 155, Cambridge, 1892), called attention to it. Kohler, in the "Kohut Memorial Volume" (1897, pp. 264-338), republished and translated Mai's text, with introduction and notes, and about the same time M. R. James reedited the work, after a Paris manuscript (which gives a text by no means superior in value to Mai's), in "Apocrypha Anecdota" (pp. 104-137, Cambridge, 1897, with an introduction). The book was condemned as apocryphal by Pope Gelasius I., about 496, in his decree concerning canonical and noncanonical books. In Mai's version it has a double title: "Testament of Job the Blameless, the Conqueror in Many Contests, the Sainted" (which seems to be the older title) and "The Book of Job Called Jobab, and His Life, and the Transcript of His Testament." For the identification of Job with Jobab (Gen. xxxvi. 33) see Septuagint, Job xlii.; also Aristeas, in Eusebius, "Præparatio Evangelica," ix. 25; comp. Kohler, *l.c.* pp. 267 *et seq.*, and James, *l.c.* p. lxxxv.).

Contents of the Book.

Like the Patriarchs (comp. Test. Patr., Adam, 14, and Tan., Wayehi, 8, ed. Buber, and Bo, 2), Job in a farewell address to his children reviews his life, telling them that he is of the generation of Abraham, a descendant of Esau (Gen. *l.c.*), and was known as "Jobab," a rich ruler of the land of Uz (Ausitis), before God called him "Job" because of his martyrdom ([see Job, Critical View](#)); that his second wife, their mother, was Dinah, the daughter of Jacob (comp. B. B. 15b). Like Abraham, he had changed from idolatry to the worship of the true God, the Maker of heaven and earth (comp. Num. R. xiv.); yet as he had set out to destroy the idols of the land, the work of Satan, he had been told by the archangel of God to prepare for a life-long battle with Satan, but at the same time he had been promised lasting renown as a great spiritual athlete and a crown of amaranth in the world to come, after the resurrection. "I shall from love of God endure until the end," Job said, and received from the angel the seal of life (comp. Soṭah v. 5, and Kohler, *l.c.* pp. 271, 316). Satan, after having first attempted, in the guise of a beggar, to get Job into his power, but without success, secured from God permission (comp. Targ. Job i. 12) to take away all his possessions (ch. i.-ii., ed. Kohler; ch. i.-viii., ed. James).

His Wealth and Charity.

Job then relates how he used his great wealth for the benefit of the poor; how of the 130,000 sheep he owned he separated 7,000 for the clothing of orphans and widows, of poor and sick; 800 dogs watched his sheep (comp. Job xxx. 1), and 200 his house. Of his 9,000 camels he caused 3,000 to work for the poor; and he sent out ships laden with goods for the feeble, sick, and unfortunate. Of the 130,000 (340,000, Mai's text) wild asses in his possession he set 500 aside, and the offspring and all the proceeds therefrom were given to the needy.

The four doors of his house were opened to the poor, who came from all parts of the country to enjoy his hospitality (comp. Gen. R. xlviii., lxix.; Ab. R. N., ed. Schechter, i. 7, ii. 14). Thirty tables loaded with all kinds of food were set for the strangers, twelve of them for widows, and none were turned away hungry. Of his 3,500 yokes of oxen, 500 were for the use of the poor. He employed fifty bakeries for the bread of the poor (comp. [Ber. 58b](#); Ḥana b. Ḥanilai) and assigned special slaves to serve them at the tables. Some poor persons were hired for that purpose, so that they might support themselves; he released many poor from their indebtedness. The milk of his cows and ewes flowed in such plenty that passers-by were invited to take a share (comp. Job xxix. 6), and the servants that distributed the meat among the widows and the poor were so overburdened with their task that they broke out into cursings (comp. Job xxxi. 31). At the table slaves played on harps and on other musical instruments, and he himself took the cithara, intoning a song of thanksgiving and praise to God (comp. Gen. R. xlix., liv., and Ab. R. N., ed. Schechter, Text A, vii.; Text B, xiv. 33-34). After each feast held by his children in turn, to atone for any possible offenses committed by them through pride, he not only offered sacrifices (Job i. 5) but also gave gifts of charity to the poor.

Satan's Mischief.

These things, however, Satan begrudged Job, so he destroyed his sheep and camels and herds by fire, or had them taken by marauders. Finding that Job in his piety still gave praise to God, instead of blaspheming, he came in the guise of the King of Persia and besieged his city, capturing all the goods thereof; then he overthrew the house of Job and killed all his children, and everything he possessed was taken. Yet under all these sad happenings Job bravely spoke the words: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job i. 21). While Job sat on his throne mourning over his children, Satan came in the form of a great hurricane (comp. "ruah kōzmikōn," Gen. R. xxiv.; Yer. Ber. ix. 13d; Mek., Beshallah, to Ex. xiv. 24), threw him upon the ground, and smote him from head to foot with leprosy, so that his whole body was covered with sores and worms (comp. Ab. R. N. *l.c.*; Tischendorf, "Apocalypses, Apocrypha," p. 67). For seven years (48 years; Paris MS.) he sat on a dunghill outside of the city, while his wife, Sitis, who had been brought up in royal luxury, served as water-carrier to win bread for herself and him. Afterward (after 15 years; Paris MS.), when she was no longer allowed to take him bread, Satan, disguised as a bread-seller, went to meet her, asking, as the price of three loaves of bread for her starving husband, for the hair on her head; to save her husband from famishing, she consented (comp. [Shab. 59a](#); Akiba's wife). At last, when under the influence of Satan, her patience gave way, and in an impassioned appeal, full of pathos (contrasting her former riches and glory with her present state of gloom and poverty) and poetic grandeur, she called upon Job to curse God and die (comp. LXX. Job ii. 9). Job, however, indignantly rebuked her and challenged Satan, who had been hidden behind her all this while, saying: "Only a coward fights with frail woman; come forth and wage war with me!" Then

Satan broke forth into tears, and said, "I yield to thee who art the great wrestler," and left him, abashed (ch. iii.-vi., ed. Kohler; ix.-xxvii., ed. James; comp. B. B. 16a: "The grief of Satan was greater than that of Job"). As to Job, the great "athlete" or "wrestler," see IV Macc. vi. 10, xvii. 15-16; and Philo [where Job is frequently characterized as such; comp. Heb. x. 32].

The Three Friends of Job.

The three friends of Job, kings like himself, Eliphaz, King of Teman (comp. Targ. to Gen. xxxvi. 12; "Ma'yan Gannim," ed. Buber, p. 9), Bildad of Shuah (Gen. xxv. 2), and Zophar (B. B. 15b; Yalk. i. 766), who had come with their body-guards to see him, were dumfounded at finding Job, who had excelled them all in wealth, in such a state; Eliphaz offered a song of lamentation, in which all joined, recalling all Job's former splendor, each strophe ending with the refrain "Whither has thy glory gone?" Job in his reply pointed to "the splendor and glory that will be mine at the right hand of the Savior in heaven among the Holy Ones in the imperishable world. Kings perish and their glory vanishes like the shadow in a mirror, but God's kingdom lasts forever, and its glory is in the chariot of my Father" (ch. vii., ed. Kohler; xxviii.-xxxiii., ed. James). The whole chapter is a most powerful effusion of Ḥasidean sentiment, and has its exact parallel in the penitential prayer of Asenath (see Jew. Encyc. ii. 173, s.v. [Asenath](#)).

"The Dead Shall Live."

Eliphaz, on hearing Job in his abject state speak thus contemptuously of his friends and their glory, became furious, and said, "Let us go hence!" but Bildad, pacifying him, said, "Instead of upbraiding a man thus afflicted, let us see whether his mind has not given way under his great ordeal." Bildad accordingly began arguing with Job concerning God and destiny. Job, however, proved to be his superior in wisdom, and showed that he was initiated into the mysteries of God which he (like the Essenes) would not betray. Finally, Zophar, stepping forth, said: "We have brought our physicians with us to cure you"; but Job declined, saying, "My cure cometh from God, the Maker of physicians." Here follows a remarkable scene. While the friends were thus conversing Sitis appeared, dressed in rags, and prostrated herself before the kings, asking them for the sake of their former friendship to have the bodies of her children taken out from the ruins of her house in order that they might be given decent burial. But Job interfered, saying, "My children will not be found; they have been taken up to their Master in heaven." "Behold, he raves!" the kings exclaimed; but instantly Job spelled the Ineffable Name, and all beheld the children of Job, with crowns on their heads, near the throne of God. Sitis, overcome with emotion, went back to her master, lay down in the manger of his cattle, and died. The animals and afterward all the people of the city wept and mourned for her, and the dirge that was sung (says the writer) "is found in the Chronicles" (ch. ix., ed. Kohler; xxxiii.-xl., ed. James).

Elihu, the Satanic Beast.

These marvelous things, however, did not prevent the friends of Job from contending that he must have sinned terribly to have brought upon himself so much suffering, and when he resented these insinuations, Elihu came forward, imbued with the spirit of Satan, and spoke hard words to Job. God showed Job afterward that Elihu was a wild beast ("serpent"), not a man (comp. Elihu as identified with Baalam in Yer. Soṭah v. 20d). The three friends finally confessed their error, brought to Job animals to be offered as sin-offerings to the Lord, and obtained pardon through Job; Elihu,

however, was not pardoned. A peculiar lyric song closes this episode, in which the three friends offer praise that their sin is taken away, while Elihu, "the evil one, the son of darkness, the lover of the Serpent, the Northern One ["Zephoni"], and the hater of the saints," is cast into Sheol.

The story of Job's restoration to health is missing in the narrative. It continues with Job's return to the city, where he held a feast of thanksgiving, asking the people each to give him a lamb for the clothing of the poor and four drachmas of gold or silver for their support. Thus taking up again his former work of charity, he soon became rich, married Dinah, and became the father of ten children, as before. Job finally admonishes his sons, summing up his ethics and his religion in the following precepts: "Forsake not the Lord! Be charitable to the poor and do not disregard the feeble. Take not unto yourselves wives from strangers." This last command proves beyond the possibility of doubt that the book is Jewish in character and conception.

Job's Three Daughters.

After having distributed his property among his seven sons, Job gave to each of his three daughters, out of a hidden treasure-box, three-stringed girdles which God had given him that by their magic power he might be cured of his leprosy and be endowed with new physical and spiritual strength, so that he might forecast all the secrets of the future. As soon as his daughters put these girdles around their bodies they were transfigured, and, in the voices of angels, archangels (heavenly archons), and cherubim, sang hymns echoing the mysteries of heaven, all of which were written down by Nahor, the brother of Job.

Job, on seeing death approach, gave a cithara to his first daughter, Day ("Yemimah"), a censer to his second, Kassiah ("Perfume"), and a timbrel to his third, Amaltheas Horn ("ḳeren ha-Puk"), that they might welcome the holy angels who came to take his soul; and while they played and glorified God in the holy dialect, He who sitteth upon the Great Chariot came and took the soul of Job away with a kiss and carried it eastward, where the Heavenly Throne is erected. Amid the singing of his daughters and the great mourning of the people, particularly the poor and the fatherless, his body was taken to the grave. The dirge is given at the close of the book (ch. xi-xii., ed. Kohler; xli.-lii., ed. James).

James (*I.c.* Introduction) hesitates to assign the whole book to Jewish sources, but the Midrashic parallels in Kohler (*I.c.*) sufficiently prove that the work is one of the most remarkable productions of the pre-Christian era, explicable only when viewed in the light of ancient Ḥasidean practise.

The History of Joseph the Carpenter

In the name of God, of one essence and three persons.

The History of the death of our father, the holy old man, Joseph the carpenter.

May his blessings and prayers preserve us all, O brethren! Amen.

His whole life was one hundred and eleven years, and his departure from this world happened on the twenty-sixth of the month Abib, which answers to the month Ab. May his prayer preserve us! Amen. And, indeed, it was our Lord Jesus Christ Himself who related this history to

His holy disciples on the Mount of Olives, and all Joseph's labour, and the end of his days. And the holy apostles have preserved this conversation, and have left it written down in the library at Jerusalem. May their prayers preserve us! Amen.

1. It happened one day, when the Saviour, our Master, God, and Saviour Jesus Christ, was sitting along with His disciples, and they were all assembled on the Mount of Olives, that He said to them: O my brethren and friends, sons of the Father who has chosen you from all men, you know that I have often told you that I must be crucified, and must die for the salvation of Adam and his posterity, and that I shall rise from the dead. Now I shall commit to you the doctrine of the holy gospel formerly announced to you, that you may declare it throughout the whole world. And I shall endow you with power from on high, and fill you with the Holy Spirit. Luke 24:49 And you shall declare to all nations repentance and remission of sins. Luke 24:37 For a single cup of water, Matthew 10:42 if a man shall find it in the world to come, is greater and better than all the wealth of this whole world. And as much ground as one foot can occupy in the house of my Father, is greater and more excellent than all the riches of the earth. Yea, a single hour in the joyful dwelling of the pious is more blessed and more precious than a thousand years among sinners: inasmuch as their weeping and lamentation shall not come to an end, and their tears shall not cease, nor shall they find for themselves consolation and repose at any time forever. And now, O my honoured members, go declare to all nations, tell them, and say to them: Verily the Saviour diligently inquires into the inheritance which is due, and is the administrator of justice. And the angels will cast down their enemies, and will fight for them in the day of conflict. And He will examine every single foolish and idle word which men speak, and they shall give an account of it. Matthew 12:36 For as no one shall escape death, so also the works of every man shall be laid open on the day of judgment, whether they have been good or evil. 2 Corinthians 5:10 Tell them also this word which I have said to you today: Let not the strong man glory in his strength, nor the rich man in his riches; but let him who wishes to glory, glory in the Lord.

2. There was a man whose name was Joseph, sprung from a family of Bethlehem, a town of Judah, and the city of King David. This same man, being well furnished with wisdom and learning, was made a priest in the temple of the Lord. He was, besides, skilful in his trade, which was that of a carpenter; and after the manner of all men, he married a wife. Moreover, he begot for himself sons and daughters, four sons, namely, and two daughters. Now these are their names — Judas, Justus, James, and Simon. The names of the two daughters were Assia and Lydia. At length the wife of righteous Joseph, a woman intent on the divine glory in all her works, departed this life. But Joseph, that righteous man, my father after the flesh, and the spouse of my mother Mary, went away with his sons to his trade, practising the art of a carpenter.

3. Now when righteous Joseph became a widower, my mother Mary, blessed, holy, and pure, was already twelve years old. For her parents offered her in the temple when she was three years of age, and she remained in the temple of the Lord nine years. Then when the priests saw that the virgin, holy and God-fearing, was growing up, they spoke to each other, saying: Let us search out a man, righteous and pious, to whom Mary may be entrusted until the time of her marriage; lest, if she remain in the temple, it happen to her as is wont to happen to women, and lest on that account we sin, and God be angry with us.

4. Therefore they immediately sent out, and assembled twelve old men of the tribe of Judah. And they wrote down the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. And the lot fell upon the pious old man, righteous Joseph. Then the priests answered, and said to my blessed mother: Go with Joseph, and be with him till the time of your marriage. Righteous Joseph therefore received my mother, and led her away to his own house. And Mary found James the Less in his father's house, broken-hearted and sad on account of the loss of his mother, and she brought him up. Hence Mary was called the mother of James. Luke 24:10 Thereafter Joseph left her at home, and went away to the shop where he wrought at his trade of a carpenter. And after the holy virgin had spent two years in his house her age was exactly fourteen years, including the time at which he received her.

5. And I chose her of my own will, with the concurrence of my Father, and the counsel of the Holy Spirit. And I was made flesh of her, by a mystery which transcends the grasp of created reason. And three months after her conception the righteous man Joseph returned from the place where he worked at his trade; and when he found my virgin mother pregnant, he was greatly perplexed, and thought of sending her away secretly. Matthew 1:19 But from fear, and sorrow, and the anguish of his heart, he could endure neither to eat nor drink that day.

6. But at mid-day there appeared to him in a dream the prince of the angels, the holy Gabriel, furnished with a command from my Father; and he said to him: Joseph, son of David, fear not to take Mary as your wife: for she has conceived of the Holy Spirit; and she will bring forth a son, whose name shall be called Jesus. He it is who shall rule all nations with a rod of iron. Having thus spoken, the angel departed from him. And Joseph rose from his sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord had said to him; and Mary abode with him. Matthew 1:20-24

7. Some time after that, there came forth an order from Augustus Cæsar the king, that all the habitable world should be enrolled, each man in his own city. The old man therefore, righteous Joseph, rose up and took the virgin Mary and came to Bethlehem, because the time of her bringing forth was at hand. Joseph then inscribed his name in the list; for Joseph the son of David, whose spouse Mary was, was of the tribe of Judah. And indeed Mary, my mother, brought me forth in Bethlehem, in a cave near the tomb of Rachel the wife of the patriarch Jacob, the mother of Joseph and Benjamin.

8. But Satan went and told this to Herod the Great, the father of Archelaus. And it was this same Herod who ordered my friend and relative John to be beheaded. Accordingly he searched for me diligently, thinking that my kingdom was to be of this world. John 18:36 But Joseph, that pious old man, was warned of this by a dream. Therefore he rose and took Mary my mother, and I lay in her bosom. Salome also was their fellow-traveller. Having therefore set out from home, he retired into Egypt, and remained there the space of one whole year, until the hatred of Herod passed away.

9. Now Herod died by the worst form of death, atoning for the shedding of the blood of the children whom he wickedly cut off, though there was no sin in them. And that impious tyrant Herod being dead, they returned into the land of Israel, and lived in a city of Galilee which is called Nazareth. And Joseph, going back to his trade of a carpenter, earned his living by the work of his hands; for, as the law of Moses had commanded, he never sought to live for nothing by another's labour. Genesis 3:19

10. At length, by increasing years, the old man arrived at a very advanced age. He did not, however, labour under any bodily weakness, nor had his sight failed, nor had any tooth perished from his mouth. In mind also, for the whole time of his life, he never wandered; but like a boy he always in his business displayed youthful vigour, and his limbs remained unimpaired, and free from all pain. His life, then, in all, amounted to one hundred and eleven years, his old age being prolonged to the utmost limit.

11. Now Justus and Simeon, the elder sons of Joseph, were married, and had families of their own. Both the daughters were likewise married, and lived in their own houses. So there remained in Joseph's house, Judas and James the Less, and my virgin mother. I moreover dwelt along with them, not otherwise than if I had been one of his sons. But I passed all my life without fault. Mary I called my mother, and Joseph father, and I obeyed them in all that they said; nor did I ever contend against them, but complied with their commands, as other men whom earth produces are wont to do; nor did I at any time arouse their anger, or give any word or answer in opposition to them. On the contrary, I cherished them with great love, like the pupil of my eye.

12. It came to pass, after these things, that the death of that old man, the pious Joseph, and his departure from this world, were approaching, as happens to other men who owe their origin to this earth. And as his body was verging on dissolution, an angel of the Lord informed him that his death was now close at hand. Therefore fear and great perplexity came upon him. So he rose up and went to Jerusalem; and going into the temple of the Lord, he poured out his prayers there before the sanctuary, and said:

13. O God! Author of all consolation, God of all compassion, and Lord of the whole human race; God of my soul, body, and spirit; with supplications I reverence you, O Lord and my God. If now my days are ended, and the time draws near when I must leave this world, send me, I beseech You, the great Michael, the prince of Your holy angels: let him remain with me, that my wretched soul may depart from this afflicted body without trouble, without terror and impatience. For great fear and intense sadness take hold of all bodies on the day of their death, whether it be man or woman, beast wild or tame, or whatever creeps on the ground or flies in the air. At the last all creatures under heaven in whom is the breath of life are struck with horror, and their souls depart from their bodies with strong fear and great depression. Now therefore, O Lord and my God, let Your holy angel be present with his help to my soul and body, until they shall be dissevered from each other. And let not the face of the angel, appointed my guardian from the day of my birth, be turned away from me; but may he be the companion of my journey even until he bring me to You: let his countenance be pleasant and gladsome to me, and let him accompany me in peace. And let not demons of frightful aspect come near me in the way in which I am to go, until I come to You in bliss. And let not the doorkeepers hinder my soul from entering paradise. And do not uncover my sins, and expose me to condemnation before Your terrible tribunal. Let not the lions rush in upon me; nor let the waves of the sea of fire overwhelm my soul— for this must every soul pass through — before I have seen the glory of Your Godhead. O God, most righteous Judge, who in justice and equity will judge mankind, and will render unto each one according to his works, O Lord and my God, I beseech You, be present to me in Your compassion, and enlighten my path that I may come to You; for You are a fountain overflowing with all good things, and with glory for evermore. Amen.

14. It came to pass thereafter, when he returned to his own house in the city of Nazareth, that he was seized by disease, and had to keep his bed. And it was at this time that he died, according to the destiny of all mankind. For this disease was very heavy upon him, and he had never been ill, as he now was, from the day of his birth. And thus assuredly it pleased Christ to order the destiny of righteous Joseph. He lived forty years unmarried; thereafter his wife remained under his care forty-nine years, and then died. And a year after her death, my mother, the blessed Mary, was entrusted to him by the priests, that he should keep her until the time of her marriage. She spent two years in his house; and in the third year of her stay with Joseph, in the fifteenth year of her age, she brought me forth on earth by a mystery which no creature can penetrate or understand, except myself, and my Father and the Holy Spirit, constituting one essence with myself.

15. The whole age of my father, therefore, that righteous old man, was one hundred and eleven years, my Father in heaven having so decreed. And the day on which his soul left his body was the twenty-sixth of the month Abib. For now the fine gold began to lose its splendour, and the silver to be worn down by use — I mean his understanding and his wisdom. He also loathed food and drink, and lost all his skill in his trade of carpentry, nor did he any more pay attention to it. It came to pass, then, in the early dawn of the twenty-sixth day of Abib, that Joseph, that righteous old man, lying in his bed, was giving up his unquiet soul. Wherefore he opened his mouth with many sighs, and struck his hands one against the other, and with a loud voice cried out, and spoke after the following manner:—

16. Woe to the day on which I was born into the world! Woe to the womb which bare me! Woe to the bowels which admitted me! Woe to the breasts which suckled me! Woe to the feet upon which I sat and rested! Woe to the hands which carried me and reared me until I grew up! For I was conceived in iniquity, and in sins did my mother desire me. Woe to my tongue and my lips, which have brought forth and spoken vanity, detraction, falsehood, ignorance, derision, idle tales, craft, and hypocrisy! Woe to my eyes, which have looked upon scandalous things! Woe to mine ears, which have delighted in the words of slanderers! Woe to my hands, which have seized what did not of right belong to them! Woe to my belly and my bowels, which have lusted after food unlawful to be eaten! Woe to my throat, which like a fire has consumed all that it found! Woe to my feet, which have too often walked in ways displeasing to God! Woe to my body; and woe to my miserable soul, which has already turned aside from God its Maker! What shall I do when I arrive at that place where I must stand before the most righteous Judge, and when He shall call me to account for the works which I have heaped up in my youth? Woe to every man dying in his sins! Assuredly that same dreadful hour, which came upon my father Jacob, Matthew 1:16 when his soul was flying forth from his body, is now, behold, near at hand for me. Oh! How wretched I am this day, and worthy of lamentation! But God alone is the disposer of my soul and body; He also will deal with them after His own good pleasure.

17. These are the words spoken by Joseph, that righteous old man. And I, going in beside him, found his soul exceedingly troubled, for he was placed in great perplexity. And I said to him: Hail! My father Joseph, you righteous man; how is it with you? And he answered me: All hail! My well-beloved son. Indeed, the agony and fear of death have already environed me; but as soon as I heard Your voice, my soul was at rest. O Jesus of Nazareth! Jesus, my Saviour! Jesus, the deliverer of my soul! Jesus, my protector! Jesus! O sweetest name in my mouth, and in the mouth of all those that love it! O eye which sees, and ear which hears, hear me! I am Your servant; this day I most humbly reverence You,

and before Your face I pour out my tears. You are altogether my God; You are my Lord, as the angel has told me times without number, and especially on that day when my soul was driven about with perverse thoughts about the pure and blessed Mary, who was carrying You in her womb, and whom I was thinking of secretly sending away. And while I was thus meditating, behold, there appeared to me in my rest angels of the Lord, saying to me in a wonderful mystery: O Joseph, you son of David, fear not to take Mary as your wife; and do not grieve your soul, nor speak unbecoming words of her conception, because she is with child of the Holy Spirit, and shall bring forth a son, whose name shall be called Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins. Do not for this cause wish me evil, O Lord! For I was ignorant of the mystery of Your birth. I call to mind also, my Lord, that day when the boy died of the bite of the serpent. And his relations wished to deliver You to Herod, saying that You had killed him; but You raised him from the dead, and restore him to them. Then I went up to You, and took hold of Your hand, saying: My son, take care of yourself. But You said to me in reply: Are you not my father after the flesh? I shall teach you who I am. Now therefore, O Lord and my God, do not be angry with me, or condemn me on account of that hour. I am Your servant, and the son of Your handmaiden; but You are my Lord, my God and Saviour, most surely the Son of God.

18. When my father Joseph had thus spoken, he was unable to weep more. And I saw that death now had dominion over him. And my mother, virgin undefiled, rose and came to me, saying: O my beloved son, this pious old man Joseph is now dying. And I answered: Oh my dearest mother, assuredly upon all creatures produced in this world the same necessity of death lies; for death holds sway over the whole human race. Even you, O my virgin mother, must look for the same end of life as other mortals. And yet your death, as also the death of this pious man, is not death, but life enduring to eternity. Nay more, even I must die, as concerns the body which I have received from you. But rise, O my venerable mother, and go in to Joseph, that blessed old man, in order that you may see what will happen as his soul ascends from his body.

19. My undefiled mother Mary, therefore, went and entered the place where Joseph was. And I was sitting at his feet looking at him, for the signs of death already appeared in his countenance. And that blessed old man raised his head, and kept his eyes fixed on my face; but he had no power of speaking to me, on account of the agonies of death, which held him in their grasp. But he kept fetching many sighs. And I held his hands for a whole hour; and he turned his face to me, and made signs for me not to leave him. Thereafter I put my hand upon his breast, and perceived his soul now near his throat, preparing to depart from its receptacle.

20. And when my virgin mother saw me touching his body, she also touched his feet. And finding them already dead and destitute of heat, she said to me: O my beloved son, assuredly his feet are already beginning to stiffen, and they are as cold as snow. Accordingly she summoned his sons and daughters, and said to them: Come, as many as there are of you, and go to your father; for assuredly he is now at the very point of death. And Assia, his daughter, answered and said: Woe's me, O my brothers, this is certainly the same disease that my beloved mother died of. And she lamented and shed tears; and all Joseph's other children mourned along with her. I also, and my mother Mary, wept along with them.

21. And turning my eyes towards the region of the south, I saw Death already approaching, and all Gehenna with him, closely attended by his army and his satellites; and their clothes, their faces,

and their mouths poured forth flames. And when my father Joseph saw them coming straight to him, his eyes dissolved in tears, and at the same time he groaned after a strange manner. Accordingly, when I saw the vehemence of his sighs, I drove back Death and all the host of servants which accompanied him. And I called upon my good Father, saying:—

22. O Father of all mercy, eye which see, and ear which hear, hearken to my prayers and supplications in behalf of the old man Joseph; and send Michael, the prince of Your angels, and Gabriel, the herald of light, and all the light of Your angels, and let their whole array walk with the soul of my father Joseph, until they shall have conducted it to You. This is the hour in which my father has need of compassion. And I say unto you, that all the saints, yea, as many men as are born in the world, whether they be just or whether they be perverse, must of necessity taste of death.

23. Therefore Michael and Gabriel came to the soul of my father Joseph, and took it, and wrapped it in a shining wrapper. Thus he committed his spirit into the hands of my good Father, and He bestowed upon him peace. But as yet none of his children knew that he had fallen asleep. And the angels preserved his soul from the demons of darkness which were in the way, and praised God even until they conducted it into the dwelling-place of the pious.

24. Now his body was lying prostrate and bloodless; wherefore I reached forth my hand, and put right his eyes and shut his mouth, and said to the virgin Mary: O my mother, where is the skill which he showed in all the time that he lived in this world? Lo! It has perished, as if it had never existed. And when his children heard me speaking with my mother, the pure virgin, they knew that he had already breathed his last, and they shed tears, and lamented. But I said to them: Assuredly the death of your father is not death, but life everlasting: for he has been freed from the troubles of this life, and has passed to perpetual and everlasting rest. When they heard these words, they rent their clothes, and wept.

25. And, indeed, the inhabitants of Nazareth and of Galilee, having heard of their lamentation, flocked to them, and wept from the third hour even to the ninth. And at the ninth hour they all went together to Joseph's bed. And they lifted his body, after they had anointed it with costly ointments. But I entreated my Father in the prayer of the celestials — that same prayer which with my own hand I made before I was carried in the womb of the virgin Mary, my mother. And as soon as I had finished it, and pronounced the amen, a great multitude of angels came up; and I ordered two of them to stretch out their shining garments, and to wrap in them the body of Joseph, the blessed old man.

26. And I spoke to Joseph, and said: The smell or corruption of death shall not have dominion over you, nor shall a worm ever come forth from your body. Not a single limb of it shall be broken, nor shall any hair on your head be changed. Nothing of your body shall perish, O my father Joseph, but it will remain entire and uncorrupted even until the banquet of the thousand years. And whosoever shall make an offering on the day of your remembrance, him will I bless and recompense in the congregation of the virgins; and whosoever shall give food to the wretched, the poor, the widows, and orphans from the work of his hands, on the day on which your memory shall be celebrated, and in your name, shall not be in want of good things all the days of his life. And whosoever shall have given a cup of water, or of wine, to drink to the widow or orphan in your name, I will give him to you, that you may go in with him to the banquet of the thousand years. And every man who shall present

an offering on the day of your commemoration will I bless and recompense in the church of the virgins: for one I will render unto him thirty, sixty, and a hundred. And whosoever shall write the history of your life, of your labour, and your departure from this world, and this narrative that has issued from my mouth, him shall I commit to your keeping as long as he shall have to do with this life. And when his soul departs from the body, and when he must leave this world, I will burn the book of his sins, nor will I torment him with any punishment in the day of judgment; but he shall cross the sea of flames, and shall go through it without trouble or pain. And upon every poor man who can give none of those things which I have mentioned this is incumbent: viz., if a son is born to him, he shall call his name Joseph. So there shall not take place in that house either poverty or any sudden death forever.

27. Thereafter the chief men of the city came together to the place where the body of the blessed old man Joseph had been laid, bringing with them burial-clothes; and they wished to wrap it up in them after the manner in which the Jews are wont to arrange their dead bodies. And they perceived that he kept his shroud fast; for it adhered to the body in such a way, that when they wished to take it off, it was found to be like iron — impossible to be moved or loosened. Nor could they find any ends in that piece of linen, which struck them with the greatest astonishment. At length they carried him out to a place where there was a cave, and opened the gate, that they might bury his body beside the bodies of his fathers. Then there came into my mind the day on which he walked with me into Egypt, and that extreme trouble which he endured on my account. Accordingly, I bewailed his death for a long time; and lying upon his body, I said:—

28. O Death! Who makes all knowledge to vanish away, and raises so many tears and lamentations, surely it is God my Father Himself who has granted you this power. For men die for the transgression of Adam and his wife Eve, and Death spares not so much as one. Nevertheless, nothing happens to any one, or is brought upon him, without the command of my Father. There have certainly been men who have prolonged their life even to nine hundred years; but they died. Yea, though some of them have lived longer, they have, notwithstanding, succumbed to the same fate; nor has any one of them ever said: I have not tasted death. For the Lord never sends the same punishment more than once, since it has pleased my Father to bring it upon men. And at the very moment when it, going forth, beholds the command descending to it from heaven, it says: I will go forth against that man, and will greatly move him. Then, without delay, it makes an onset on the soul, and obtains the mastery of it, doing with it whatever it will. For, because Adam did not the will of my Father, but transgressed His commandment, the wrath of my Father was kindled against him, and He doomed him to death; and thus it was that death came into the world. But if Adam had observed my Father's precepts, death would never have fallen to his lot. Think you that I can ask my good Father to send me a chariot of fire, 2 Kings 2:11 which may take up the body of my father Joseph, and convey it to the place of rest, in order that it may dwell with the spirits? But on account of the transgression of Adam, that trouble and violence of death has descended upon all the human race. And it is for this cause that I must die according to the flesh, for my work which I have created, that they may obtain grace.

29. Having thus spoken, I embraced the body of my father Joseph, and wept over it; and they opened the door of the tomb, and placed his body in it, near the body of his father Jacob. And at the time when he fell asleep he had fulfilled a hundred and eleven years. Never did a tooth in his mouth hurt him, nor was his eyesight rendered less sharp, nor his body bent, nor his strength impaired; but

he worked at his trade of a carpenter to the very last day of his life; and that was the six-and-twentieth of the month Abib.

30. And we apostles, when we heard these things from our Saviour, rose up joyfully, and prostrated ourselves in honour of Him, and said: O our Saviour, show us Your grace. Now indeed we have heard the word of life: nevertheless we wonder, O our Saviour, at the fate of Enoch and Elias, inasmuch as they had not to undergo death. For truly they dwell in the habitation of the righteous even to the present day, nor have their bodies seen corruption. Yet that old man Joseph the carpenter was, nevertheless, Your father after the flesh. And You have ordered us to go into all the world and preach the holy Gospel; and You have said: Relate to them the death of my father Joseph, and celebrate to him with annual solemnity a festival and sacred day. And whosoever shall take anything away from this narrative, or add anything to it, commits sin. Revelation 22:18-19 We wonder especially that Joseph, even from that day on which You were born in Bethlehem, called You his son after the flesh. Wherefore, then, did You not make him immortal as well as them, and You say that he was righteous and chosen?

31. And our Saviour answered and said: Indeed, the prophecy of my Father upon Adam, for his disobedience, has now been fulfilled. And all things are arranged according to the will and pleasure of my Father. For if a man rejects the commandment of God, and follows the works of the devil by committing sin, his life is prolonged; for he is preserved in order that he may perhaps repent, and reflect that he must be delivered into the hands of death. But if any one has been zealous of good works, his life also is prolonged, that, as the fame of his old age increases, upright men may imitate him. But when you see a man whose mind is prone to anger, assuredly his days are shortened; for it is these that are taken away in the flower of their age. Every prophecy, therefore, which my Father has pronounced concerning the sons of men, must be fulfilled in every particular. But with reference to Enoch and Elias, and how they remain alive to this day, keeping the same bodies with which they were born; and as to what concerns my father Joseph, who has not been allowed as well as they to remain in the body: indeed, though a man live in the world many myriads of years, nevertheless at some time or other he is compelled to exchange life for death. And I say to you, O my brethren, that they also, Enoch and Elias, Revelation 11:3-12 must towards the end of time return into the world and die — in the day, namely, of commotion, of terror, of perplexity, and affliction. For Antichrist will slay four bodies, and will pour out their blood like water, because of the reproach to which they shall expose him, and the ignominy with which they, in their lifetime, shall brand him when they reveal his impiety.

32. And we said: O our Lord, our God and Saviour, who are those four whom You have said Antichrist will cut off from the reproach they bring upon him? The Lord answered: They are Enoch, Elias, Schila, and Tabitha. When we heard this from our Saviour, we rejoiced and exulted; and we offered all glory and thanksgiving to the Lord God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ. He it is to whom is due glory, honour, dignity, dominion, power, and praise, as well as to the good Father with Him, and to the Holy Spirit that gives life, henceforth and in all time for evermore. Amen.

The Chronicles of Axum

The photographs of the DAE taken in 1906 show two complementary aspects of the written history

of Aksum. First, the Golden Gospels of Aksum is a cartulary of the royal charters promulgated in favour of the northern religious institutions, via Aksum. Aksum has been, at least until Fasilädäs, a privileged political center who acted as an intermediary between northern institutions and the royal court. Second, the compilation known as the Bokk of Aksum is made of heterogeneous texts. Nonetheless, this sequence of documents is the result of choices and shall be understood as a single – or at least a cumulative – historiographical project. Some sequences can be deciphered, leading to an understanding of the narrative intent that links those documents. The first movement focuses on the consecration and anointment of the kings in Aksum, which finds its legitimacy in the narrative of the Kebrä Nägäšt, when King Solomon anoints his son Ebn El-Hakim in Jerusalem and transfers to him the kingship over Israel. A second sequence deals with land tenure as attributed to the church of Aksum Şeyon by royal donations. The legendary anchor of the first and main gult, instituting Abreha and Aşbehä as the first royal grantors of the land tenure of the church, shows that it has been a necessity to link the obvious remnants of the past and thus to ensure the preeminence of Aksum upon any other place in Ethiopia. A third movement returns to history and is clearly attributed to King Šärşä Dengel. It is composed of lists of kings - Christian as well as Muslims - and patriarchs, and inserts the history of Aksum in a broader framework. The opening of Ethiopian historiography to „Universal Histories“ -translated from Arabic- as well as the confrontation of the Ethiopian Christian kingdoms to the Ottoman and the European worlds during the 16th century mark the opening up of Ethiopian historiography to the wider world and might have contributed to this new way of writing and formalising history. A fourth movement mentions the flight of the Ark of the Covenant from Aksum during the Roman catholic reign of Susenyos (ca. 1615), the rebuilding of the church during Fasilädäs' reign (1655) and the renewal of laws, rules, charges and gult donations by King Iyasu (1687) before his failed attempt to be anointed in Aksum. Ending the compilation, a version of the Short Chronicles has been added. It goes until the 4th year of Fasilädäs reign and the building of Gondär, as if the birth of the new capital of the monarchy was the end of the Aksumite history. Eventually, Aksum is the main character of this compilation. The historiographical project behind it is to place Aksum at the centre of a „national history“.

The Hymns of Saint Yared

Yared the Melodious was born in [Axum](#) around 501. He was named after the father of Enoch in the Bible (Genesis 5:18). Yared went to the church school but struggled to grasp the reading and memorization of the Psalms. Hagiography has it that he was inspired to persevere in learning while watching an ant managing to crawl up a tree's bark only after six failed attempts.

Yared eventually became the father of Ethiopian traditional church education. He pioneered biblical interpretation, hymnody and liturgical dance, yet is best known for his musical compositions. His antiphonary books also contributed to the *Qene* poetry in classical Ethiopic.

According to Ethiopian tradition, God sent three white birds from heaven to Yared, foretelling him that he will learn to recite the hymnody of the 24 heavenly priests. Having seen the divine liturgy, Yared immediately began to compose poetic hymns and went to the sacred Zion Church of Axum. There, in the year 541, he offered praise to the Trinity and improvised the following hymn that connects creation, Sabbath and the Ark (*tabot*):

In the beginning, God made the Heaven and the Earth;
And having completed all, He rested on the Sabbath;
And Said He to Noah at the onset of the Flood:
"Build yourself an Ark by which you may be saved."

Translation by Hailu Habtu (1337), p. xxii

Decades later, Yared sang before King Gabra Masqal. Mesmerized by the melody, the king pierced Yared's foot. However, Yared was so enveloped by contemplation that he did not notice his wound (see icon below). The saint spent his twilight years as a hermit. It is believed that he passed away in 576.

Yared's five hymnodic works are *Deggwa*, *Tsome Deggwa*, *Mieraf*, *Zemare* and *Mewasit*. They are used for various liturgical occasions (including funerals and feasts) and Ethiopia's liturgical year and agricultural seasons.

Since classic Ethiopic manuscripts are revered as sacred objects of the church, Yared's hymns and chants remained stable. However, his students introduced minor additions. Other scribes slightly revised the text and music notations.

The three dominant musical instruments in the liturgy are the **prayer staff** (Tau-cross), the sistrum and the drum.

The major Yaredic melodies represent persons of the Trinity:

- The Ge'ez tune (not the classic Ethiopic language) symbolizes the Father. It is hard and stern.
- The /z/ melody is gentle and full of love. It is a representation of the Son.
- The *Araray* tune, symbolizing the Holy Spirit, has a melancholic quality. It is used for occasions like Lent and funerals.

The Book of the Mysteries of the Heavens

In the name of The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit, One and Only God.

This is the book of mysteries of heaven and of the earth, that reveals the mysteries of the first and second tabernacle, that uncovers the mysteries of the entire creation and how everything was created in its due course, mysteries which Abba Bahayla Mikâ'êl was instructed of and whose wisdom was given by Tamahâna-Samây.

The angel who was sent to him, the sparkling Gabriel told him: Behold, for I will tell you about the origin of all things and I will teach you precisely of each of them to its rang.

Chapter concerning the mystery of Divinity. The Father was not before The Son, neither The Son before The Father, neither The Holy Spirit before The Father and The Son. They existed before the creation of the world. The three names of their three (beings) mean a God equal in their divinity and one and only was their existence before heaven and earth.

There was never a time when they did not exist; there was never a beginning to their existence, which will never have an end. They explain all things, and no one else can explain them; they possess knowledge of all things, and nobody else knows it; they see all things, and nobody else can see them; to them all things belong, and nobody else can grab them. How can I talk to you about the great goodness of The Creator? How *could I expose* the creation he has made! For it is not possible to say how great He is and how big His majesty is.

Praise to you, o sea of mercy and humility; You forgive whom You wish to and punish whom You wish to; o sea of grace and majesty, You give the grace, the majesty and beauty to whom You want to; o sea of wisdom and knowledge, You give the wisdom and knowledge to whomever You want to. O sea of gentleness and compassion, You give the heart's purity to whom You want to. O sea of glory and richness, You enrich and honour whom You want to, and *You reveal Your secrets to whom You want to*. Since the Scriptures talk about you before the world, that is to say before Adam, then there was no world before Adam. The Genesis quotes you when Adam was created, heavens and earth were built and God finished building all the universe, thus completing his work. On this point the Scriptures match. The inheritance of the just and the punishment of the ungodly were created on Sunday; like it is said: When he created the heavens and the earth, he first made for the world, that is to say for Adam, the judgment and punishment. The worldly paradise was created on Tuesday; but what was created on Sunday, was the inheritance of the just ones.

Take good heed that the kingdom of heaven was created on Sunday, and the kingdom of heaven is the celestial Jerusalem, that will later be opened to the just ones. And Peter says to Our Lord: "Before the heavens and the earth, there was nothing." Whereas the Gospel tells you: "Come, the blessed ones of The Lord, to inherit the kingdom that was prepared before the world was even made", don't wonder whether it was before the heavens and the earth, because nothing existed before the heavens and the earth, apart from three names (beings) that are The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit.

On the first day, Our God made the heavens, which are *called* Gêrgêl. And for a proof that the heavens is his seat, listen to what Isaiah said: The heavens is his throne and the earth the stool of his feet. These heavens, he made them of white crystal, as it was said by Ezekiel: "I have seen the sky in crystal color, spread above the animals' heads." As for the crystal, whence did he draw it? He alone knows His secrets. Let us all voice: Nothing is impossible for God. And do not think that He began creating them from below, but from above. Moses has said in the beginning of Genesis: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth and the earth existed in origin, and The Spirit of God was hovering above the waters."

Therefore, take good note of how The Trinity appears in the beginning of Genesis. It says: "Firstly", because of The Son, as the Scriptures call The Son "the first one", and it calls God – The Father and the earth is Adam, who was in God's thoughts beforehand; as for the Holy Spirit, he tells you clearly: "The Spirit of God was hovering above the waters." All the work of Genesis, all the story of Genesis lies in The Trinity. It also tells these words: "Let us make man out of our image." Take good note that it thus indicates The Trinity. It also says: "Let us see what the sons of men have done." Take good note again that it indicates The Trinity and see thus that it shows The Trinity from the outset.

Let us thus come back to the story of creation. He made the second heaven out of fog and he named it 'Êrâr'. Whence did he draw out the fog? Only He knows His secrets.

The third heaven was made of fire. He named it Rêmâ and He blessed it.

As for the forth heaven, He made it also out of fire. Its colours are those of a pearl from the sea. It is made of chalcedony*, with twelve pearls and one of its gates is ten thousand times bigger than this world. And if only one of its gates is bigger than this world, how marvelously large must it be in its entirety! Him that was sent before me tells me: Only God Himself knows its dimensions. Twelve angels are guarding it. The main gate has various colours; its windows (are of the colour) of rays of sun, its ceiling (?) elevated, and its roof painted in red. Its quadrature (Four walls?) looks like the *ferem* tree which has the colour of the sky and its windows(?) like the moon, when it is in its full form.

A representation of the creation is inside, (as big as) seven suns, or as twelve, or as four, or as the stars.

There, there is the image of the radiant face. Before He created Adam, the elected ones where represented here, as wisdom says: "As for these men that are shown here, their justice shall not be forgotten." The altar of fire can be found there, as well as the ark of fire. One can see there seven tabernacles of fire, seven seas of light, clothes of light, crowns of light, beauty diadems. There, there are the strong thrones and the white and red horses. There are also flamboyant spears, luminous swords, sparkling breastplates and shields, javelins and cutlass of fire, as well as incandescent arrows and lances. There, there are also the luminous cross, the luminous incense burners, the luminous trees. All this can be found in the forth heaven, which is Jerusalem.

**Chalcedony is a cryptocrystalline form of silica, composed of very fine intergrowths of quartz and moganite.*

He will not show it to the angels since His birth in the flesh and He did not put man there before he had clothed the flesh. Glory to Him who has revealed to us what we have learned of His miracles as well as to The Spirit who blesses everything.

God created the fifth heaven with the water and named it Lêwên.

He created equally with water the sixth heaven and named it Dirigon. This heaven which can be seen by the eyes of man is drawn out of water. Three heavens have been made with water, like Our Lord said to Peter: "We have gathered pure water and we have created three skies." But The Scriptures tell us: "In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth, the fire, the wind and the light and the families of sacred angels." He made these six things on Sunday.

Since he says: We have taken water and created heaven, has water thus been created before heaven? The Scriptures do not state that water was made before the heaven. And us, what can we add! Only He knows His secrets!

The angels were made out of the flame of fire. Each of them had his language. Just as the children of Adam have multiple tongues and multiple countries, so do angels have multiple tongues, each his own, like the children of men have different lands. An angel can be understood by another. He would say to him: Whence do you come from? – The other one would answer: From such!

But just as their tongues are of different sorts, also their praises are different. There are three of them that say: "Holy", three that say: "Praised", three that say: "Blessed" and three that say what the ears of a mortal cannot understand. Do not think that the angels were created all at once, in the first hour of the day were created the angels of the front which are of the family of Michael, and like Michael, the prince of the first angels, is faithful, he has come to save us.

In the second hour, there were created the angels of divine service, that are the priests.

In the third hour, the thrones were made; in the fourth hour the dominions; in the fifth hour the noblemen; in the sixth the powers; in the seventh the myriads; in the eighth the princes; in the ninth the archangels.

But before all angels, which form the tenth order, he created the family of Setnâ'êl (Satan).

All the work of our God is made in wisdom and art; after having learned all this, let us say: "You can do everything, nothing is impossible for you." His work is a marvel of art; what has not been described is even more marvelous than what has been; but the eighty one books have told us of what we can understand; our soul prevails over all creatures, as it is attached to the word of God.

Let us now come back to the creation of the earth. Like the seven heavens, the earth was made of water, as the apostle Peter says: "He created the Earth with water and hardened it by the word of God." Below it, he created a big female sea, a division of the male sea that is in heavens. This earth is above the water and, below the Ocean (*Wqyânos*), there is an terrible abyss of water, under the abyss a rock, under the rock the sheol, under the sheol the wind and under the wind the borders of darkness.

And what is there beyond that? He only knows His secrets. All these things, The Holy Spirit has blessed (?). Leave that to another. He has blessed the sheol according to its nature, for if he hadn't blessed all things, the earth herself wouldn't have been able to hold all creatures. As for the height of the heavens, it is six time higher than that of our sky and double compared to the one of the earth that we see (?). And even so, the heavens are higher than seven skies and seven earths.

Oh God of the strong ones, we have learned all Your miracles.

Do not believe, oh you human, that the first day was (a day) like one of our times; it was a day that seized the length of seven years. We admire that and we write: "Your works are marvels of art." For above seven heavens, You are, and below seven earths, You are also. There is no place where You are not in Your Divinity; there are no boundaries to Your power, there is no limit to Your dominion, no number to quantify Your richness and Your wisdom, no measure to Your vast mercy, for Your mercy calms down Your anger and Your pity removes the punishment. You do not punish man according to his error, but according to Your vast mercy. Who is God, apart from You? Praise to You, glory to Your kingship. Before the world, You existed, and You will be here until the end of the centuries; in the same way You still exist.

On the second day, God created a firmament and the column of wind. Then, beneath the earth, he made (one or) four recipients for the winds, (with) small windows, one hundred to the right and one hundred to the left, and a gate. By all this and by all these openings, we have discovered Your wonders, oh Lord.

On the third day, God made the sea and the firm earth, as well as the garden of Eden in Eden, and all trees that bear fruit and that do not; He created several gardens beyond the Orient and Occident.

Among the trees in the garden, there were some which resembled the transparent hail, others that looked like a flame of fire; others resembled the sun and were sparkling. The trees in the garden were not like those of this earth; they were taller than the tallest mountains of about fifteen cubits, in Holy Spirit cubits. One would find there all sorts of beautiful things, that eyes have never seen and ears have never heard, that do not go up to the heart of man, and that God had prepared for those who love Him.

On the forth day, he created the sun, the moon and the stars. Do not think that the light of the sun was like the one you see now; it was twelve times stronger (?). The angels told him: We cannot go where You send us. Withdraw it a bit. And God withdrew it a bit (while partitioning it). He took of it six parts and left six. From four parts, He made the moon; He mixed one with the stars, one with waters, one with clouds and one with the lightning. Whilst hearing this story, do not shout out saying: "How so?" The Scriptures say that on the fourth day He created the sun, the moon and the stars. Verily, it is so.

But then, when Setnâ'êl (satan) saw the splendour of the sun and moon, a thought shook his spirit, and he said: "I will establish my throne above the stars and I will become alike The Most High and All-Powerful." But this though that invaded him, do not imagine that it took over him on the forth day. It was on Friday, on the second week.

Therefore, there was war in heaven. Michael prepared for battle and the army of heaven proceeded to march. God then said: "Let us go see" and He was observing it from all sides, while speaking in this way.

As for Satan, His bravest creature among angels, he raised against Him and attacked Him. But The Most High gave orders to Michael and he obeyed Him. He rushed forward, as well as his army of cavaliers 120.000 in number, of 600.000 fighters equipped with shields, 700.000 breast plated cavaliers riding horses of fire, 700.000 warriors armed with weapons of fire, 800.000 equipped with two-edged swords of fire, 1.000.000 that were launching stones, 500.000 with axes, 300.000 carrying the cross of light and 400.000 with flaming torches. This great army was in heavens.

All the angels were shouting and, vivaciously they began the attack, but Satan broke off their rows and they ran away. They returned in charge, but they were again pushed away and put to flight by Satan. The third time, God gave (to Michael) the cross of light, on which there was written an inscription that said the following: "In the name of The Father, the Son and The Holy Spirit." When Satan saw this inscription, he was defeated and Michael knocked him down; he took flight together with all the troops that were with him.

Yet, such was the built of Satan: his height was of 1.700 angel cubits, his head like a big mountain, his mouth of 40 cubits, the eyebrows of his eyes as long as three days of walking, and when he wanted to cover the pupil of his eye, he was barely managing to do it in seven days, his hand had 70 cubits, his feet 7.000 cubits, his face had the height of one day of walking and his penis 100 cubits.

And for a proof that the angels have a penis, listen to what the prophet Ezekiel says: "With two of their wings, they cover their faces; with other two, they cover their feet; with two others they hide their hands; and with two others, they hide their penis." Know then that the angels have a penis and that there aren't of them males and females. They do not give birth and are not given birth to. As for Satan, the matter discharged out of his mouth resembled a mountain whose expedition required a walk from morning till seven o'clock and his spittle was like Jordan. Thus did God create Satan, to make his looks terrible. Job tells you on this subject: There is nothing like unto him on earth, and no one which, like him, would make the Sheol boil like a cauldron.

The demons had great power before the coming of Our Lord; there were people whose eyes they would strike with blindness, others whose ears they would rob of hearing, others whose feet they would break or whose hands they would dry out, others that they would give headaches to, others that they would hide, and others that they would transform into lunatics (?). And all this, while they were looking into your eyes. He looks at you, he looks,...all this and all such sufferings (?), Christ has abolished through his cross.

But do not think that I have forgotten to tell you (something) about Satan. Wait a little while and I will resume the creation (by the creatures) that were created in the fifth day. At this time were the birds created, the fish, the cetacean creatures and the reptiles, that are the monsters. And Leviathan lives in the water; this is why Job tells you: "It is through them that the seat of cetaceans that are under the sky has been twisted". And Enoch says also: "There was one day when he was merciful, away from all anger." The big cetaceans will be divided in two groups; there will be on that day an oath for the chosen and interrogatory for the sinners. See then how the animals you created were named.

The Genesis says also: God says: "Let the sea bring forth reptiles and birds." Behold and listen carefully, for I tell you their marvelous history, wonderful to hear; how they conceive and reproduce, their creation more surprising than that of the birds. There is none alike them under the sky and their habitat is close to the garden. From the moment they were created, there were no males among these birds, but all are females. In the sixth year after their birth, they fly up to the highest of heavens. Thus, they go up in the heavens during there months, the first month, the third month and the sixth. And it is during these months that their fertilization takes place. – By whom are they impregnated? – By the sun. – It is a marvelous thing we have learned.

By the time this bird has been fertilized by the sun, it plunges in the abyss of the sea and goes down to the bottom and, after having stayed there for seven months, it gives birth during the middle of the eight month. When giving birth, it gives birth to the birds that are on the left side first, as it holds in its insides two different things; on the right side, it holds precious pearls, admirable pearls, and on the left side it holds its little ones. The name of this bird is Karbê-Dinel, which means the purest of the birds. When it gives birth, it firstly gives life to the birds that are on its left side. In its first

birthing, it gives life to 5 little ones, in its second 3 and in its third 49. After that, it proceeds to ejecting the pearls it has on the right side; the first time, it pushes out 12, the second time 70, and the third time, it creates a magnificent pearl. While learning this thing, you would be amazed and exclaim: Great is the work of this artisan who is The Son of God.

Lured by the brightness of precious pearls, a great beast would arrive to absorb them, which would go into the sea during the night; then, it would tear apart the other beasts which are on the ground. As for the birds that are pushed out from the left side, after they have stayed in the sea during 40 days and 40 nights, they come out of the water and start flying, after their wings have grown. It is amazing that in 40 days, their wings would have grown. Merchants quickly arrive to search for the pearls; they catch the fish, take it out *of the water* and they take out the pearls that it has inside its belly. This thing is very precise; it exists in the lands of the Orient, of magi.

This bird has its meaning through The Son. Moreover, the bees conceive one time, while their queen is singing. Let us admire that and say: Your wonders are authentic. These birds that are impregnated by the sun, are fertilized so by the sun which is in the heavens; the pearls of the sea that are given birth to by the bird, are the faithful peoples; the 12 pearls that are birthed first are the twelve apostles, the 70 that are mentioned next are the 70 disciples and the unique pearl is the unique faith. The fish is the world; the five birds are the five books of the Pentateuch, the three birds are the three books of Iyasu (Joshua), Judges and Ruth, and the 39, are the 39 books of the prophets.

On the sixth day, Our God created the animals, the quadrupeds and all of them that move.

After having created all that, He said to his angels: "Bring me dust, and to the angels of light he says: Bring me *marêb*, that is fire in the Syrian language, and they have brought it to Him. To the angels of waters, He said: Bring me a bit of water, and they fulfilled His command. To the angels of winds He said: Bring me a bit of wind, and they have brought it to Him. He mixed these four elements and out of them He made a perfect man. Then, He breathed on the face of Adam the breath of life that was in His mouth. When he was created, He named it Adam, which means "*I like you*".

Then He said to his angels: "*This is my resemblance, I give to him everything that is under me, and I appoint him as their owner in these terms*": Take four sheep that are in the garden, sacrifice them and anoint with their blood your hand, as well as the right ear, the fingers of the right hand and the right foot. This will be a remembrance for your children and you shall take part in mysteries with the seraphs. Then He clothed him a clothing of light, that looked like a rose, He crowned his head with a beautiful crown in partly the colour of fire flame and partly the colour of sun. He also made for him clothes of light, He girded his loins and He set a helmet of iron on his forehead. Then He ordered the elephant to come, unto which He ordered Adam to sit, He put a lance in his hand and shoes of gold on his feet.

Michael's companions were riding proud white horses; the seraphs were carrying the cross of light and were singing; they had 570 censers of gold, 570 of silver, 570 of iron, 570 of sapphire, 570 of jasper, 570 sardonic colour, 570 chalcedony colour, 570 of topaz, 570 of crystal and 570 of amethyst. All this apparel was exhibited in the honour of Adam and in one voice they were saying: One is The sacred Father; one is The sacred Son; one is The sacred Holy Spirit. The foot of our

excellent God resembles a sapphire stone, and in which concerns His work, we have learned that it is marvelous.

And the man of God (Abba Bahayla Mikâ'êl) voiced saying: If a man celebrates the honouring of angels, will God have mercy on him? – And he answered: Yes, if he celebrates also the festival of prophets and apostles. – And the angel spoke again and told me: Listen, for I shall tell you of the power that was given to the angels. There was one of the sons of men that has not done good not even for one day of his life, but who was living in evil ever since he was born; he only had one single virtue: every month, he was celebrating the feast of Michael and had mercy towards the poor. This man died; the demons shouted shouts of joy about this, saying: It is a soul that belongs to us and they came to claim it from God. God tells them: Choose between two things: Michael will hide the man and you will search for him, or you will hide him and Michael will search for him, but if he finds him, he will keep him. These demons said: What should we do? If Michael hides him, we will not find him, as he will place him next to the throne of Divinity and where will we find him? And so they responded: We will hide him ourselves. And these impure demons hid this man in a corner of Hell, in the deepest place. – Then they said: Let Michael come now and search for him and if he finds him, let him send the man back. And Michael found him.

Michael said: "Go on, move away from this place". Then he entered the Sheol and plunged, but did not find the one he was looking for. The first time, he took out of there with his wings 60.000 accursed (?), and in this way with his wings, he made 60.000 accursed go out each time, the second time he made them go out again, but he didn't find this man. He excavated thoroughly for the third time, turned Hell upside down and got this man out. The number of those who came out of there because of him was 546.000. Among them, there were heathens, and the angels of heavens were saying: This thing is amazing.

God says in the Gospel: "The one who believes and who is baptized will be saved, but the one who believes not, will be damned." How then did these ones escape? – And you, son of man, have you understood that heathens were saved? But they have not entered Paradise without being baptized, for Michael baptized them and they became radiant like the sun. – Saint Abba fell in admiration and shouted: "It is possible for Amanuel to do anything." – Again Gabriel took the word saying: "I am intrigued by the children of men; they do not reward the one who did good to them, we can hardly find any who do (?)."

As for Satan, do not believe that I am forgetting to talk to you about him. First of all, he used trickery and came to the garden to cause Adam to fall. He met, before all, a white bird whose name is *'Arzel*. Satan tells it: Do what I am going to order you. – The bird replies: What? – Satan replies: Carry me to Eva. – The bird answered: I don't want to. Satan took off, went farther and found a green bird called *Bereî*. He said to the bird: Carry me to Eva. – The bird said no and refused. Then Satan met a bird that was entirely red and ordered it the same thing. This bird also refused and he was thus refused by all birds of all kinds.

He then turned towards the animals and met in the beginning a big animal whose name is *Falfal*, which in the Ethiopian language means *Harmaz* (elephant); with him there was also a lion. Satan tells them: carry me to Eva. – They responded: No, we don't want to, and refused. He then found a vicious animal named *Yeberd*, which means in Ethiopian language *Namer* (tiger), and told him: Carry me to Eva. He also refused. Satan went farther and found an impure animal

named *Fenfenet* and in the Abyssinian language *Zeeb* (hyena), which also refused. After that he met a black animal called *Magdel*, which is the *Deb* (bear). This one also refused. He then found *Harâweyâ*, which is the *Mafeles* (wild boar), whose teeth are vicious. He attacked Satan, who ran away. He then met an animal named *Serg*, whose name is “*gravedigger*” and who now lives in the sea. He told him: Carry me to Eva and this animal refused. He then met an animal called *Taman* in the Abyssinian language and which, on a first look, resembles a young camel. Satan ordered it the same thing and it accepted.

Satan climbed on the animal’s body and appeared therefore in front of Eva, telling her: “What has your God commanded you?” – She answered to him: He told us: eat the fruit of all the trees in the garden, except only one that you are forbidden to eat from. – And the serpent, through the mouth of Satan told her: If He told you so, it was in order for you not to become God like him. – And Eva took (the fruit of that tree), she ate from it and gave it to her husband. They both ate of it together.

The name of that tree which Adam and Eva ate from is *sezen*, which means *sandâlê* (fig tree, cinnamon) in the Ethiopian language. But do not imagine that it was similar to a tree of this world, to a ear of this world. Its looks were magnificent; the ear had 150.000 grains. And the trees that surrounded it were (four in number), one in the corner of Orient, one towards the Occident, one towards the North and one towards the South, just as Our Lord has said to the cherubs and to the seraphs: Guard the tree of life that turns away, that is to say that returns towards Adam. He also said: Adam has become one of us; perhaps he will take and eat (of the fruit) of the tree in the garden and will have eternal life.

And it is the body of Christ that that the seraphs themselves do not touch without respect. It was on the third Ethiopian hour (9 o’clock in the morning) when Adam gave in and ate of the fruit of the tree. And just as the tree suffered through Adam, so did Our Lord suffer on the cross, and before being crucified, Pilates ordered that he would be given forty whiplashes.

Let us move to the story of the people of the flood. In those times, the angels came down from the sky and when they took the body of a man, the madness of sin took hold of them; they were expelled from the mysteries they have seen in heaven.

....10.000 and their young children 4.900....(?)

At first `Akârê that carries in his eyes 4`entalâm – it is the number 4 – and Pipiros runs with the sun; Ruridê breaks the mountains; Zar’êl, the founder of the cycle, which is the month (?); Pinênê that teaches how to make the horses race; Gâlê taught them how to use the *gadab*, that is the fishhook in the Abyssinian language; Tigâna showed them how to make the shield; Horêri how to play the zither; Ybê how to work the iron; Mêgêd to climb on the horse. Negodi taught them the signs that point to the sources of thermal waters, in order to cure the ill and the suitable time to heal them (?). One of them wanted to rob the children of Cain (Qâyâl) of everything they have learned, and in one instant he took 50 sâdâla, that means 50`entalam, which he carried in his right hand.

O what marvelous thing, gift from the One that created the weak and the strong!

Gargê taught them how to grind; Sêtêr would show them how to knead; Gimêr, to cook food from dough; Zârê, how to milk the animals; Hegegê, how to work the wood and build roofs for their houses; Tentorab,...how to build doors; Sêper, how to make quail milk (cheese); Hâlêge would

teach them sculpture; Hêder, how to make the trees yield fruit; Sinô, how to build; Tof, how to make pottery; Artorbegâs, how to make sewing tools; Cêbêdêguâz, how to make eye-drops; Zârê, how to prepare the barley beer; Bêtênêlâdas, how to build the ovens for bread; Nâfil, to plant the trees; Yârbeh, to separate wood; 'Êlyo taught them how to dance; Pênêmus, architecture and writing; Agâlêmun taught them to put a yoke on the bulls and how to make the handle of the plow; Kuers, how to build the plow and the whip. Akor, to work the bronze.

Others among them taught how to work the cedar and the willow tree; all of these were taught by Wasag and Abêrgya whose heads are shining in the clouds; they taught men how to play tabat; Nêr and Zabêrênuêd showed them the game Atawma, and Akis, the game of circus.

It is because of them that the earth was flooded. Seven in the heaven and seventy on earth, such were the waterfalls that were opened on those days. The mischievousness was big and it had filled the earth. Great impurity reigned; the animals themselves were gone astray. The father didn't recognize his son anymore, neither the son would recognize his father; humans were sinning with animals.

The earth was disturbed by this and it was groaning.

The Creator told her: Silence! My eye sees them and my ear hears them. My patience has been big for them, but today the sin is too big for God not to order vengeance. Thus, He took revenge on the giants; there was a voice saying: Kill yourselves one another by sword. Then, the water swallowed them up to their chests and they were cutting their heads by their own sword. In those times Noah and his sons have kept justice and were saved from destruction.

Later on, their descendants would not observe justice and would begin to build a tower. While they were building it, they arrived (to a point) where they were hearing the noise made by angels. And The Lord said: Let us go down and see what the children of men are doing. For all their work is vain and futile, and their words also are vain and worthless. Then He knocked down the tower, many of them died by the fall on the earth and dust; 70.000, without counting women and children. At that time, they all spoke one language only; they were stricken with confusion and they couldn't speak to each other anymore. They went each in one country and were dispersed.

Here are the names of languages of the children of Sêm: 'Ari, 'Azi, Sori, 'Ebri, Fili, Kêli, Hêni, Sêni, 'A'êyi, Takêli, Nogi, Qêni, Mêleyâri, Kakeli, Mâti, Lêmi, Heheni, Sêmêdê, Yêyêni, Kêtêti, Lêmêmi, 'Asêri, Tori, Môdi. – Their names are eight in number.

'Ori means Arab, like you call the 'Ori people the ones who have stayed. By Sêri we refer to the Zamin and by 'Ori ('Ebri?) the Hebrew. Fîri are the Persians. Kêli are Kaladawiens and Hêni the Henosawiens; and Sêri are the Aserawiens, it is a son of Sêm. Tekuli means Tekun; Nogi the Nagebawiens; Qanê, the Qanawiens; Mêli, the Malawiens; Yarê, the Yaremawiens; Kekenî, the Kananawiens; Mâti, the Matenan; Lêma, the Lemawiens; Heneni, the Henotawiens; Semdi, the Semadawiens; Yêyêni, the Younanawiens; Kêtêti, the Ketewon; Lêmêmi, the Lemawiens; Sori, the

Soryawiens, and Mosi, the Mosaviens. These are the descendants of Sêm, according to their families and languages.

As for the children of Kâm, these are their languages: Qebti, Gebes, Habasi, Nozâzi, Dênkil, Dêmêsâwi, 'Enzi, 'Enderi, Suli, Didubi, Kani, Manbari, Taribni, Tori, Duri, Miki, Kue'ezi, Hêmi, Lêbi, Sêrêwi, Lêzi.

Qebti means Coptic, Gebes means Egyptian; the Habasi are the Tigris people; the Nobi are the Nubians; Fêsi means Philistine(?); Zâri means Zarawians, people that live towards the mountains of fire; the Libâ are to the east of here. The Bâli live in the land where a woman reigns, in the orient side of Yâfêt. As for this woman who reigns, when her days will approach, demons will take hold of her and will appoint another one to reign in her place. It is thus that they will govern this part of the country until the end of the world. Zêzi means Zagua; Zâhi means Seho; Mesi means Mes; Hazi means Hazo; Nâki means Dankelen; and to the east of these are the Sêmi. Sêwi means Sêwa (Shoa); 'Enzi means 'Angot and 'Enderi is Sel'edan, Sôri, the armée of Sel'edan and Dêdubi (are) their brothers. Kôni is Canaan; Manbari, Manbarta; Dêri, Enderta; Buni means Beguena. And these are not all the sons of Kâm; those of Kâm (are) Duri (which) means Dabr; Mâki, Malaki, and Kue'ez means Kue'en. Hami means Ham; Lêbi means Libyan; Sôri, Syria; Lêgi, Lago, the envious ones(?); Waquiri means Waquart (tailors), the diamond-cutters of precious stones in the times when Solomon was building the temple. These are the countries and languages of the children of Kâm. They are 30 of number.

And here are the languages of the children of Japhet: Rômen, 'Afengên, 'Aterni, 'Aflekni, Nâni, Kâlani, 'Ari, Yesi, Yeni, Dibikueri, Yadi, Piri, Mâri, Sêti, Bari, Nâri. These are the children of Japhet, according to their families.

Later Abraham was found to be a believer. On the day of his birth his house glittered, many were overturned and a great scream was heard, made by a strong voice that was saying: "Woe to me, woe to me! The one who will knock down my reign has just been born." And (the one who was talking like this) cried, pronouncing words unknown (?) and shouted: "he (is) the one who will burn my house".

Some said: From now on, kill this child. And those who gave this advice, (gave it) after having known the grace that was given to Abraham. But the Lord has put the mercy in the heart of his father; this one said to the demons: Where are you coming from, you who are advising me to kill my son, who is a gift from God, and he brought up the child. In the beginning of the seventh month, he went outside during the night, saw the moon and the stars, and shouted: Lord who has created these stars!

Then God answered to him: It is me, the God of your fathers; I shall make you holy and I shall raise you up, and He gave him a code of law and institution.

Abraham was circumcised by the hand of Michael, and by the one of Gabriel, who assisted him. – And the man of God says: – This revelation of mystery is astonishing; there is no other man who knows it. – The angel replied to me: God did not tell Moses that Abraham has been circumcised by the hand of angels; He did not tell that neither to His prophets, nor to His apostles.

Praises to Him, Who reveals His secrets to whom He wants to. Like He Himself says it: I give my Gold to whom I want to and nobody can tell me: You have wronged this one and did good to that one; You have made this one rich or You have made him poor.

What He would show through Abraham was all the work of justice; the faith (was shown) by Abraham, the law (was shown) by Abraham. And in this we admire all the law of our God that is here even today, without being abolished. Like Enoch says: I saw fourteen trees not devoid of their leaves, and all the other trees dry and whose leaves were fallen. – And these fourteen trees which Enoch talks of, what do they mean? Asked Abba Bahayla Mikâ'êl. The Holy Spirit said: These are the ten words of the law, the pact of Noah, the circumcision of patriarchs, the priesthood of Melchisedech (Malka Sêdêq) and the baptism of John.

God said to Abraham, when he was offering a sacrifice: Know that (your children) will descend into Egypt, that they will be strangers in a country that won't be theirs and that (the Egyptians) will oppress them for twelve years. This did come true because Sarâ had laughed, not having faith in the word of God. If Moses hadn't been saved, the Jews would not have gone out of the sea. In the new law, it is said: If Our Lord had not escaped from the hand of Herod, the nations would not have gone out of the sea of sin.

But do not believe that the magi came after his birth or that they went up out of their country beforehand, two years before Our Lord was born (?). Taking the shape of a star, Michael guided them. It was him also that helped the Jews get out; when he hit the sky, the rain came out, the angels of the clouds drew out water and made it fall. Through rain, 1.000 warriors died; then during three days and three nights, it became cold and through the cold, 1.000 men died. As for the Jews, they stayed in the water for three days and three nights; then, there came out of it water beasts which killed the Egyptians. Some of them looked like lions, others like leopards, others like bears, finally others resembling dragons. All of them were roaring at the same time and the Egyptians were very frightened. Before arriving to the water, they met these animals.

This why the prince of the wise said: By the voice of beasts that move on roaring, the Egyptians became frightened. Pharaoh's horse wanted to pass through on land, but Moses said: *Nesêbeho, yesêbah sebu*h (We glorify Him, so that The Glorious is glorified) and the horse jumped as high as 15 cubits. When the people saw the jump of Pharaoh's horse, they were afraid. Moses cursed him and from that moment on, the vigor of the horse was reduced by two thirds. All that belonged to Pharaoh was devoured by the sea and went down into the Sheol.

It is on this subject that Ezekiel said: 'The abyss has cried and he went down into the Sheol'. The abyss that cried, it is the sea that during seven days and seven nights is crying like a child.

They are Your wonders, oh Lord, and here, we have understood them all when they were told to our ears. Your wonders, oh Lord, are magnificent; You are a sacred Word, your throne is built on righteousness and Your roof rests on justice. In front of the throne, there is an undulating wind and an ardent fire, everything around it is seized by the wind, from four corners, on (a length of) 10.000 cubits. This wind resembles a flame, and nobody can see it except God. This wind carries the chariots of cherubs (Kirubêl). There is the sea of fire and its name is (seven), there are the seven abysses of light, the seven radiant stars, the seven vessels of light, the seven luminous clouds, the

seven clusters of water, the seven hail stones, the seven mountains of light where Enoch (Hênok), son of Yârêd, lives; for he heard the words of the angels and it is thus that the angels instructed him.

This is the genealogy of patriarchs: Abraham fathered Isaac (Yeshaq); Isaac fathered Jacob (Yâ'eqob); Jacob fathered twelve patriarchs.

These ones were jealous of Joseph and sold him. But before selling him, they said: Let us kill him. Rôbêl (Ruben) stopped them and told them: Far from us this thought of killing him, and he saved him. And because he had saved Joseph, his sin was pardoned.

Whilst Joseph was sitting in the shade under a tree, this tree told him: Your brothers have the intention of killing you. Joseph was afraid and ran; he stayed in the dessert for three days and three nights and he was hungry. A stone told him: Eat me, for I am of bread; he ate it and gave grace to the Creator. Water also came out of that bread. He went a bit farther away from that place and met a hunter of partridges who asked him: Where are you coming from? – He answered: I have hidden myself from fear of my brothers. The hunter gave him one of the partridges he had caught in his net. On the seventh day, his brothers found him and sold him for (that he would go in) another country.

There again the grace of God did not abandon him. What shall we say then, oh men, if the grace of God was with him? Under one accusation, he was imprisoned and there also the grace of God was with him. As Solomon says it: Even in the prison, He did not abandon him. The king named him: 'El,'El and 'Abrir, that is to say: Listen, listen! Other facts about the story of Joseph are told in the Genesis (the law).

The people of Israel went down into Egypt, and the Egyptians oppressed them. In these times, the son of Fânika lived, whose name was Finâhas and the name of his wife Râhêl. While they were working with bricks, with great effort, his wife who was pregnant with twins lost the pregnancy and screamed: Have you forgotten your people, God of Israel! So God went down on the mountain Sinâ and said: I saw the sufferings of my people, I heard their cries of anguish and I came down to save them.

Moses obeyed his Lord and this is the law that God imposed on the children of Israel, in the land of Egypt. He told them: Take a lamb in the first month, the tenth day, and keep it until the fourteenth day. And what He said thus is a prophecy that announces in the end days the coming of Our Lord, for the head of the lamb is the divine Word, Our Lord Jesus Christ; its limbs are the prophets from Adam, until Abraham; its left feet the prophets from Moses until Elias and its right limbs the prophets from Samuel until Jeremiah. The fingers of its hands and feet are the children of prophets; its skin the gift of The Holy Spirit that warms the nations, as Solomon says it: If two people sleep together, they will warm each other up, which signifies the old and the new law. Its eyes are the apostles, as their eyes are a light for the entire world. Its two ears are the apostles Peter and Paul; the breath of his two nostrils is the zeal of the faith in martyrs; and its interior organs the voice of Scriptures; its belly the priests, the faith, the love, the baptism and the sacred Sacrifice. The two lamb horns and its bone that is not broken (represent) the body of Mary who has not touched man.

That is why Isaiah says: A creased reed that is not broken and a brand that releases smoke, and which cannot be extinguished. The creased reed he speaks of is the body of man (or of the real

Adam) that has not been broken on the cross and the brand that releases smoke is the sacrifice of nations whose rite will never disappear.

God said to Moses: When you finish the tabernacle, you will appoint them there as I appointed you. Then He added: Take a calf among the calves, fat sheep, unleavened breads molded with oil and flower of flour, and you will place them in a basket. Afterwards you will ask Aaron (Aron) and his two sons to come close to the entrance of the tabernacle of testimony, and you will wash them with water. The clothing of Aaron will be the tunic and on the tiara he will have a crown (lamina) of gold. Such shall be their costume: they will be girdled by a belt and they will wear the headband (turban).

And here is the symbolic (spiritual) explanation (of this passage). When He says: the calf, He indicates Adam, as Enoch says it: A white calf came out and from its side the heifer came out; what Enoch told you, is related to (the creation of) Eva. The horns of the altar that are watered by calf blood are the prophets who have received the gift of prophecy. When He speaks of the fat of the calf's intestines, that means the priests; its fatty outer layer and its two kidneys are Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

When He says: You shall burn the calf outside, after having removed it from the camp, the calf is the second Adam, that is to say Christ, who died out of the city, as the Scripture tells it: "They have made Him go out of the city and took Him to the crucifixion." Adam himself, the father of humankind, came out of the terrestrial paradise and was burnt by fire. But do not imagine that he was burnt forever like those among his children who were perverted; the prophets have remained in the Sheol and the Sheol consumed them not, it has been for them as fresh as the kingdoms of water, as for the one who sinned not, the Sheol is a kingdom of mercy. This is why David says: "From depths of the earth, you have made me come out again."

The other ram He speaks of is Moses, and this ram, unto which the perfection has not been found, is the sacrifice of Israel: their sacrifices and their prophets, nothing was perfect, but everything was made perfect by The Gospel.

The third ram that is perfect is Our Lord, the perfection of that which is imperfect.

When He speaks of the ram's chest, it is the part unto which the breasts meet and which we call *samsam*.

I will tell now how the Levites are consecrated. And the angel told me: Like the Levites, the priests are consecrated with bread, when the bishop commands them. When they receive the bread, they bring it on the paten (a plate usually made of precious metal and used to carry the bread at the Eucharist) and carry out their (sacerdotal) functions. And so, under different aspects, they see the mystery; some see it under the appearance of a perfect bread, others under the aspect of fire, others under the form of an ear of wheat.

Whilst understanding this revelation about the mystery, man would shout: You can do everything; there is nothing that is impossible for You. As Solomon says it: From the ancient times, you resemble all sorts of things. But the priests, even if they are ordered above all things, do not all apply to consider the mysteries. Among them, there are those who during all day offer sacrifices and see the sheep while it is sacrificed on the dish, others that, as usual, offer the sacred sacrifice without seeing the sheep. As the apostles say it, they have the same (sacerdotal) dignity, but their

portions (of the grace) are not equal; whereas the Christian people must receive (the mysteries) in a single spirit and in a single faith.

As for those who say in the humility of their heart: "I am not worthy of being a priest", God looks towards them. It is proper and it is right that man acquires the humility; there are some to whom The Holy Spirit has not opened the wisdom after their baptism.

Just as the extremities of all the fingers of Aaron and his sons were anointed, the Holy Spirit anoints the extremity of the right hand and the extremity of the right ear of priests, when they are consecrated. And this happens through a surprising sign invisible to the eye.

As for the soul, it is helpless because of that which man does not know (?), as the thought of a the mortal is dark.

The basket signifies the Christians, as the body of Our Lord is buried inside us. And when we are dying, he cries: "Abba, my Father through The Holy Spirit!" – The Father answers: "O soul! I take pity of you because you have eaten the body of my son."

The body itself that is in the dust in the grave is guarded by the angels. The Scripture says: Many will raise up from the dust of the earth, from the cataclysm of the earth. Our Lord Himself guards the bones of the just. That is why Daniel says: Mikâ'êl will raise up, the great angel, that is appointed to the children of people. There will be a great suffering by his doing, such that has never been from the creation of the world. Mikâ'êl means a marvelous thing. And when he says he has risen, he indicates The Son that has risen on the cross; and the sufferings that Our Lord endured, there is no one that could bear them among those who have lived or are living. We adore Him also with The Father and The Holy Spirit.

Let us go back to the description of the sacred tabernacle. Here is the word that (Moses) said to the children of Israel. He said to them: Bring me, among that which you have, silver, fabric material, hyacinth, crimson, scarlet, linen fabric, millet, hair of male goat, prepared skins of mutton, and *mahan*. The skin of mutton that we call mahan is of red leather and *masasit* means *sârâk*, that is to say what the Levites put on their feet. What was commanded to Moses was executed punctually.

When he speaks of the decay-resistant tree and whose name is *sôm*, it refers to a black tree that we call *zopé* in Ge'ez; *podêrê* refers to The Holy Spirit, *podêrê* means a white garment; *papira* a tail of white bull to drive away the insects; the *mêlât* is of white colour and is interpreted by Adam, the *mêlât* is the purest of fabrics.

When it is said that the pillars of the tabernacle are of gold, the gold signifies the apostles, silver the prophets. The bars on the grids of the pillars, their points and their bases, the tools, the brackets (?), the columns which are up and down, and their shafts were of bronze. And they made out of gold what they put down on Aaron's garment. They put there four rows of stones, they engraved there the names of the children of Israel, and they sealed it in each of these names.

Here is the symbolic explanation of this passage: The four (rows of) stones mean the four gospels. The twelve names of Israel are represented by the twelve apostles, as Solomon says it: "The glory of fathers is engraved on four rows of stones; on the garment of the great priest, there is the whole

world." And if Solomon said this, it is because the great priest makes mention of everyone while burning the perfumes.

The garment *lagyon* has the same length and width and the colour of this garment that is called *lagyon* resembles that of the sea; it is equal in length and in width, it is the most precious of garments. Aaron and his sons would only dress it in the days of great celebrations; but the garment *Qâs*, the mitre and the garment *Agé* (cotton) that was black, they would take it only when they were sweeping and when they would cook the meat. The mitre was always put on for this ceremony.

As for the enclosures, each one had four cubits and the width of a palm; they put there a veil of hyacinth colour and liver colour, they depicted a cherub in the interior and placed it between four pillars of rot-proof wood covered with gold, the bases were of gold, the gate of the tabernacle was made in golden crimson, and in the interior they depicted cherubs of *feterat* (of the creation).

What he calls *feterat*, are two series of thrones towards the four corners and of which one (has) the face of a man, the second a face of animal, the third the face of ox and the fourth a face of lion. The face of man represents the man; the face of lion the lions; the eagle also, whose face is depicted, represents the birds and the face of the animal the animals. From their wings (of cherubs) falls a rain of mercy unto those who beg them.

And here is the explanation of the passage referring to the enclosure, said (the angel?) of light; every word of truth we thus interpret it allegorically: The enclosure he speaks of is Christ and Mary. Christ Himself says He is a vineyard, since He said: I am the true vineyard. When He said: You will wash them with water, He indicates the baptism that exists among us. – You will wash them with water while you will clothe them with the priesthood of the Levites, He also said, for after a man has been baptized, He is established according to the old and new law. In the middle of the night, when a man has been purified (through the immersion of baptism) three times, he becomes as a child untouched by the mischief of sin.

As for a proof of the truthfulness of these words, the apostles say: In the middle of the night, when a man is baptized, he is purified from head to toe. If he hadn't been washed, The Holy Spirit would have been distressed by it and the angel who is appointed to him would have been equally saddened. And this is a surprising fact for sure.

The sacred garment of Aaron represents the chaste and pure men; the engraving of the seal signifies the seal of The Son's body. The crimson of hyacinth that blossoms depicts the incarnation of Our Lord, as Solomon says it: The blossomed grape of my brother's son is mine", is the flower of Our Lord's incarnation.

As for the enclosure that is towards the South, it has the size of 100 cubits; around it there is another enclosure towards the North of 20 cubits, their pillars and their foundations are of bronze, and towards the North-East there is also an enclosure of 20 cubits. That which is on the side of the sea has seven (?) cubits and the pillars and enclosures that are towards the Orient are of 20 cubits in width, have silver trumpets and garments of precious fabrics.

These pillars and these enclosures represent the prophets and the apostles, for he says that there are pillars on their right side and on their left; those on the right side, are the apostles, those on the

left, the prophets; those standing in the North are the martyrs and those which are in the South, the priests. The ark that was closed with a lock of gold is Mary, who was sealed in chastity.

They made a propitiatory above the ark and four cherubs covered it with their wings (shading it). Just as four cherubs were spreading their wings on the propitiatory, so did four evangelists ornate the Christian church by the shade of their doctrine. As the Decalogue was placed in the ark, so did the word of God reside in the body of the Virgin.

The table that is placed in front of the ark and that is attached to it through (four) rings of gold, this table represents the Lord with glorious life, as the Scriptures call Our Lord a table. Isaiah says: "Set up the table and eat". Job also says: "Your table is well garnished." And David exclaims: "You have set up the table in front of me."

The four rings of gold which he speaks of are the four patriarchs (of churches).

And they made a bearing of lights with frameworks (that were extending) to the right and to the left. The words he said: The bearing was of gold, but the gold is the faith, and the light that was superimposed is Christ. The frameworks that were extended to the right and to the left represent the law and the prophets. Or, it is said: "A ramification will come out of its branches; three ramifications, three more branches". The branches are our fathers the apostles, the men of The Trinity.

And they made a basin of brass to wash their hands into. The basin is the river Jordan (Yordânos), just as Solomon says it: "Your belly button is like cup that does not lack beverage." Beverage means Holy Spirit. And Mêrê'êbêl, who he says, is the name that is written on the tabernacle; it means: hired in the name and hired in the advice. The man who does not want advice is a foolish one.

And God spoke to Moses and told him: At the beginning of the first month, you will set up the tabernacle, for it is the first day of the first month that Noah (Noh) has set up the ark and finished its construction. He finished it on the first day of the first month and up to the sixteenth day he entered it. On the 17, he closed the ark. When he cast the raven, the raven went away and never came back.

The angel gave me the explanation of this and told me: The raven, it is Satan who has not returned in his abode anymore after having left it. And the first dove means the law, the prophets and their tabernacles.

Then after having waited for seven days, Noah released the dove. The dove he refers to, is the sacred Church. The seven days during which Noah waited, are the seven days (during which Christ has endured) sufferings, from Monday right until His resurrection.

Noe offered a young ram as sacrifice and begged for the pardon of the entire world's sins. The ark of Noe was not made with wood of this world, but it came from a tree that had cast an eagle. And the altar of Melchizedek (Malka-Sêdeq) was made from a sacred stone that the angels have consecrated and they placed it in the center of the earth.

It is for that that the apostles say: There, where the altar of Melchizedek is, the head of the dragon can be found. The dragon, it is Satan, and if we say it is there, it is because, in the same place, God has cut off the serpent. As Paul says it: " He has killed the enemy through His cross".

The ram which was offered as sacrifice instead of Isaac, belonged to the race of those that Israel offered and to the race of the one that Abel sacrificed. This ram is the image of Christ, and they are the rams of paradise.

And Moses set up the tent (?) surrounded by a veil of gold. He also set up the table, with its garnish, the chandelier, the lights; he finished all his work. The glory of God filled in the cloud. God sent in His glory. The cloud that was floating above is The Holy Spirit; its garnish, The Son, and the lights, The Father that makes him strong; the incense, the prayer of saints; the oil, the baptism, the law of The sacred Church, the property of Christians, which had been made for them, as Christ was the complement of all and that is all the work of the tabernacle (?).

As for the place of consecration, they brought in according to their number a bowl of the value of 130 (shekels), one of seventy shekels in holy shekels, a vase of ten (shekels) made of gold and full of incense, a calf, a ram and 5 calves, 5 sheep, 5 goats, each one year old, for the peace sacrifice. Such were the sacrifices that they offered.

And here is the explanation of it that the angel gave me. The twelve that brought in for the place of dedication on one side and another in the sacred Church are the twelve apostles that bring the entire world to Our Lord. In the place of the silver tray the new law to chaste men; instead of the bowl, a source of benefit, the blotting out (of sins) that is in the mouth of the priest; instead of seventy shekels, the seventy disciples: instead of the ox, Christ; in the place of the sheep, Mary; in the place of rams, the doctors; instead of 5 calves, the five wise virgins; in the place of 5 sheep, the 5 breads; in the place of two heifers, the two fish that have satiated 5.000 people; instead of 5 male goats, 5 foreign people that had believed and were baptized. And also instead of sheep, the women that have offered their possessions to the service of Our Lord, and whose names are as follows: Salomê, Magdalâwit (Magdalene), Sarâ, Yohanna (Joanna), wife of Kozâ, and Mary who anointed Our Lord with perfumes; instead of Moses, Christ; instead of Aaron, Peter, the leader; in the place of Josue (Iyâsu), the chaste John.

But it is not possible to explain the work of the tabernacle in all its parts, such as Paul (Pawlos) says it: "I have told you many things, as much as you can understand of it". Now here is a beautiful word (allegory). – Instead of a tray of gold, (we have) Christ, and the tray that held ten shekels of gold, represent the ten fingers of Our Lord that He extended on the cross; when we say that it is full of incense, that means that Our Lord prayed on the cross and erased thus the sins of the people. The hands Moses raises represent also the hands of Christ and Amâlêk the demons. Joshua (Iyâsus) who goes away to make war, is interpreted by The Holy Spirit that went out to fight with the evil ones. Aaron and Hor that grabbed the hands of Moses signify the two thieves that were crucified with Our Lord.

Here is the word that was written for the wise ones and which the angel told to the blissful Bahayla Mikâ'êl. And now we have finished the description of the tabernacle and of everything related to it, description in which there can be found wisdom, intelligence and science. After having heard it, the wise one increases his wisdom. It (the Gospel?) says: he, who has ears to hear, hears. The first one speaks about the last one and the last one completes the first one. One single word coming from one single discourse. And when it is said they made one single seal, that means that the Gospel is the seal of all Scriptures. I have finished telling you the explanation of the mystery of the tabernacle.

And on the subject of the tabernacle, the prophet has seen; Ezekiel (Hezeq'êl) described the vision about Jerusalem (Iyarusâlêm). In it, the people of Jerusalem were divided according to their families, like the twelve tribes of Israel. These are the twelve apostles. And here are those that were there: 25.000 heads of just ones in one gate; (in another) 10.000; in the third one 20; in the fourth one 85.000; in the fifth one 25.000; in the sixth one 10.000; in the seventh one 10.000; in the eighth one 25.000; in the ninth one 4.500; in the tenth one 40.500 and a tenth 4005(?). Those who remained in the dark enclosure (were in the number of) 400, and 500 towards the Occident, and on the coast of the sea, and towards the sun, and they did not go through to the side of the Orient and were not near this dark enclosure. Towards the South (there were) 18.000.

At all the entries, he tells you there is a *têhê*, and in the place where this *têhê* is (there are also) 30 from one side and 30 from the other. And in the place where he says there is a *têhê*, 6 from one side and 6 from the other; 30 from one side and 30 from the other, these are the 60 births of patriarchs. And when he says *têhê*, he means to say *drawing*. From one *têhê* to another means from one portrait to another. When he said six from one side and six from the other, these are the twelve apostles.

There are there three groups that remain close to the enclosure, these are the avengers that own the justice and in the first as well as in all the entrances those whose heads we mentioned, that is to say the just ones and their angels and again their number (?). From one *têhê* to another, there were some who came closer, others that went father, ones and the others according to their grades of sanctity and those who are equals (can be recognized by) the equality of their seats.

He also told me: The just ones do not exceed seven grades, for all the ordination of the priesthood is accomplished by the patriarchs and the grades of the just ones are complete in the number of seven. – One gate is farther than the other and for an opening, the space of a just one is bigger than the double of this world and than the gate through which the light shines. And one illuminates more than the other; there are some gates made of gold, others of silver, others of pearls, others of crystal. Three gates are of gold; three are of silver, one is more elevated than the other, like Isaiah says: "The lintel of the gate has been lifted by the voice of those who were shouting." In all these openings, the gates are different, and the souls of the just ones enter them and get out of them through the windows of Jerusalem. There, there are the bosoms from which pours out into Jerusalem the honey, the milk, the wine and the oil that go out into the garden and water the entire earth.

Then he (Ezekiel) told you: To each of its edges, there was a *tohi* and an *Elâm* (hall), and six chambers orientated towards the orient and towards the Occident, two towards the North and towards the South. The hall had five cubits with the *êpêmedê* of *Elâm* and three gates. The *Elâm* had 20 cubits and the width of the *êlâm*, its degrees and its height, each six; the gate of *êpêmedês*, five and its length one (?) cubit, and the *êpêmedês* six on each side (?); in the interior six, in the sides four and thirty three equal floors, and one separation. And in front of the *apolisu* (there was) like a sea of 70 cubits (long?) and 5 cubits width. The *Apolisu* has one hundred windows and its openings with 2 and 3 cherubs towards a single *sabart* that is a palm tree. The wood of the altar was three cubits tall and the tables of chipped stone one cubit and a half long and one cubit in width and height.

And here is the explanation of this passage: the *êlâm* means divided into four parts; and the two *êksêdêrê* are the two baskets of sacrifice where the two cherubs are. *Elâm* also means column and *êpêmed* means platform. *Apolisu* means sanctuary and *iyâzehâ*, room.

And here is the symbolical explanation: The two *êksêdêrê* means the men, and when he says two, he indicates the two natures of men. The *êksêdêrê* that wraps up the man (?) means the right side of The Father; and the *êpêmed* is interpreted by the Jordan (Yordânôs); the three gates by The Trinity; the *êlâm* by the Gospel. When he says twelve, these are the twelve apostles. If he says it was finished in 6 days (?) the 6 of which he speaks of, are the 6 words that invoke the saints and also because the accursed ones plead through 6 words. – Those who keep themselves on the right side are the Christians, that are Orthodox. As for those who call themselves Christians, but are not orthodox, their place is on the left. But the ungodly ones are not summoned to appear, for there is no ransom which they can be redeemed by. They go into the Sheol, flowing there like the water, as David says it: "The fire marches in front of Him; the flame surrounds His enemies." Our Lord also says in the Gospel: "Let the people be gathered in front of Him."

On the subject of the day of punishment, Esdras ('Ezrâ) says: "From one side, there will come happiness, from the other the judgment and the punishment." There are five names: the Sheol, the darkness, the punishment, that which is a wicked smoke, that is hell; there remains, the *fifth*, the judgment; hell does not grasp (devour) it; the demons are devoured by hell.

Let us continue our story. When he says 70 for the *êpêmedes*, he indicates the 70 disciples; the four corners are the four evangelists that are equal in their words (?); when he says that the *apolisu* has 70 cubits, he speaks of this world. That is why Ezekiel has said: "On that day, after the captivity, I had a vision; he took me on a high mountain; a city was built there. I entered it and met a man; his face was of brass heated by fire; in one hand he had a cord to measure and in the other a rod to measure quantity. This rod was upright on the entrance whose height was of six cubits and equal in width. He measured exactly the six feet with the rod, then the *têhê*, next he measured a second *têhê*, then three *têhê* compared to the first one, then the *êlâw* and the '*aêlî*, crowning of gates (?). He inspected everything as much as he could.

The man he saw is The Son; the rod he caught sight of is the word of The Gospel, when he says that its height was of 6 cubits, he indicates the 6 words, through which they present their defense; the seven feet are the seven ranks of The Church; when he says he stood at the gate, the gate is the baptism; when he says its height and its width were equal, these are all the words that God has pronounced and of which one is not lesser than the other in anything; he carefully measured the *têhê*, he says, that represents everything that was accomplished by The Gospel.

The *têhê* he speaks of is the place where the chosen ones are represented; and all those that are not represented, are thrown in the fire of hell; because for the one who was not marked by a sign in their forehead, there is no salvation; as for the one who is marked by a sign in his forehead, Christ has promised him he will be sealed. As The Father has told to The Son: "All those that will be sealed by the blood of your rib (?) shall not perish and shall not suffer in the Sheol." Death itself, who is Satan, as Paul says it: "He has fought that angel of death, who is Satan" among the Christians, is a great mystery, above all, those who will have made a small act of charity for the love of Mary, shall not perish.

On the subject of the ordinances of Israel, listen to what I will tell you. When Aaron said: *We praise him*, the birds of Judas (Yehudâ) answered to him, chirping in a marvelous order. The sweetness of their voice turns back the heart, and the people go up to listen to them. The birds of Judas that are in his camp are in the number of 1.000 doves, 300 prattle birds, that are the *agorgânât*, and 200 turtledoves.

When he says: *Prepare your ear, oh sky, for I will speak*, these are the birds of Ruben (Robêl), that answer to him; their number is 1.000 and 300 birds of Babil and the birds of Joseph (Yosêf) are also numerous.

Then when he says: *"For the fire of my anger is burning"*, the birds of Joseph answer to him.

When Aaron says: *"May God bless you!"*, the birds of Dan, of Nephtali and Asêr answer to him. A marvelous work has been made in the tabernacle of Israel. On other days, not all the birds chirp at the same time, but only ten alternately; on the holy days, they chirp all together. Their nourishment is provided by a tribe, they each receive ten measures. The measure is the *Hamor*, according to the measure of Ethiopians and in Abyssinian, its measure is 2 *entalam*. And again an *épha* (filled) one single time, the half at dawn and the half at dusk.

The Komon tree is planted in the tabernacle; every morning the priest comes and tells it: "We water you with water" and it sprouts in hope; for if it was not talked to in this manner, it would not be so beautiful. – When we sacrifice a lamb for the sins, we cook it with the fire of this tree; for other sacrifices, we use other trees.

That is what the angel of God told me and he added: So that you do not forget the word of God, so that you understand, so that your heart opens up to the word of God, so that you apprehend, repeat these names and say: Adâm, Zarudâ'êl, Bazanadaqâ'êl, Nâtnâw, Daflâ, 'Awlâlâ'êl, Kabikâ, Tâtâ, 'Elâdâ'êl. After having pronounced that, he should read the Psalter; the one who will bring him a bit of water, he should drink it and take it in without breathing. Here is what I have told you and explained to you.

Let me now reveal to you a surprising mystery about the tabernacle. The sacrifice was offered in the seventh enclosure, and, as I have told it to you, where the *samâsaye*(?) is, there can be found the sacrifice of fire. As for the altar and the enclosure, such is their description and their ordinance.

The seventh tabernacle, that is Karâ, has nine pillars and eighteen beams; it contains a terrible altar furnace and its length (1.000); above it a bed of brass spread out, of the same length, perforated by eighteen holes. Below a plate of brass is spread out, its length of 1.000 (cubits). There are three pots there, one of gold, one of silver, the third one of brass; this tabernacle of testimony is where their sacrifices are being performed.

And the explanation was given to me by Moses and Aaron. They told me: Listen carefully. When you are spoken of the enclosure, that is the sacred Church, as John abu-qalamsis (Apocalypse) (says it): "I have seen churches." The nine pillars which are spoken of are the nine peoples that were brought into captivity during the times of Selmanâsor.

The eighteen beams signify: the first, *you shall not adore another one but me*, the second, *the love*, the third, *humility*, the fourth, *the joy*, the fifth, *the gentleness*, the sixth, *the patience*, the seventh, *the peace*, the eighth, *the faith*, the ninth, *the charity*, the tenth, *the care to avoid the words(?)*, the eleventh, *the fasting*, the twelfth, *you shall not steal*, the thirteenth, *the absence of pride*, the fourteenth, *the chastity*, the fifth, *abstaining from false oath*, the sixth, *what you hate to be done on yourself, you shall not do it unto your fellow man*, the seventeenth, *you shall honour your father and your mother*, and the eighteenth, *you shall not desire everything that you see*. The one who will observe these prescriptions will inherit the kingdom of heavens.

There is a terrible altar furnace, he says, the furnace is Adam. When he says that the height was of 1.000 cubits, these are the 1.000 generations. – And above a bed of brass is spread out, the bed is the cross, the bed of pain of Our Lord, as (he says it): “He has rescued me on my bed of pain.” He also says: “He has put an arc of brass in my arm.”

The twelve holes which he speaks of are the twelve gates of heaven, as the prophets say it. The four gates of heaven, *knowledge* Dabra-Seyon that bears fruit to 100.000th, Dabra-Sina to the 100.000th and Dabra-Tabor to the 400.000th. – The plate that is under is in place of the pact or in the insides of the believers.

The three pots which he speaks of, the one which is of gold represents the apostles, the second of silver, the prophets, and the third one in brass, the Christians.

That is why when he tells you that all their sacrifices are performed in this tabernacle of testimony, he indicates that the functions of the Church are completed by priests of all ranks; but not all of them offer the sacrifice. – The apostle of this enclosure is Thaddeus (Tâdêwos), brother of Jacob (Yâ’eqob) and the angel is Salâtyâl, the guardian of the altar.

The eighth enclosure has eight pillars and eight foundations. – When he says eight (pillars), he means to say the seven orders of priesthood, the eighth is the Christian people; the eight foundations are the seven writings of the Church and the eighth the Church itself.

As such is the order of the Levites: the great priest extracts the meat of the cauldron with a fork and throws it on the bed of brass. The fat flows through the holes; he causes it to fall underneath and fills three pots with it; then he brings three doves on the days of the Sabbath of each week and they smell the perfume of the altar. The first one is red, the second one of multiple colours, and the third one white. The priest raves against this white dove, strikes it and kills it while telling it: “It has corrupted my altar and has destroyed all the sons of my tabernacle.”

The explanation of this passage (has been given to me) by Moses and Aaron; they told me: The Levites are the priests, and the priest is the son of God; the fork is the voice of the Gospel that seeks man for the faith; the cauldron is the world; the meat represents the nations that cry for Him; the fat that flows underneath is the faith that is preached under the sky; the three pillars which he speaks of are the three series of prophets from Adam to Moses, from Moses to the Lord and from Our Lord until the end of the world.

When he says that the first dove is red, these are the sacrifices of Israel. As John says it in his vision: “There came out a ghastly horse; the one that was riding it was called death and the Sheol followed him.” So the ghastly horse that did not succeed in the enclosure is the Mosaic law (law of Moses).

The second dove that is multicolored, represents the prophets and the children of prophets who have not completely received the baptism of life; that is why it is not completely white. The third dove, which is white, is The Son of God that is pure of any sin. The priests that rave against it are the people that crucify, the house of Levi. – When he says that they tell (to the dove): “It has corrupted my altar”, these are the Jews that say: “He has destroyed our law and our doctrine.” – And when they add: It has destroyed all the sons of my tabernacle, it is that truthfully their law has been destroyed, as well as their prophecies, their priesthood and their kingdom, as the minister says it: “Their law has passed, as well as their prophecies and their priesthood.”

Being resurrected from the dead, the word of eternal life has renewed the law for us. We who are believers, we have seen a miracle, and the priests, on the day of their ordination, see the hidden mystery; there are some of them that see it under the shape of a fire flame, others under the appearance of a child, others under the shape of a bread of pure flour. Most of them see it under the shape of bread and this is a marvelous mystery. And on the subject of the doves, these are two series of prophets; they climb up from the Sheol and settle on the tabernacle. This takes place in the Sabbath days. – The same among the Christians, those who are sinners, but have a bit of grape, will not be thrown out. Those who have a bit of grape are those who have received the faith, that is to say those who have received the seal of baptism; they will not perish.

And on the subject of the eighth enclosure, Enoch tells you about the Sabbath that is the justice. These are the Sabbaths of the Incarnation of The Son; when he says: In this enclosure, there comes down a man, it is The Son, and when he says that He places there a straight mountain, that is The Church, in which there is the right faith (orthodox).

– And the apostle of this enclosure is Nâtnâ’êl, son of Qalayopâ (Clopas), and the angel is a seraph (Surâfêl), because on the eighth day, in the eighth enclosure, He took mercy on the seraphs.

Here is the description of the ninth enclosure: it has 5 pillars and 6 chevrons.

There, Mo’ab, the great priest dwells; there the tree Kamon is planted; its fruit has the size of a bean and it can only serve as a condiment. There can also be seen the pomegranate tree, out of which a juice comes out, which looks like blood. When those who were possessed by demons drank this juice, they would be healed of the illness of their sin. This juice has been lost and could not have been found ever since the time of Moses.

And the next explanation (has been given to me) by Moses and Aaron; they told me: When he tells you about the ninth enclosure, that is the sacred Church that consists of seven clerical ranks, and of men and women who have the faith. – When he mentions 5 pillars, these are Peter, John, Jacob (Yâ’eqob), and Jacob, brother of Our Lord. The six chevrons are the the six words of The Gospel, through which they dispute(?)...

When he tells you of Moab, that is The Lord, Father of all things, as David says it: “Moab, the priest, is my hope.” And again, the Moabites (Mo’abawiyân) are interpreted by the demons. It is not our intention to assimilate them to The Lord, on the contrary they are driven away when we pronounce the name of Our Lord. Moab also signifies fire; and the colour red is the emblem of the creation of angels. And for a proof that the Moabites are demons, listen to the Pentateuch that tells you: “The angels whose name are Moab will be destroyed.” And Isaiah also says: “In the night, we shall

exterminate Moab." That means: When Our Lord will be crucified, the afternoon will be night and then the Sheol will disappear, the devil will be caught like a bird and, in the night, they will overthrow the wall of Moab.

Verily this tabernacle has been overthrown, as well as its wall which is the law, as it has been said: "Remove its wall", and again Isaiah shouts: "Moab, be sad for yourself." Verily the demons have been saddened, as well as those who crucify. Moreover Isaiah says: *Ladêbân* (Dibon? Is. xv, 2) has perished, this signifies that the synagogue, full of benefits created by the law and prophets, has been destroyed. – When he says that the tree *Kamon* was planted there, he indicates the tree of the prophecy; and when he says that it can only serve as a condiment, that signifies the law and the prophets who have been of no use to Adam and who could not save him. They are called under the names of condiments; because these are not complete nourishment, as only Christ is the bread of life, a perfect food. That is why Isaiah says: "They eat the cumin with the wheat." Verily, the prophecy of prophets has been devoured by the wheat of life, who is Christ.

When he says that the tree *remon* is planted there, he means the tree of *Aryâm* (the heavens), and when he tells that if those who are possessed by demons drink of the fruit juice of this tree, will be healed of their illness, that signifies that when the peoples have drunk with faith the blood of (Christ) the glorious, they are healed of their sins. The demon which has grabbed and possessed them is Satan.

When he says that this tree has perished and cannot be found anymore since the death of Moses, he indicates that the water of life is dried out for those who have crucified (Christ; for the Jews) and that it has gushed forth for the believers. That is why the prophet says: "The water of *Nêmrêm* is dried out", which signifies the water of mystery. Then the prophet also says: "They have climbed the road of *Aromin*." Verily, the just ones have climbed the road of heavens. Moreover, Isaiah says: "There will be a shaking of earth"; and truly it is reported in The Gospel that the earth is shaken and that several bodies of the just are resuscitated and entered the sacred city at the top of the road. – The apostle of this enclosure is Bartholomew (*Bartolomêwos*), the seeker of secrets, and the angel is *Heberyânos*, the great cherub.

Here is the description of the tenth enclosure. Its pillars are four in number; it is extremely enlightened from all sides; there comes out of it a smoke similar to a flame, and this happens every year on the feast of the wheat; it has seven chevrons and seven torches.

An the explanation of it was given to me by Moses and Aaron; they told me: The four pillars which he speaks of are the sacred Father, and its light, The Son, as the prophet says: "Sent out your light and your justice." Moreover he says: "Your right side, your arm and the light of your face." Then he says again: "Let the light come out of your residence." And the smoke resembling light is The Holy Spirit. As the prophet says it: "The smoke has filled the house (destined) to His praises." And John (says): "The temple was full of (smoke of) praises and power." Ezekiel says: "The altar was filled with smoke." Peter also says: "The glory has been sent out with the smoke." And Jeremiah says: "Adam

was surrounded by a vapour of smoke." The prophet says again: 'From the North, there will come out a smoke. And what will the kings of nations say', if not that they have contaminated it?

When he talks about the feast of wheat, he means that likewise in the new law, on the day of the feast of the 50 (Pentecost), The Holy Spirit came down at three o'clock, in the moment of the offering of sacrifice (or of the rising).

When he mentions three chevrons, these are three heavens, as the teachers of the world say it: "We have taken pure water and we have created three heavens; we have created others with the flame of fire."

When he says seven torches, these are the seven tabernacles of fire, the veils of the Trinity.

This enclosure is the resting place of the just ones and the children of Qa'ât, and Qa'ât begot Lêwi, and Enbarâm begot Moses and Aaron and Mary, Moses begot Gersom and 'Êlyâzâr; Aaron begot Nâdâb and 'Abdyu; 'Al'âzar begot Finâhas; Finâhas begot 'Absê; Absê begot Bâqâ, and Bâqâ, Tâmren; Tâmren begot 'Aki-Mêlêk. These are the priests, servants (sons) of the law and the rites; they and others are mentioned in the book of Chronicles. – The apostle of this enclosure is Phillip (Filpos), which means young wise man, and the angel is Sadâkyâl, the comforter of the afflicted.

This is the eleventh enclosure; it has 8 pillars and 49 chevrons.

And the explanation has been given to me by Moses and Aaron; they told me: When he mentions eight pillars, five of them are the law of Moses, three others are the one (book of) Joshua, the other the one of Judges and the third the one of Ruth.

The 49 chevrons which he speaks of are the 49 books of prophets; (this number of) 49 is completed by these eight prophets that have known the past and the future. One of them says: The king of midday (Azêb) will go to the king of North; she will get married there; the two kings will tell each-other falsehoods during a meal, and because of that a great massacre will happen between the two of them.

And the explanation of this passage was given to me by Moses and Aaron in these terms: "The king of midday is the Roman that dwells to the midday and to the west of heaven." And now he is his servant and they have perverted him during 6 years and 5....; there will arrive an impostor (bearer of false name) and two years after his arrival, (will also arrive) the king of north bearing a false name, and this one will descent from Japhet. As Ezekiel says it: A prince(?) will descend from Japhet.

When he says: they will discuss both of them lies at the same table, that means that the king of midday tells him: After I shall grab the king of Ethiopia, I shall deliver him to you, and the other one tells him: I will give you 7.000 horses. They have acted with perfidy one against the other; that is why there will be a great massacre between them. – She will flee on a horse and will return to her father. The king of midday will chase her after having made alliance with the king of Ethiopia, as they will have in their hands the spear of the cross; when he will see this sign, the impostor will run away from them, then he will accumulate the anger of all the nations. Then shall The Lord come with His army; He will make war against him and will overthrow him from his throne. His troops will be exterminated and he himself will be thrown in the fire, as the apostles tell it. – Afterwards there will be a new heaven and a new earth. – This enclosure is the resting place of the children of Isachar

(Yesakor); the son of Qâ'ât will be overthrown(?), of Qa'ât son of Lêwi; the son of Fâqurâ will be deposed(?) as well as Qorê, son of Fareg; and Fareg Tâmoûz, and Tâmoûz Fêlêto. These ones have been burnt by the fire and only the children of Nâmu'êl remained. Nâmu'êl begot 'Êlfâsafi who was the father of many children.

And this is the twelfth enclosure, with 4 pillars and 12 chevrons.

Here is the explanation of it: The four pillars he speaks of are the patriarchs of The Church. In the place of four animals, there are the four seats; in the place of four rivers, the four rivers of The Gospel; in the place of four winds of heavens, the four corners of the earth, instead of four chariots of cherubs, the four angles (arms) of the cross; instead of four scales(?) of the sun, the four corners of the altar; instead of four seas of fire, the four angles of The Church; instead of four pillars of the moon, the four stones that are on the garment of Aaron; instead of four camps of heaven, the four series of encampment of Israel in the moment of their migration; (instead) of four horns, the four pains in the hands and feet of Our Lord; instead of four gates of heaven, the four faces of heaven; instead of the four trees of the garden, the four exterior(?) signs that are given on the day of baptism, the milk, the honey, the flesh and the blood; instead of four glass windows, the hundred torches of The Church; instead of four angels that are standing straight, at the four sides of The God of spirits, the four elements of the world's creation and of those that have been created with each (*of these elements*). Glory to the Artisan who created all that and everything exists through The Trinity.

The twelve chevrons he tells you about are the twelve apostles. – This enclosure is the resting place of the children of Azâhêl, son of Qa'ât, son of Lêwi. And Azâhêl was son of Nêš, who was born in the month of Nêšân, and Nêšân begot Ayâb, Ayâb begot Pâkon, Pâkon begot Dabr, Dabr (begot) Nâr and Nâr, Wêles. – And the apostle of this enclosure is Jacob (Ya'eqob), son of Alphaeus (Alfeyos), and the angel is 'Aqâmâyâl, the guardian of paradise.

And this one is the thirteenth enclosure, that has 318 chevrons, whose colour is white like the flower of the rose, and there is a time when one of them will rise in the midst of them.

The explanation has been given to me by Moses and Aaron; they told me: When you are told about pillars, these are the law, the prophets and the apostles; the 318 chevrons in question are the 318 orthodox fathers (of Nicaea); when it is said that their colour is similar to the rose flower, it is because the rose flower is white and the doctrine of 318 fathers is brilliant like the sun; when he tells you that there is a chevron which sometimes appears among them and sometimes disappears, that is Our Lord and Our God: sometimes He shows Himself in the midst of them and sometimes He disappears, sometimes they are 318. It is so, in order that they should know that He is The Lord. – This enclosure is the resting place of the children of Kêbron, son of 'Orên, and 'Orên of Amhân, and Amhân of Têgrân, and 'Alhiz and Sêwên son of Wâker. – And the apostle (of this enclosure) is Paul (Pawlos) and the angel is angel 'Akyâl.

And this one is the fourteenth enclosure; it has two pillars, one big and one small, and the chevrons are like a pomegranate peel; there are three of them.

And the following explanation has been given to me by Moses and Aaron. They told me: When two pillars are mentioned, these are the two (types of) martyrs, those of Antioch and those of Jerusalem. When he cites a big pillar, these are the martyrs of Antioch and the small one the martyr

children of Jerusalem. The colour of the pillars is similar to the pomegranate peel, he says, it is the image of the spilling blood of martyrs. – When he said three chevrons, that is the image of The Trinity that the martyrs venerate, but the martyrs of Antioch are bigger than the ones of Jerusalem for us, and as for The Most High – He Himself knows what is bigger. Among the children, several have been martyrs, and have preserved their chastity; Theodore (Têwoderos) is mostly cited, *qui nunquam concubuit cum muliere, neque semen effudit super mulierem nisi in somnis noctis* (who never slept with a woman, nor his seed poured over a woman except in a dream of the night); while his comrades surpassed him, during the time he was learning The Scripture, crying he saw the gifts of heaven. In the tabernacle there are written the words: Sabâot, Saddây and Samuel said.

(Description) of the fifteenth enclosure: It has two pillars, of which one resembles the colour of water and the other gleams like a flaming fire, and there is a single chevron for these two pillars.

The explanation was given to me by Moses and Aaron; they told me: The two pillars he speaks of are Elias (Êlyas) and John, and when he mentions a pillar that burns like a fire, that is Elias whose heart was inflamed by zeal for God. When he says that one had the colour of water, that is John who baptizes the nations (peoples) in the water. When he says that the chevron is unique for the two, he indicates the leather that both of them have girded. – This enclosure belongs to the children of Mirâri, Mirâri begot Hâmusi and Lobini begot Semey. Thus what it is said to be the tabernacle of 'Yâ'êl, means the one who listens to the prayers(?).

The description of the sixteenth enclosure is such: it contains four pillars and 500 doves, of which 400 white and 100 black, plus two chevrons.

And Moses and Aaron gave me this explanation: When he says four pillars, these are the four abbots, science Macaire (Maqares), Antoine (Antons), Senuti (Sinodâ) and Pacôme (Paquemis). The 400 white doves, are the children of these four priors and the 100 black ones are the monks behind. The two chevrons are the fasting and prayers of the saints.

In the interior there are represented the portraits of the first sacred fathers.

At first Adam, Seth, Enos, Qâyân, Malâl'êl, Yâred, Henoch, Matusalâ, Lamech, Noah, Sem, Alfâksad, Qâyân, Sâlâ, 'Ebêr, Fâlêk, Râgw, Sêroh, Nâkor (*Arphaxad, Cainan, Heber, Phaleg, Reu, Sarug, Nachor*), Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. – They have drawn lots, and the man that the lot had designated, was represented in the middle of the tabernacle. As for the fathers, it is an angel of the front who represented them. – Then Juda, Phares, 'Êsrom, Arâm, 'Aminâdab, 'Ason, Salomon, Ba'êz, Iyabêd, 'Esêy, David, Salomon, Robeam, Abyâ, 'Asef, 'Iyosâfet, 'Iyorâm, Iyoas, 'Amês, Azaryâs, 'Ozyân, 'Iyo'atâm, 'Akâz and Hezeqyâs, Menâsê, 'Amos, 'Iyosyâs, 'Ikonyân, Salâtyâl, Zarubâbêl, 'Abyudâ, 'Êlyaqêm, 'Azar, Sadoq, 'Al'âzar, 'Êlyud, 'Akim, 'Al'âzar, Mâtân, Yâ'eqob and Joseph (Yosêf). These ones are written in The Gospel – and being parents of Mary, The Virgin – this is the reason why they have been saved.

And here is the description of the seventeenth enclosure: it has three pillars, the first has eight chevrons, the second two and the third twelve.

And the explanation is this one: when he says three pillars, these are Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; when he says that the first has eight chevrons, these are the children of Abraham, six he had from Ketura, one of Sara and another of Agar. – And here are their names: Zanbar, Yâkens, Mâdây and Mâdân, 'Iyâzebaq, Sêhya, Yesmâ'êl and Yeshaq. – When he says that the second pillar had two chevrons, these are the children of Isaac, Jacob and Esau. – And when he said that that third had twelve chevrons, these are the sons of Jacob.

These are all the mysteries of tabernacle, those that the angel of God has exposed to me. And the nation is distributed according to their tribes: towards the orient the tribe of Judas is placed, with those who encamped with him; the tribe of Ruben (Robêl) is towards the right side, as well as those who encamped with him according to their families; the tribe of Joseph settled towards the sea (the west), with those who encamped with him; the tribe of Dan settles behind, in the west side of the tabernacle, as well as those who were encamped with him. In the same order according to which they walked, they aligned themselves when stopping, and they did not step into the seventh (tabernacle) where the altar is.

The fathers of tribes were represented on the costume of Aaron, Judas by the carnelian, Issachar (Yesâkor) by the topaz, Zabulon (Zabelon) by the emerald, 'Atâ and Ruben (Robêl) by the jasper, Simon and Levi by the carbuncle stone, Gad by the sapphire, in one row; Joseph by the amethyst, Benjamin (Benyâm) by the agate; Manasse (Menasê) by the Telem, Gad by the chrysotile, Nephtali by the onyx, Aser by the beryl.

Here is the explanation of these stones: the carnelian means: it has been established by God; the topaz, it has announced the sufferings of The unique Son; the emerald,....the people(?) by the fire; the jasper stone, it has fiercely sworn; the carbuncle stone is the emblem of the zeal of priests; the sapphire signifies: we prostrate ourselves in the place where the feet of Our Lord were; the amethyst means: before time, it has produced ears (of corn); the agate, it has shattered the believers, then it has become a believer itself; telem signifies: they have been treacherous(?) like a hook among those that were like them. 'Aqtema means it caused God to be killed and *tebê* means: show us his art. Such is the explanation (of these stones) and such is the marvelous mystery. – The apostle of this enclosure is Étienne ('Estifânos) and the angel, the one who spoke to me.

When he spoke about the first pillar, that is Bersebâhê Pilelos; the second pillar is named 'Êsêdêrês, and the chief of the priests of Israel; the third one is called Natiê-A'âq-labatêr. Here is the explanation of these names: Bersebâhê means The Father who is praised by The Son; Pilos means: their praises come from them; 'Êsêdiros means; The Father did not precede The Son; 'Êsidiros also means the right side of The Father which is The Son. If he says he is the chief of princes of Israel, that is because this one (The Son) appeared in the middle of the apostles, although they had closed the gates, like David says it: "God is held in the meeting of Gods", and when he says: tinotiki, that is the balm that The Holy Spirit was to us; Aklabêpêr means the one who sanctifies the body and the spirit.

I make the sign of the cross and I proclaim The Trinity, and I believe in this Trinity which includes three persons and one single divinity, one single reign, one single power, one single domination, one single will, one single desire; three aspects and one single appearance, three persons and one single name, one complete equality, one single totality, as it is said: "The sun dwells in heaven and its light dwells on the earth and its fire embraces." Through this example The Trinity is known.

There are four chevrons, the ark in which the law of Moses is, the golden crane of Manna, Aaron's staff that sprouted, the censer of gold, the four whips of strings. There are represented four cherubs and a mountain of transparent crystal colour above the ark.

And here is the explanation: when he mentions four chevrons, these are the four books that Ezra ('Ezrâ) has written; when he speaks of the ark, that is the new ark, the pure Mary. There the ark of Moses was and here we are, ourselves, the ark of The Holy Spirit, like Paul says it: "You are the ark (the temple) of The Holy Spirit, Christ." Only the Decalogue was placed in the ark and here the Word of The Father, The unique Son alone at Mary's bosom. As the book of the kings says it: "Inside of the ark, there is nothing but the Decalogue."

The Omer is the image of The Church; the manna that is found there represents the body of The Son; the lid of gold the apostles; Aaron's staff that budded is interpreted by the key of Peter and Moses's staff by the cross of Christ.

The staff of Moses, by striking the sea, has made Israel pass through and the cross of Christ, having stricken the head of the dragon which is the devil, has made the nations pass from death to life. There, the staff of Moses has performed ten miracles and here the cross of Christ has smashed the heads of ten demons.

When he speaks of the whip of strings, this signifies that there, they punish the one who has sinned by forty whip blows, as The Law says it: "If one of them has profaned the chrism, he needs to receive 143 whip blows, and if it is to cure (a disease) that he drank of, he needs to be taken to a place where he will not come back from and where he is taken to be put to death."

The four cherubs are the four evangelists. When he says that on the ark there is a mountain of transparent crystal colour, the mountain signifies a cloud and when he says that it was crystal colour, these are the children of baptism (the Christians), for when Our Lord was baptized, a luminous cloud covered His head, as the Evangelist says it: "There appeared a brilliant cloud, that overshadowed them." Paul also said: "We ourselves have testimonies that surround us like a cloud." The Exodus (Law) also says: "The tabernacle was covered by a cloud." Job says, from his side: "A very brilliant cloud in one single time." Zachariah also says: "For He has risen from the thick cloud of His saints." And David says: "He has guided them during the day through the thick cloud." – Solomon also says: "The cloud has caused the dew to fall." On the other hand, Isaiah says: "I shall cover my people by a thick cloud."

Isaiah also says: "There was a vine for the beloved in a fertile land; I enclosed it in a fencing of solid rocks, I encircled it by a hedge and there I planted vine chosen among the wild vine; in the middle of it I built a pylon, then I waited for it to bring forth grapes, and it has brought forth blackberries. Judge between my vine and I, God said." – Here is the explanation of this passage: the vine in question is Israel, as this prophet says it; the fertile country is Jerusalem upon which the fortifying dew from the top of the heavens has descended. When he said: I shall surround it by a wall, that signifies that in the desert, Israel has made a plate of brass 70 cubits long, which they have filled with dust and planted a vine on, as David says it: "They planted the vine and sown the fields." When time came, they watered it; when they proceeded to walk, The Holy Spirit walked with them and raised Itself by God's order. This ordinance remained until the death of Moses.

The entire status of Israel was ruled by ordinances. Their celebrations were as follows: the Easter of unleavened bread, the celebration of the ear (cereal), the sophar, the bader, the tabernacles, the Sabbath. In the days of celebration, all the people gathered together and all took oath in the tabernacle. On that day, the great priest took a red heifer that never bore yoke and said: "This heifer is (offered for) the repurchase of the sins of people", and he would slay it as impure. Those who were seizing it were impure, as well as the one who touched it; the one who was offering it for sacrifice and the one who was spilling its blood were equally impure; the one who was sprinkling the people with its blood was also impure, but those who were watered with it were saints. Oh, marvelous wonder!

And here is the explanation: when he says: A red heifer, that is Mary. When he adds that it did not bear yoke, that signifies that she has not known man; and, just as Mary is the red heifer, in the same way Our Lord is assimilated to the same heifer, for he has dressed the flesh of Mary. Those who slay the heifer are *the ones who crucified him*, the assembly (synagogue) of Jews and the people sprinkled by His blood are the Christian people, who are saints.

On the same day of celebration, the great priest entered in the Holy of Holies, accompanied by a priest and by a virgin he has chosen. He would put in her hands a vine branch and a ear of corn. Then, after having put on the turban(?), he would say: "You will give a sign, such is his word to people."

This passage is explained in this manner: The great priest is Christ; the Holy of Holies is the image of the sacred baptism; the priest that stands on the right represents John the baptist; the chosen virgin, Melchizedek (Malka-Sêdêq) pontificates it. The vine branch and the ear of corn are the symbols of bread and wine (*the Eucharist*); when Melchizedek speaks to the people, and when he says: "You will give a sign", it alludes to the sign of the body and blood (*of Christ*) that Melchizedek gave to Abraham, and that is why David says: "You are forever priest according to the order of Melchizedek."

Isaiah also says: "He will come towards the city of Hagê, will go through Magêdon, he will establish his richness in Mekmâs and will cross the valley; he will be seen from the mountains, will raise above hills and upon his arrival to Hagê, Rêma, the city of Samuel, will be struck with fear. The daughter of Gâlan will flee; He will be heard in Êson and in 'Anâtot, and the Medenawi (*the inhabitants of Madmena*) will tremble."

Here is the explanation of this passage: Hagê means the angel of life; the city is the world; Magêdon is the belly button of the world. When he says that he will establish his richness in Mekmâs, this is the richness of The Son, that is to say His body and His blood, that He has shown after having placed them beside Melchizedek. The valley is the people; that is why David says: "The valleys will be filled with wheat." The wheat is the word of God; the mountains are the prophets and the hills the apostles. – When he says that upon His arrival to Hagê, Rêma, the city of Samuel, will be stricken with fear, that means that upon the arrival of Our Lord in the Sheol, the tribes of Satan, that are descended from Rêma, were stricken with terror. Samuel means Adam. – When he adds that the daughter of Gâlan will flee, that is the Sheol; Gâlan means a young man and the young man signifies the sin, that is to say Satan. – We call him a young man; Job says: "And he has the wearing of a teenager." Solomon also says: "Woe to you, oh city, whose king is a young man." – And when he says He will be heard in Êson and in 'Anâtot, that signifies that the coming of The Son has been

made known through the law. – When he says that the Mandênâwi will be frightened, that is to say that the demons and the ones who crucify had been frightened when The Son was resurrected.

And on the subject of His resurrection. Isaiah says: "Now I am getting up, says The Lord; now I am glorified, I am exalted, and now you shall see and you shall know." In what concerns His suffering (His passion) Isaiah also says: "He has come like a sheep to be slaughtered, like a sheep that does not make a sound in front of its slaughterer, He did not open His mouth in His pain." – Isaiah says again concerning the passion of The Son: "Rich women, stand up and hear my voice; believing daughters, turn your ear to my word. And on each celebration, each year, celebrate my commemoration, commemorating the day of my passion."

And here is the explanation that was given to me regarding this passage. – When he says: rich women, these are the christian churches, that are rich through their two laws, the old one and the new one, as well as through the glory of God. – When He says: Hear my voice, that is the voice of The Gospel. – The young women are the souls of the just. – When He says: Each year, celebrate my memory, that is Easter, the commemoration of His Resurrection. – When He says: "Thinking of the day of my suffering"; that signifies that Our Lord said: "Announce my death until I return."

And Isaiah tells you clearly: "Will seven women take one husband? (They told him): We will eat our bread and we will clothe with our garments; so that we will only be called by your name and take away the reproach from us." – On that day, they will shine in the council of His praises.

Here is the explanation of this passage: When he mentions seven women, these are the seven guards of The Church, and the bread is the word of God, as Paul says it: "You who have been baptized by Christ, you have clothed with Christ." – When he says: "Take away reproach from us," that signifies: Do not let us fight with the male goats and the bulls. The light is The Apostles; as well as He has told them Himself: "You are the light of the world." – The rest of Sion signifies the Christians who have remained, that is to say who have been saved.

Isaiah tells you clearly: "Grow wings like an eagle." From his side, Ezekiel pronounces himself thus on the subject of the eagle: "This eagle with great wings, full of claws, has entered Lebanon and has removed the most chosen part of the cedar; it has cut it in the middle, in the most tender part."

And here is (the explanation): the eagle is The Spirit, its wings are the prophets and its claws the apostles. In the past, in the celebration day of Bader of Israel, It was floating for two hours and came out after having torn out the veil, but since they have crucified Our Lord, It did not come back to them, as the prophet says it: When the spirit left, It did not come back. The prophets also announced the coming of The Son; Moses says: "You shall see with your own eyes. The one who will not have seen the sign of the serpent, will die, but the one who will have seen it will not die." The evangelist clearly tells you: "As Moses raised the serpent in the desert, so will The Son of man be suspended (crucified). And when Isaiah says: "He will come to be slaughtered like a lamb", he speaks of the crucifixion of Our Lord. – Jeremiah says: "I am like the soft sheep; they have devised an evil plan against me and they have said: We will put a piece of wood in his bread." The wood is the cross and the bread is Christ, as He Himself said it: "I am the bread of life that came down from the heavens, jealous and vengeful, who will avenge Himself in the place of Abel." God said: "Whoever will punish Cain, shall be punished seven times and for Lamech seventy seven times."

And here is the explanation of this passage: Lamech was blind and that is the image of Satan, as well as Cain is the image of his father Adam. Lamech killed Cain and Satan killed Adam by making him eat of the fruit of the tree. In the times of Lamech the flood came; (through) seven cataracts of the sky and seven of the earth, and as well as Lamech (is punished) seven times more than Adam, so shall Satan (be punished) seven times more than the work accomplished on the day of Sunday. And like for the punishment of Lamech, Christ, the offspring of patriarchs, has come, carried by seventy seven pearls, to punish Satan. And the seventy seven pearls are those of which Luke, the evangelist, speaks of. His two wives are explained by the two nations of Cham (Kâm) and of Japhet ('Yâfêt). The man who was killed is Adam and the young man is Abel. May the one who is wise understand, says Abba-Basalota-Mikâ'êl.

Then Peter was sent to me and he told me: I will explain to you the incarnation of The unique Son. The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit said: "We have created everything by agreement and while Adam has sinned, The Son came down by obedience on the wing of Gabriel. It is because of Mary that all creation was made" and if he says: because of Mary, it is that the smallest thing will not be lost in heavens(?). Mary bore the sun of justice in her breast and gave birth to Him. After His birth, He was, according to the law of Moses, circumcised on the eighth day. Then on the fortieth day Simeon received Him.

Simeon, the priest, was living for a long time in the hope of The Lord's coming. In the past, while studying the book of Isaiah, the prophet, he found these words: "It shall come to pass that a virgin will conceive and give birth to a son." He said: "Will this therefore be so?" and he threw down his pen (calame), while saying: "How will this birth happen without man, in the same manner as grain without seed?" – But The Holy Spirit announced him that he would not die before having seen Messiah.

Or, before having seen Messiah, he waited 300 years, and when he caught sight of the child, he shouted: "Now, remove your servant." He pronounced these words (and the following words) until the end (of *Nunc dimittis*, Luke II, 29) and God told him: Tell to those who are in the Sheol: "Your salvation approaches; I myself have held Him in my arms; The Savior of the world has come." The prophets also (were in joy), as The Lord says it: "The joy came from prophets". They were all tossing relentlessly, so that the word of the prophet came true: "The mountains will be shaken from their foundations." Then Adam shouted of exaltation, Noah jumped of joy, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were delighted, Moses, Aaron and Joshua made actions of thanksgiving; David played the zither, Job was stunned, Solomon sang, Isaiah jumped, Jeremiah danced, Ezekiel and Daniel clapped their hands; Tobie kicked with his foot, Esdras was amazed, Hosea composed praises, Amos glorified (God), Joel called The Most High and Micah appealed to The Merciful.

The other prophets each rendered thanksgivings and returned to their dwellings. One returned to the east, another to the west, the other to the north, the other to the south. As well among the trees of paradise, there were four groups: we call prophets those who were facing the setting sun; apostles those who were facing the rising sun; priests, monks and martyrs those who were at the North and those who were at the south (were called) Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, and the children were with them.

"The tree on which Our Lord was crucified, where is it coming from"? you may ask. Was it not brought from paradise by an eagle who threw it in Jerusalem? And this tree was not the same as

other trees. The highest of the trees wanted (Our Lord) to be crucified on this tree, so that it was shortened more than the shortest ones. It was not equal to them beforehand, but it was so only through the crucifixion of Our Lord. It was brought to Our Lord for His crucifixion(?) by Judas Iscariot (Yehudâ Asqorotawi). This man had committed the sin of impurity with his mother; he had caused his father to die from his hand and he had stoned his sister; his grandfather also had refused the blessing, they told him his name(?). When a prophet was coming to their country all Israel did the benediction, only he did not do it, so that the word of David came true: "He refused the benediction that drove away from him", and the children of Israel cursed him because he did not have the gift of benediction.

Our Lord being dead, came back from the dead in His power and, in the moment of His ascension, He ordained priests the apostles and revealed the mysteries to them. To Peter, He appeared in the form of mystery, and when he saw the flame, Peter ran away, falling on John. To John He showed Himself under the shape of white crystal, for he was a virgin. To James, He appeared under the aspect of a sword, for it is through sword that he must accomplish his martyrdom; to Phillip, under the aspect of the sea; to Bartholomew, under the appearance of a vine, to Thomas, under the shape of an ox, for the faith of Thomas was strong as the brass; to Matthew, under the aspect of a child; to Thaddeus, under the form of an ear of corn; to Nathaniel, under the appearance of a white dove; to James, son of Alphaeus, under the aspect of lightning.

Then He started to talk to them and told them: "Do not fear anything, it is I; have you not known your own weakness by now?" They were terrified, not being able to speak; they were all like cadavers.

He spoke again and told them: Is it not on Thursday evening (the evening of the fifth day) that I have given you My body and My blood? at that time I did not appear to you in this shape; but consider well and know that you are body and blood (?). And He told Peter; if My body had not taken the shape of a wheat bread, nobody would have been able to receive it. Having said this, he received the bread of His sacred body and The Lord of The universe went up to heaven. The Lord told Peter again: Of all sins the biggest is the lack of belief and the perfidy, the counsels of injustice and iniquity. If a man accomplished the works of justice and adores (God) and leads a life entirely holly, if he does not have on his face the sign of charity, the angels who watch will prevent him from entering through the gates of heaven.

And the souls, when they leave the body, where will they reside? in the land of their creation. As Enoch says it: I saw the souls in four places, because there are four gates of heaven, these are: Dabra Syon, Dabra Sebâh (of the Orient) that is Dabra Zayt, Dabra Sinâ and Dabra Tabor. The souls remain there during one day, then they present themselves in front of The Creator. According to the hour in which they came out (*of the body*), the souls of Christians keep themselves there (*through the duration of one day*). Those who have the mercy have a city built of mercy. I am telling you this, said the angel that was sent to me; but what is greater than everything, are the hardships that Our Lord suffered on the cross: The One who laid out the world from what was not (*from nothingness*) had been brought before the judgment court to be crucified. He who could have wiped out in an instant those who were crucifying Him, suffered the crucifixion; they were spiting in His face, they were kicking Him, they were slapping Him, they pierced His right side with the lance and nailed down His hands and His feet. When the angels of heaven saw the nakedness of The Lord, they cried, sobbing, descended after having taken their swords and wanted to kill the whole world. The

Most High, full of patience and forbearance, stopped them from doing so, saying: "Do not destroy my creature. Is it not for her that I suffer?"

And (the angels), having heard these words, shouted: Praises to You, oh Merciful and Forbearing! Then the angels of Michael took off their crowns and covered the nails of His right hand; those of Gabriel covered the nails of his left foot; those of 'Urâ'êl covered the wound made by the lance blow that He had received in His side; the seraphs (Surâfêl) overshadowed His head and the cherubs (Kirubêl) covered His face. 'Urâ'êl and Rufâ'êl also covered His face, but none could entirely hide The One whose divinity fills everything; it is Him who covers the nakedness of the face of any creature. Praise to Him!

On the day of His passion, the angel of death was overthrown, but beforehand his power was stolen from him, on the first day of teqemt, when (Christ) says: "Do not transform the house of my father into a house of commerce." It is thus that his power was taken away from him and, from that day until His crucifixion, 545 days passed, not alike those that we count, but double.

And Our Lord being dead, was resurrected through His power, without lifting up the stone that was set in, just as at His birth, He did not break the purity of The Virgin. Glory to Him! He can do everything and nothing is impossible for Him. The saints have seen His image, across different times, for His image will not cease to exist until the end of the world. The first and the last of prophets have seen His image.

Daniel also saw beasts that went up from the sea to the breath of wind. He says: "The first one was like a lioness, and it had wings, and her wings were like those of the eagle. I watched it until the feathers of her wings were plucked off; she raised up and stood on a foot of man and a heart of man was given to her. And I told her: Raise up and eat a lot of flesh."

Here is the explanation of this passage: This beast signifies Nebuchadnezzar (Nâbukadanasor), as well as the lion which he speaks of, for the kings of peoples are called lions, says Jeremiah: "The sheep that was lost, the lions ate it." The sheep, that is the house of Israel. – If he says: I watched it until her wings were plucked off, that is because his kingdom (of Nebuchadnezzar) was taken away from him. – And she stood on a foot of a man, he says, that means that his pride made him a beast and that he then became a man again and that a heart of man was given to him. – The flesh that he ate, that means he would rule a long time.

(Daniel) also spoke of a beast that resembled the leopard. It is 'Eskender, son of Phillip, of the race of Japhet. – When he says she had four wings of a bird, these are the four...of 'Eskender; his four heads, are the four kingdoms that the parents of 'Eskender governed over. – The beast that looks like a bear is Darius, if he says looking like the bear, that is because the bear is procreated by two (different) animals: his father is the leopard and his mother is the hyena, and Darius had a Medean (mendênâwi) for a father, descendant of the kings of Japhet, and his mother was from the family of kings of Egypt.

Finally, says Daniel, I saw a terrible beast; that is the kingdom of the children of Esau (Êsâw), of which the angel said to Esdras: that is the fourth kingdom which appeared to your brother Daniel; and the descendants of Esau would reign in Rome, in Zabid, in Selden and in Egypt. But they would

not reign constantly, most of them would reign each on their turn. One family would reign after another. That is why Daniel says: 'They will be mingled with the posterity of humans.'

The eagle which Esdras saw is explained thus: The eagle is the kingdom of the descendants of Esau; it is also interpreted by the false messiah, for the mother of the false messiah shall be from the house of Esau and that is why he will be attributed to his mother. And see now: The sea is the world; the three horns are the three kings who have reigned before him and these things will be accomplished in the tenth cycle. – These are their names: Yâdin, Kamadin, Lafadin.

The twelve wings he speaks of are twelve kings, whose names are these: Yâbibin, Kâti, Sa'adi, Hodi, Mâdi, Hadi, Dâdi, Gâdi, Sâdi, Nidi, 'Adi, Lawdi; these ones will come to power in twelve cycles. And when he says he will fly with his wings over the entire earth, that indicates that he says: "Bow down in front of my image." – When he says: that the clouds gathered upon him, these are Enoch and Elias (Êliâs); the winds he speaks of are the just ones; the heads and the small wings are the kings which will stand up each in his time. – And he has subjected everything that is under the sky, he says, that signifies that he will deliver everything to his power, like The Scriptures tell it. – When he says: Do not stand watch all of you altogether, he means: "Do not make justice all together." It is thus that he spoke to his governors: "All of you, you shall reign and shall govern after me, each of you for a thousand years."

Oh impostor! who taught you of such lies? In the past, like you, Mahamad (Mahomet) said: 'After the resurrection of the dead ones, a man will marry a thousand wives.' The one who said: "You shall reign each of you a thousand years", lied; and the one who said: "A man will marry a thousand women", equally lied.

When he says: It is not from her head, but from the middle of her body that he will come forward, that signifies that he will be born out of the bloodline of a woman from the house of Esau.

– When he says again: eight kings whose years will be evil, and here are their names: Nâdi, Sadi, Halqâdi, Sâhwadi, 'Abâdi, Asrâdi, Hamadi, 'Arodi – and this one will die from the hand of an orthodox king, and when he will die, he will remain thirteen cycles one hundred years less three and three weeks which will be added. – And these ones will reign in the times that will be assigned to them. After them, two kings will arise, in their times, in Rome and in the country of Sa'aladin, which will be called a tyrant. But he will be conquered by the orthodox who had been made kings in Ethiopia.

Here is everything that the angel described, before its coming to pass, to the blissful Basalota-Mikâ'êl. – As for the three kings which are spoken of, they will reign for a hundred years, before the passing of the kings that shall arise with the false messiah, which will be the third. And it is clearly said: "They will die from a blow of javelin from your hand in a war and one will die in his bed." – When he said: "After he will have suffered", that is the false messiah who will suffer by the sword of God; and the lion which arose from the desert, is The Son, (that will rise up) from the middle of nations. As Isaiah says it: And the nations will shout, (the nations who are) the trees of the plain. And Solomon told to the Christian Church: "Raise up and ascend from the plain", that is to say from the nations. David also says: "The plain will rejoice, together with everything it encloses", which means: the nations will rejoice. – And I shall rejoice those who will remain of my people until the judgment day will be over.

If he speaks thus, it is because the judgment day will have a length of a thousand years. This will be then the joy of the chosen ones and while these ones will rejoice, the sinners will object. Blessed will then be the one who has believed in Christ. When even though the sins of the believer will be as big as mountains and numerous, if his justness is like a spark, this little justness will carry him through and erase all his sins. Glory to The One who gave the faith to the one whom He loves and the incredulity to the one whom He detests. All those who say: "The orthodox Christians will be accursed", those ones are without Christ, for if they are called Christians and if they observe the precepts of justice, the judgment (the damnation) cannot reach them.

When the apostles were on the point to scatter themselves in the countries of the world, Peter said: Any one who is not a believer will not be justified (*will not save his soul*), this is my doctrine and what I shall teach. – Andrew said: The one who is not compassionate will not be justified, this is what I say and what I shall teach. – James said: The one who will not be decapitated(?) for God will not be justified, This is the word which I shall teach. – John said: The one who is not chaste in his virginity, will not be justified, this is the doctrine I shall teach. – Phillip said: The one who swore in vain, will not be justified, this is what I shall teach. – Bartholomew said: The one who does not honor his father and his mother will not be justified, this is what I shall teach. – Thomas said: The one who has not been slain like a calf, will not be justified, this is my teaching. – Matthew said: The one who is not gentle like the dove will not be justified, this is what I shall teach. – Thaddeus said: The one who is not zealous for the law will not be justified, this is what I shall teach. – Nathaniel said: The one who will not cause his body to suffer on the cross will not be justified, this is what I shall teach. – James, son of Alphaeus, said: The one who has not been stoned will not be justified, this is what I shall preach. – Matthias said: Whoever is not impoverished will not be justified, this is what I shall teach.

When all the apostles had spoken like this, Paul spoke and told them: Listen to me, my brothers, this is the doctrine I shall teach: The one who will believe and will have been baptized will be saved, but the one who will not believe will be condemned. The one who does not love his fellow man will not be justified; the one who hates his fellow man will be damned. Thus, he said, I shall preach.

When the apostles had discoursed in this way, Our Lord Jesus Christ arrived and told them: May the peace be with you, my disciples. And they got up and adored Him and knew He was Our Lord. He told them: What did I tell you yesterday? Certainly, I enjoyed the words of Paul, my chosen one, his words were more pleasant to me than all of yours. Did I not tell you in The Scripture: The one who believes and who was baptized will be saved and the one who does not believe will be condemned. And through which work will man be saved, if he does not have the faith and the love (for his fellow man) and the faith? This is better than being a martyr. No man is absolutely without fault; Only God is perfect. And you, aren't you men? Observe the heaven; not even it has been pure before me.

You, Peter, you have renounced me three times during the night and I have pardoned you your sin. Nevertheless, there is no bigger sin than rejecting the creator. – You, John, while I was being attached to the cross, you rejoiced with the princes of priests. – You, Andrew, you went out for Hêguâ(?). – You, James, after having abandoned your clothes, you ran away. – You, Phillip, you went out in the middle of the city. – You, Bartholomew, you ran away with Râkub, the son of your sister. – You, Thomas, you disappeared, riding in a cart. – You, Matthew, you hid yourself in the city and you came out, during the night, in secret. – You, Thaddeus, you went out wrapped up in a veil. – You,

Nathaniel, you hid yourself in a forest. – You, James, son of Alphaeus, you hid yourself in a field. – This is what you have done, yet I have never walked away from you, but I have chosen you to be my inheritors.

After Our Lord's ascension, the apostles said: It should be that we die for the name of Christ, our God.

And the martyrs arrived successively, saying: let us deliver our souls for the name of Christ, our God. After them all, there came the monks, for it is in them that the perfect reward was placed. This is the work and the sanctity of Antoine, the first of the monks, for nobody in the world fought (*led an ascetic life*) like Antoine. His father was, in the world, very rich, owning 500 pairs of bullocks. And while being in this situation, he died like every man. And Antoine cried: What have you become? Oh, my father, where is your voice who gave orders to your servants? And this accident was only caused to you by a light breath that is no more and that you have no more. After having pronounced these words, Antoine went out into the desert; he was then eighteen years old. Antoine had twelve main temptations, but he had many others; he shone like twelve times the measure (light) of sun, while the saints only shine like seven; there are some that shine like the moon, there are some that shine like the stars.

And this is what was the constancy of Antoine. Firstly (he was tested) by a woman, secondly by the Arabs, thirdly by the demons who made him come down from the mountain thirty times, fourthly by the hunger, fifthly by the thirst, sixth by the animals, seventh by the sword, eighth by a blow of lance, and this blow of lance (he received it) at the infidels(?); ninth by the "anqâl" that is to say by the lice, tenth by the voice which was telling him: go back to the world; eleventh by the calls that men gave him; twelfth by the evening primroses. – And these saints (monks) conquered the demon, by remembering that this world is temporary.

And the man of God asked the angel who was sent to him and told him: What will then happen at the end of the world? – The angel answered to him: A wicked king will reign, as The Scriptures say it. And John of the Apocalypse says: The Lord will arrive, riding a white horse.

As for the impostor, such will be his work: He will be born after having torn up the bosom of his mother and will kill his father; he will sit on a throne and will reign. And when the days of his reign shall be over, Our Lord will fight him with His army. – But Elias, of Tisbe (Tesbeyâwi) will strike him first in the chest; Joshua, son of Nâwe, in the forehead; David, the musician, pierced his loins with the lance; Peter knocked his horse with the lance, and Theodore and Claudius, after having cut his head, broke through his breastplate; John carried a new blow to his horse.

Then a strong voice shall be heard shouting: I am the one who killed him, it is I who have arrived first (to kill him). – And the fire of anger, coming from the mouth of The Lord, will kill him and his army shall perish with him. Elias will put a crown of gold around his neck, Joshua will put on a green garment of gold; Peter a frontal(?) of gold; John his white necklace(?), Theodore and Claudius the red crowns; David and other just ones their bands(?) of gold. Then the resurrection will take place, as well as the judgment: the heaven, which is wrapped up around His throne, like a letter that God had hidden, will unroll before the chosen ones. This earth will be like an earth which is walked on by the feet of the just.

There will be then a new heaven and a new earth and paradise will show itself. – When the trees of paradise will produce fruits, these fruits will be men. And if he says when they will produce fruits, that signifies when they will do good works. For the one who teaches one word from the psalms of David, this word shall produce 10.000 fruits each day. Do not reveal this mystery if not to doctors, hide and do not reveal a secret which comes from God. The one who keeps the word of God, values more than the gold and the silver, for everything that touches the flesh (the body) is like the grass and all honour like the fruit of the grass, but the word of God stands for eternity.

The book of the mystery is finished; we read it to marvel the one who will understand the admirable lecture of this book and it shall enlighten, like the replenishing sun, the heart of man.

The Kebra Nagast: Short Sections

The introduction and notes have been prepared by John Terry (2021) and the translation is that of E.A. Wallis Budge, *The Kebra Nagast* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1932) and the full version can be found online at Internet Sacred Text Archive (as well as copyright information here). A note on the translation: in the absence of more modern and accurate open-access translations, Budge's translation style includes stilted and archaic language (e.g. "mayest" or "lovest" for "may" and "love") that has no real connection to the original Ge'ez.

Introduction to the Text

The *Kebra Nagast*, often known as the "national epic of Ethiopia," is a long text written in Ge'ez in the 1300s which details the history of Ethiopian monarchs who descend from King Solomon. This narrative is an invention of the fourteenth century meant to support the concept of a "sacred dynasty" anointed by God. The excerpts we'll focus on most closely involve the relationship between Solomon and Makeda (the Queen of Sheba in the southern Arabian Peninsula), the rise of their son Menelik, the transporting of the Ark of the Covenant to his kingdom in Ethiopia, and the eventual conversion of Ethiopia (the kingdom of Axum) to Christianity in the 300s. The *Kebra Nagast* is an exceptionally powerful piece of political ideology and is seen by many modern Ethiopian Orthodox Christians as a historically accurate account attesting to a direct line between ancient, medieval, and modern authority.¹

Here is a general outline of the *Kebra Nagast* (with sections included below in bold):

- The Trinity, which resides in the Tabernacle, creates the first man, Adam
- Some of the main stories of Hebrew Scripture (such as Noah and Abraham) are retold
- **Queen Makeda of Sheba (who is mentioned in I Kings 10:1-13 and II Chronicles 9:1-12, and whose kingdom is possibly in Yemen/Ethiopia, straddling the Red Sea) hears about the legendary wisdom of King Solomon and visits him in Jerusalem from a merchant called Tanrin, who has been helping supply Solomon's kingdom with building material for the Temple**
- After the exchange of gifts and conversation, Makeda converts to Judaism

- **After a celebratory banquet, Makeda and Solonon have sex, conceiving a son, Menelik (referred to in this translation as BAYNA-LEḤKEM)**
- Menelik is raised in Ethiopia but visits his father Solomon in Jerusalem as a teenager, where he is anointed king of Ethiopia after a few years studying the Torah
- **On departure, one among Menelik's group steals the Ark of the Covenant, replaces it with a duplicate, and snuggles it to Ethiopia,**
- God tells Solomon in a dream not to pursue the Ark because it was his will that it leave Jerusalem, signifying the transfer of God's favor to his kingdom
- The author(s) resume a retelling of some of the main events of Hebrew Scripture
- The story of Christ is retold, and the author(s) imply his descent from Solomon

The *Kebra Nagast* can be seen as analogous to a spinoff of an original story—sort of like the multiple films and television series inspired by the original *Star Wars* trilogy. As we can see from the general outline above, the *Kebra Nagast* attempts to graft Ethiopian history onto biblical history. Many historians refer to this as “providential history,” a type of (mostly premodern) history writing that claims divine endorsement and guiding of specific human activities. Providential histories take for granted that the history of a certain people or state is anointed by God to do his will.

Historical Context: Christianity in Medieval Ethiopia

The *Kebra Nagast* claims an unbroken line from Solomon to the present, but in historical context it's clear that the “Solomonic Dynasty” began as an ideology around 1270, when Yekuno Amlak overthrew the Zagwe Dynasty with the support of the church to form his own. In order to gain legitimacy, a new dynasty needs a powerful ideology, and the Solomonic Dynasty found one in claiming descent from Solomon himself. As a consequence, historians know comparatively little about the Zagwe Dynasty.

As providential history the *Kebra Nagast* smooths over a complex religious history in east Africa. Even earlier than the Zagwe, the Kingdom of Axum began converting to Christianity in the 300s under King Ezana. Prior to this Axumites had practiced polytheistic religions prominent in both East Africa and southern Arabia. The Axumites developed a rich Christian tradition of coinage, architecture, and manuscript production so that by the time of the Zagwe there was already an ancient history of Christian rulership and culture on the ground in Ethiopia.



Fig 2: The

Garima Gospels, possibly the earliest known illustrated gospel book (c. 500s-600s), and an outstanding example of medieval Ethiopian manuscript production (image © Michael Gervers, University of Toronto).

The Zagwe Dynasty's most famous contribution to medieval Ethiopian Christianity is probably the complex of churches at Lalibela, named for King Lalibela, all of which are carved out of natural stone in the 1100s—in other words, they're more sculptures than buildings.

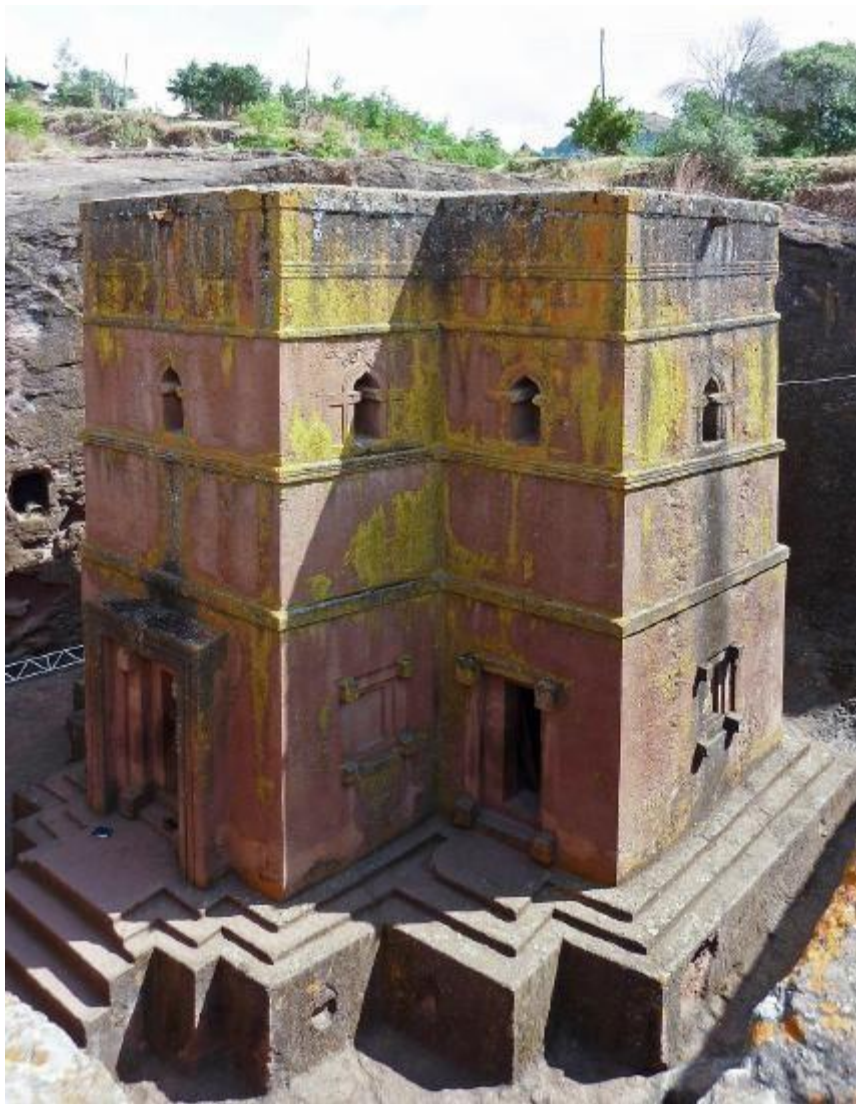


Fig. 3: The church of St.

Georgia at Lalibela, a carved church in a cruciform shape (Wikimedia Commons)

All of this matters because, by the time of the writing of the *Kebra Nagast*, promoters of the Solomonic Dynasty were drawing on an ancient Christian tradition nearly a millennium old. How could they hope to convince people in east Africa and beyond that they were the rightful continuators of this tradition of art, architecture, manuscript production, and theology? By locating their roots in the reign of King Solomon and claiming direct descent from him, they were able to provide powerful legitimacy to their rule, which, while it ceased in the late 1700s as a direct family line, continued to be claimed until the death of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1975—the so-called 110th descendant of Menelik.

Excerpts

Discussion questions have been added after each short section of the *Kebra Nagast* below. This can help break up the longer text for classroom use. General discussion and response questions include:

- 1) What is the main argument of this text, and how do the authors seek to advance that argument?
- 2) Consider the implications of the *Kebrā Nagast*. What range of reactions do you think there might have been when it was popularized in the medieval period?
- 3) Think about national myths or stories you know about (either in your own country or elsewhere). What kinds of stories do people like to tell about their origins? How does this compare?

24. How the Queen nade ready to set out on her Journey

And the Queen said unto them, "Hearken, O ye who are my people, and give ye ear to my words. For I desire wisdom and my heart seeks to find understanding. I am smitten with the love of wisdom, and I am constrained by the cords of understanding; for wisdom is far better than treasure of gold and silver, and wisdom is the best of everything that hath been created on the earth. Now unto what under the heavens shall wisdom be compared? It is sweeter than honey, and it makes one to rejoice more than wine, and it brightens more than the sun, and it is to be loved more than precious stones. And it fattens more than oil, and it satisfies more than dainty meats, and it gives [a man] more renown than thousands of gold and silver. It is a source of joy for the heart, and a bright and shining light for the eyes, and a giver of speed to the feet, and a shield for the breast, and a helmet for the head, and chain-work for the neck, and a belt for the loins. It makes the ears to hear and hearts to understand, it is a teacher of those who are learned, and it is a consoler of those who are discreet and prudent, and it gives fame to those who seek after it. And as for a kingdom, it cannot stand without wisdom, and riches cannot be preserved without wisdom; the foot cannot keep the [p. 22] place wherein it hath set itself without wisdom. And without wisdom that which the tongue speaks is not acceptable. Wisdom is the best of all treasures. He who heaps up gold and silver does so to no profit without wisdom, but he who heaps up wisdom—no man can filch it from his heart. That which fools heap up the wise consume. And because of the wickedness of those who do evil the righteous are praised; and because of the wicked acts of fools the wise are beloved. Wisdom is an exalted thing and a rich thing: I will love her like a mother, and she shall embrace me like her child. I will follow the footprints of wisdom and she shall protect me for ever; I will seek after wisdom, and she shall be with me for ever; I will follow her footprints, and she shall not cast me away; I will lean upon her, and she shall be unto me a wall of adamant; I will seek asylum with her, and she shall be unto me power and strength; I will rejoice in her, and she shall be unto me abundant grace. For it is right for us to follow the footprints of wisdom, and for the soles of our feet to stand upon the threshold of the gates of wisdom. Let us seek her, and we shall find her; let us love her, and she will not withdraw herself from us; let us pursue her, and we shall overtake her; let us ask, and we shall receive; and let us turn our hearts to her so that we may never forget her. If [we] remember her, she will have us in remembrance; and in connection with fools thou shalt not remember wisdom, for they do not hold her in honor, and she doth not love them. The honoring of wisdom is the honouring of the wise man, and the loving of wisdom is the loving of the wise man. Love the wise man and withdraw not thyself from him, and by the sight of him thou shalt become wise; hearken to the utterance of his mouth, so that you may become like unto him; watch the place whereon he hath set his foot, and leave him not, so that you may receive the remainder of his wisdom. And I love him merely on [p. 23] hearing concerning him and without seeing him, and the whole story of him that hath been told me is to me as the desire of my heart, and like water to the thirsty man."

And her nobles, and her slaves, and her handmaidens, and her counselors answered and said unto her, "O our Lady, as for wisdom, it is not lacking in thee, and it is because of thy wisdom that thou loves wisdom. And to for us, if thou goes we will go with thee, and if thou sits down we will sit down with thee; our death shall be with thy death, and our life with thy life." Then the Queen made ready to set out on her journey with great pomp and majesty, and with great equipment and many preparations. For, by the Will of God, her heart desired to go to JERUSALEM so that she might hear the Wisdom of SOLOMON; for she had hearkened eagerly. So she made ready to set out. And seven hundred and ninety-seven camels were loaded, and mules and asses innumerable were loaded, and she set out on her journey and followed her road without pause, and her heart had confidence in God.

25. How the Queen came to SOLOMON *the King*

And she arrived in JERUSALEM, and brought to the King very many precious gifts which he desired to possess greatly. And he paid her great honour and rejoiced, and he gave her a habitation in the royal palace near him. And he sent her food both for the morning and evening meal, each time fifteen measures by the *kôrî* of finely ground white meal, cooked with oil and gravy and sauce in abundance, and thirty measures by the *kôrî* of crushed white meal wherefrom bread for three hundred and fifty people was made, with the necessary platters and trays, and ten stalled oxen, and five bulls, and fifty sheep, without (counting) the kids, and deer, and gazelles and fatted fowls, and a vessel of wine containing sixty *gerrât* measures, and thirty measures of old wine, and twenty-five singing men and twenty-five singing [p. 24] women, and the finest honey and rich sweets, and some of the food which he himself ate, and some of the wine whereof he drank.² And every day he arrayed her in eleven garments which bewitched the eyes. And he visited her and was gratified, and she visited him and was gratified, and she saw his wisdom, and his just judgments and his splendor, and his grace, and heard the eloquence of his speech. And she marveled in her heart, and was utterly astonished in her mind, and she recognized in her understanding, and perceived very clearly with her eyes how admirable he was; and she wondered exceedingly because of what she saw and heard with him—how perfect he was in composure, and wise in understanding, and pleasant in graciousness, and commanding in stature. And she observed the subtlety of his voice, and the discreet utterances of his lips, and that he gave his commands with dignity, and that his replies were made quietly and with the fear of God. All these things she saw, and she was astonished at the abundance of his wisdom, and there was nothing whatsoever wanting in his word and speech, but everything that he spoke was perfect.

And SOLOMON was working at the building of the House of God, and he rose up and went to the right and to the left, and forward and backward. And he showed the workmen the measurement and weight and the space covered [by the materials], and he told the workers in metal how to use the hammer, and the drill, and the chisel, and he showed the stone-masons the angle [measure] and the circle and the surface [measure]. And everything was wrought by his order, and there was none who set himself in opposition to his word; for the light of his heart was like a lamp in the darkness, and his wisdom was as abundant as the sand. And of the speech of the beasts and the birds there was nothing hidden from him, and he forced the devils to obey him by his wisdom. And he did everything by means of the [p. 25] skill which God gave him when he made supplication to Him; for he did not ask for victory over his enemy, and he did not ask for riches and fame, but he

asked God to give him wisdom and understanding whereby he might rule his people, and build His House, and beautify the work of God and all that He had given him [in] wisdom and understanding.

26. How the King held converse with the Queen

And the Queen MÂKĒDÂ spoke to King SOLOMON, saying, "Blessed art thou, my lord, in that such wisdom and understanding have been given unto thee. For myself I only wish that I could be as one of the least of your handmaidens, so that I could wash thy feet, and hearken to thy wisdom, and apprehend thy understanding, and serve thy majesty, and enjoy thy wisdom. O how greatly have pleased me thy answering, and the sweetness of thy voice, and the beauty of thy going, and the graciousness of thy words, and the readiness thereof. The sweetness of thy voice makes the heart to rejoice, and makes the bones fat, and gives courage to hearts, and goodwill and grace to the lips, and strength to the gait. I look upon thee and I see that thy wisdom is immeasurable and your understanding inexhaustible, and that it is like unto a lamp in the darkness, and like unto a pomegranate in the garden, and like unto a pearl in the sea, and like unto the Morning Star among the stars, and like unto the light of the moon in the mist, and like unto a glorious dawn and sunrise in the heavens. And I give thanks unto Him that brought me hither and showed thee to me, and made me to tread upon the threshold of thy gate, and made me to hear thy voice."

And King SOLOMON answered and said unto her, "Wisdom and understanding spring from thee thyself. As for me, [I only possess them] in the measure in which the God of ISRAEL hath given [them] to me because I asked and entreated them from Him. And thou, [p. 26] although you do not know the God of ISRAEL, hast this wisdom which thou hast made to grow in your heart, and [it hath made thee come] to see me, the vassal and slave of my God, and the building of His sanctuary which I am establishing, and wherein I serve and move round about my Lady, the Tabernacle of the Law of the God of ISRAEL, the holy and heavenly ZION. Now, I am the slave of my God, and I am not a free man; I do not serve according to my own will but according to His Will. And this speech of mine springs not from myself, but I give utterance only to what He makes me to utter. Whatsoever He commands me that I do; wheresoever He wishes me to go thither I go; whatsoever He teaches me that I speak; that concerning which He gives me wisdom I understand. For from being only dust He hath made me flesh, and from being only water He hath made me a solid man, and from being only an ejected drop, which shot forth upon the ground would have dried up on the surface of the earth, He hath fashioned me in His own likeness and hath made me in His own image."

- Characterize this first meeting between Solomon and Makeda. What are they both concerned with, and why?

28. How SOLOMON gave *Commandments to the Queen*

And the King answered and said unto her, "Verily, it is right that they (i.e., men) should worship God, Who created the universe, the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land, the sun and the moon, the stars and the brilliant bodies of the heavens, the trees and the stones, the beasts and the feathered fowl, the wild beasts and the crocodiles, the fish and the whales, the hippopotamuses and the water lizards, the lightning and the crashes of thunder, the clouds and the thunders, and the good and the evil. It is meet that Him alone we should worship, in fear and trembling, with joy and with gladness. For He is the Lord of the Universe, the Creator of angels and men. And it is He Who kills [p. 29] and makes to live, it is He Who inflicts punishment and shows compassion, Who

raises up from the ground him that is in misery, Who lifts up the poor from the dust, Who makes to be sorrowful and Who to rejoice, Who raises up and Who brings down. No one can chide Him, for He is the Lord of the Universe, and there is no one who can say unto Him, 'What have you done?' And unto Him it is meet that there should be praise and thanksgiving from angels and men. And as concerning what thou says, that 'He hath given unto you the Tabernacle of the Law,' verily there hath been given unto us the Tabernacle of the God of ISRAEL, which was created before all creation by His glorious counsel. And He hath made to come down to us His commandments, done into writing, so that we may know His decree and the judgment that He hath ordained in the mountain of His holiness."

And the Queen said, "From this moment I will not worship the sun, but will worship the Creator of the sun, the God of ISRAEL. And that Tabernacle of the God of ISRAEL shall be unto me my Lady, and unto my seed after me, and unto all my kingdoms that are under my dominion. And because of this I have found favor before thee, and before the God of ISRAEL my Creator, Who hath brought me unto thee, and hath made me to hear thy voice, and hath shown me thy face, and hath made me to understand thy commandment." Then she returned to [her] house.³

And the Queen used to go [to SOLOMON] and return continually, and hearken unto his wisdom, and keep it in her heart. And SOLOMON used to go and visit her, and answer all the questions which she put to him, and the Queen used to visit him and ask him questions, and he informed her concerning every matter that she wished to enquire about. And after she had dwelt [there] six months the Queen wished to return to her own country, and she sent a message to SOLOMON, saying, "I desire [p. 30] greatly to dwell with thee, but now, for the sake of all my people, I wish to return to my own country. And as for that which I have heard, may God make it to bear fruit in my heart, and in the hearts of all those who have heard it with me. For the ear could never be filled with the hearing of thy wisdom, and the eye could never be filled with the sight of the same."

Now it was not only the Queen who came [to hear the wisdom of SOLOMON], but very many used to come from cities and countries, both from near and from far; for in those days there was no man found to be like unto him for wisdom (and it was not only human beings who came to him, but the wild animals and the birds used to come to him and hearken unto his voice, and hold converse with him), and then they returned to their own countries, and every one of them was astonished at his wisdom, and marveled at what he had seen and heard.

And when the Queen sent her message to SOLOMON, saying that she was about to depart to her own country, he pondered in his heart and said, "A woman of such splendid beauty hath come to me from the ends of the earth! What do I know? Will God give me seed in her?" Now, as it is said in the Book of KINGS, SOLOMON the King was a lover of women.⁴ And he married wives of the HEBREWS, and the EGYPTIANS, and the CANAANITES, and the EDOMITES, and the ÎYÔBÂWÎYÂN, and from RÎF⁵ and KUËRGUË, and DAMASCUS, and SÛREST(SYRIA), and women who were reported to be beautiful. And he had four hundred queens and six hundred concubines. Now this which he did was not for [the sake of] fornication, but as a result of the wise intent that God had given unto him, and his remembering what God had said unto ABRAHAM, "I will make thy seed like the stars of heaven for number, and like the sand of the sea."⁶ And SOLOMON said in his heart, "What do [p. 31] I know? Perhaps God will give me men children from each one of these women." Therefore when he

did thus he acted wisely, saying, "My children shall inherit the cities of the enemy, and shall destroy those who worship idols."

Now those early peoples lived under the law of the flesh, for the grace of the Holy Spirit had not been given unto them. And to those [who lived] after CHRIST, it was given to live with one woman under the law of marriage. And the Apostles laid down for them an ordinance, saying, "All those who have received His flesh and His blood are brethren. Their mother is the Church and their father is God, and they cry out with CHRIST Whom they have received, saying, 'Our Father, Who art in heaven.'" And as concerning SOLOMON no law had been laid down for him in respect of women, and no blame can be imputed to him in respect of marrying [many] wives. But for those who believe, the law and the command have been given that they shall not marry many wives, even as Paul saith, "Those who marry many wives seek their own punishment. He who marries one wife hath no sin."⁷ And the law restrains us from the sister [-in-law],⁸ in respect of the bearing of children. The Apostles speak [concerning it] in the [Book of] Councils.

- So far, is this conversation believable? Why or why not? What does it tell us about the preoccupations of the people who composed the *Kebra Nagast*?

30. Concerning how King SOLOMON swore to the Queen

And SOLOMON answered and said unto her, "I swear unto thee that I will not take thee by force, but thou must swear unto me that thou wilt not take by force p. 34 anything that is in my house." And the Queen laughed and said unto him, "Being a wise man why do thou speak as a fool? Shall I steal anything, or shall I carry out of the house of the King that which the King hath not given to me? Do not imagine that I have come hither through love of riches. Moreover, my own kingdom is as wealthy as yours, and there is nothing which I wish for that I lack. Assuredly I have only come in quest of thy wisdom." And he said unto her, "If you would make me swear, swear thou to me, for a swearing is meet for both [of us], so that neither of us may be unjustly treated. And if thou wilt not make me swear I will not make thee swear." And she said unto him, "Swear to me that thou wilt not take me by force, and I on my part will swear not to take by force thy possessions"; and he swore to her and made her swear.

And the King went up on his bed on the one side [of the chamber], and the servants made ready for her a bed on the other side. And SOLOMON said unto a young manservant, "Wash out the bowl and set in it a vessel of water whilst the Queen is looking on, and shut the doors and go and sleep." And SOLOMON spoke to the servant in another tongue which the Queen did not understand, and he did as the King commanded, and went and slept. And the King had not as yet fallen asleep, but he only pretended to be asleep, and he was watching the Queen intently. Now the house of SOLOMON the King was illumined as by day, for in his wisdom he had made shining pearls which were like unto the sun, and moon, and stars [and had set them] in the roof of his house.

And the Queen slept a little. And when she woke up her mouth was dry with thirst, for the food which SOLOMON had given her in his wisdom had made her thirsty, and she was very thirsty indeed, and her mouth was dry; and she moved her lips and sucked with her mouth and found no moisture. And she determined to drink the water which she had seen, and she looked [p. 35] at King SOLOMON and watched him carefully, and she thought that he was sleeping a sound sleep. But he was not asleep, and he was waiting until she should rise up to steal the water to [quench] her thirst.

And she rose up and, making no sound with her feet, she went to the water in the bowl and lifted up the jar to drink the water. And SOLOMON seized her hand before she could drink the water, and said unto her, "Why hast thou broken the oath that thou hast sworn that thou would not take by force anything that is in my house?" And she answered and said unto him in fear, "Is the oath broken by my drinking water?" And the King said unto her, "Is there anything that thou hast seen under the heavens that is better than water?" And the Queen said, "I have sinned against myself, and thou art free from [thy] oath. But let me drink water for my thirst." Then SOLOMON said unto her, "Am I perchance free from the oath which thou hast made me swear?" And the Queen said, "Be free from thy oath, only let me drink water." And he permitted her to drink water, and after she had drunk water he worked his will with her and they slept together.

And after he slept there appeared unto King SOLOMON [in a dream] a brilliant sun, and it came down from heaven and shed exceedingly great splendor over ISRAEL. And when it had tarried there for a time it suddenly withdrew itself, and it flew away to the country of ETHIOPIA, and it shone there with exceedingly great brightness for ever, for it willed to dwell there. And [the King said], "I waited [to see] if it would come back to ISRAEL, but it did not return. And again while I waited a light rose up in the heavens, and a Sun came down from them in the country of JUDAH, and it sent forth light which was very much stronger than before." And ISRAEL, because of the [p. 36] flame of that Sun entreated that Sun evilly and would not walk in the light thereof. And that Sun paid no heed to ISRAEL, and the ISRAELITES hated Him, and it became impossible that peace should exist between them and the Sun. And they lifted up their hands against Him with staves and knives, and they wished to extinguish that Sun. And they cast darkness upon the whole world with earthquake and thick darkness, and they imagined that that Sun would never more rise upon them. And they destroyed His light and cast themselves upon Him and they set a guard over His tomb wherein they had cast Him. And He came forth where they did not look for Him, and illumined the whole world, more especially the First Sea and the Last Sea, ETHIOPIA and RÔM.⁹ And He paid no heed whatsoever to ISRAEL, and He ascended His former throne.

And when SOLOMON the King saw this vision in his sleep, his soul became disturbed, and his understanding was snatched away as by [a flash of] lightning, and he woke up with an agitated mind. And moreover, SOLOMON marveled concerning the Queen, for she was vigorous in strength, and beautiful of form, and she was undefiled in her virginity; and she had reigned for six years in her own country, and, notwithstanding her gracious attraction and her splendid form, had preserved her body pure. And the Queen said unto SOLOMON, "Dismiss me, and let me depart to my own country." And he went into his house and gave unto her whatsoever she wished for of splendid things and riches, and beautiful apparel which bewitched the eyes, and everything on which great store was set in the country of ETHIOPIA, and camels and wagons, six thousand in number, which were laden with beautiful things of the most desirable kind, and wagons wherein loads were carried over the desert, and a vessel wherein one could travel over the sea, and a vessel wherein one could [p. 37] traverse the air (or winds), which SOLOMON had made by the wisdom that God had given unto him.

- Consider the issues of gender roles and consent in this section. Why does Solomon trick Makeda into sleeping with him? How do you think the medieval audience of this story would interpret it?

31. Concerning the sign which SOLOMON gave the Queen

And the Queen rejoiced, and she went forth in order to depart, and the King set her on her way with great pomp and ceremony. And SOLOMON took her aside so that they might be alone together, and he took off the ring that was upon his little finger, and he gave it to the Queen, and said unto her, "Take [this] so that thou may not forget me. And if it happen that I obtain seed from thee, this ring shall be unto it a sign; and if it be a man child he shall come to me; and the peace of God be with thee! Whilst I was sleeping with thee I saw many visions in a dream, [and it seemed] as if a sun had risen upon ISRAEL, but it snatched itself away and flew off and lighted up the country of ETHIOPIA; peradventure that country shall be blessed through thee; God knows. And as for thee, observe what I have told thee, so that thou may worship God with all thy heart and perform His Will. For He punishes those who are arrogant, and He shows compassion upon those who are humble, and He removes the thrones of the mighty, and He makes to be honored those who are needy. For death and life are from Him, and riches and poverty are bestowed by His Will. For everything is His, and none can oppose His command and His judgment in the heavens, or in the earth, or in the sea, or in the abysses. And may God be with thee! Go in peace." And they separated from each other.

32. How the Queen brought forth and came to her own Country

And the Queen departed and came into the country of BÂLÂ ZADÎSÂRĒYÂ¹⁰ nine months and five days after she [p. 38] had separated from King SOLOMON. And the pains of childbirth laid hold upon her, and she brought forth a man child, and she gave it to the nurse with great pride and delight. And she tarried until the days of her purification were ended, and then she came to her own country with great pomp and ceremony. And her officers who had remained there brought gifts to their mistress, and made obeisance to her, and did homage to her, and all the borders of the country rejoiced at her coming. Those who were nobles among them she arrayed in splendid apparel, and to some she gave gold and silver, and hyacinth and purple robes; and she gave them all manner of things that could be desired. And she ordered her kingdom aright, and none disobeyed her command; for she loved wisdom and God strengthened her kingdom.

And the child grew and she called his name BAYNA-LEḤKEM.¹¹ And the child reached the age of twelve years, and he asked his friends among the boys who were being educated with him, and said unto them, "Who is my father?" And they said unto him, "SOLOMON the King." And he went to the Queen his mother, and said unto her, "O Queen, make me to know who is my father." And the Queen spoke unto him angrily, wishing to frighten him so that he might not desire to go [to his father] saying, "Why do you ask me about thy father? I am thy father and thy mother; seek not to know any more." And the boy went forth from her presence, and sat down. And a second time, and a third time he asked her, and he importuned her to tell him. One day, however, she told him, saying, "His country is far away, and the road thither is very difficult; would you not rather be here?" And the youth BAYNA-LEḤKEM was handsome, and his whole body and his members, and the bearing of his shoulders resembled those of King SOLOMON his father, and his eyes, and his legs, and his p. 39 whole gait resembled those of SOLOMON the King. And when he was two and twenty years old he was skilled in the whole art of war and of horsemanship, and in the hunting and trapping of wild beasts, and in everything that young men are wont to learn. And he said unto the Queen, "I will go and look upon the face of my father, and I will come back here by the Will of God, the Lord of ISRAEL."

- What does the Makeda mean by "I am your father and your mother"? What do you think this statement has to do with the overall argument of the text?

46. How they made a plan concerning ZION

And while AZÂRYÂS¹² was asleep at night the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, "Take to thee four goats, each a yearling—now they shall be for your sins, thyself, and 'ÊLMEYÂS, and 'ABÎS, and MÂKRÎ—and four pure sheep, yearlings also, and an ox whereon no yoke hath ever been laid. And thou shalt offer up the ox as a sacrifice on the east side of her [p. 69] (i.e., ZION), and the sheep and the goats to the right, and left thereof, and at the west of it, which is close to its exit. And your Lord DAVID shall speak to SOLOMON the King and shall say unto him, 'One thing I ask from thee, O father, I would offer up a sacrifice to the holy city JERUSALEM, and to my Lady ZION, the holy and heavenly Tabernacle of the Law of God.' And SOLOMON shall say unto him, 'Do so.' And DAVID shall say unto him, 'Let the son of the priest offer up sacrifice on my behalf, even as he knows'; and he will give thee the command, and thou shalt offer up the sacrifice. And thou shalt bring forth the Tabernacle of the Law of God after thou hast offered up the sacrifice, and I will again show thee what thou shalt do in respect of it as to bringing it out; for this is from God. For ISRAEL hath provoked God to wrath, and for this reason He will make the Tabernacle of the Law of God to depart from him."

And when AZÂRYÂS awoke from his dream he rejoiced greatly, and his heart and his mind were clear, and he remembered everything that the Angel of the Lord had shown him in the night, and how he had sealed him [with the sign of the Cross], and given him strength and heartened him. And he went to his brethren, and when they were gathered together he told them everything that the Angel of God had shown him: how the Tabernacle of the Law of God had been given to them, and how God had made blind His eye in respect of the kingdom of ISRAEL, and how its glory had been given to others, and they themselves were to take away the Tabernacle of the Law of God, and how the kingdom of SOLOMON was to be seized by them—with the exception of two "rods", and how it was not to be left to ÎYÔRBĚ'ÂM (REHOBAM) his son, and how the kingdom of ISRAEL was to be divided. And [AZÂRYÂS said], "Rejoice with me. I rejoice because it hath been shown unto me thus; for the grace of their priesthood and [p. 70] kingdom shall depart with us, and it shall be by the Will of God. Thus said he (i.e., the Angel) unto me. And now come ye, and let us go and tell DAVID our Lord so that he may say to his father, 'I will offer up a sacrifice.'"

And they went and told [DAVID, the son of SOLOMON] and he rejoiced, and he sent to YÔ'AS (BENAIAS),¹³ the son of YÔDÂĤĚ, to come to him, that he might send him to his father, and he came. And DAVID sent him to his father SOLOMON, and he said unto him, "Send me away, for I will depart to my own country, together with everything that thy goodness hath given me; and may thy prayers accompany me always wherever I go. But now there is one petition which I would make unto thee, if peradventure I have found grace with thee, and turn not away thy face from me. For I thy servant am going to depart, and I wish to offer up a sacrifice of propitiation (or, salvation) for my sins in this thy holy city of JERUSALEM and of ZION, the Tabernacle of the Law of God. And peace [be] with thy majesty."

47. Concerning the offering of AZÂRYÂS (AZARIAH) and the King

And YÔÂS (BENAIHA), the son of YÔDÂHÊ, went and told King SOLOMON, and the King rejoiced over it and commanded them to make ready the altar of offering so that his son might sacrifice. And he brought and gave unto him that which he had vowed to God, one hundred bulls, one hundred oxen, ten thousand sheep, ten thousand goats, and ten of every kind of animal that may be eaten, and ten of every kind of clean bird, so that he might offer libations and sacrifices to the God of ISRAEL; and twenty silver *sâhal* of fine white flour, each weighing twelve shekels, and forty baskets of bread. All these things did SOLOMON the King give unto his son DAVID. And again DAVID sent a message saying, "Let AZÂRYÂS the priest offer up sacrifice on my behalf"; and SOLOMON [p. 71] said unto him, "Do that which thou wishest." And AZÂRYÂS rejoiced because of this thing, and he went and brought from his father's flock an ox whereon never yoke had been laid, and four yearlings of the goats and four clean yearlings of the sheep. And the king went to offer up sacrifice, and the priests made themselves ready, and the poor folk were gathered together, and the birds of the heavens rejoiced, and they were all united in their great gladness that day. And AZÂRYÂS mingled [his offerings] with the offerings of the king, and he made an offering with his vessels, even as the Angel of God had commanded him to do by night. And then, after they had offered up their sacrifices, they went back to their houses and slept.

48. How they carried away ZION

And behold, the Angel of the Lord appeared again to AZÂRYÂS and he stood up above him like a pillar of fire, and he filled the house with his light. And he raised up AZÂRYÂS and said unto him, "Stand up, be strong, and rouse up thy brother ÊLMËYÂS, and 'ABËSÂ, and MÂKARÎ, and take the pieces of wood and I will open for thee the doors of the sanctuary. And take thou the Tabernacle of the Law of God, and thou shalt carry it without trouble and discomfort. And I, inasmuch as I have been commanded by God to be with it for ever, will be thy guide when thou shalt carry it away."

And AZÂRYÂS rose up straightway, and woke up the three men his brethren, and they took the pieces of wood, and went into the house of God—now they found all the doors open, both those that were outside and those that were inside—to the actual place where AZÂRYÂS found ZION, the Tabernacle of the Law of God; and it was taken away by them forthwith, in the twinkling of an eye, the Angel of the Lord being present and directing. And had it not been that [p. 72] God willed it ZION could not have been taken away forthwith. And the four of them carried ZION away, and they brought it into the house of AZÂRYÂS, and they went back into the house of God, and they set the pieces of wood on the place where ZION had been, and they covered them over with the covering of ZION, and they shut the doors, and went back to their houses. And they took lamps and set them in the place where [ZION] was hidden, and they sacrificed the sheep thereto, and burned offerings of incense thereto, and they spread purple cloths over it and set it in a secret place for seven days and seven nights.

- The "doors of the sanctuary," that is, the Holy of Holies where the Ark was housed in the Temple, can only be open by the chief priest. What specifically are the authors implying in this part of the story?

4G. How his Father blessed his Son

And then the King of ETHIOPIA rose up to depart to his country, and he came to his father that he might pray on his behalf, and he said unto him, "Bless me, father"; and he made obeisance unto

him. And the King raised him up, and blessed him, and embraced his head, and said, "Blessed be the Lord my God Who blessed my father DAVID, and Who blessed our father ABRAHAM. May He be with thee always, and bless thy seed even as He blessed JACOB, and made his seed to be as many as the stars of heaven and the sand of the sea. And as ABRAHAM blessed ISAAC my father even so shall thy blessing be—the dew of heaven and the spaciousness of the earth—and may all animals and all the birds of the heavens, and all the beasts of the field, and the fish of the sea, be in subjection unto thee. Be thou full, and not lacking in fullness; be thou perfect, and not lacking in perfection; be gracious, and not obstinate; be in good health, and not suffering; be generous, and not vindictive; be pure, and not defiled; be righteous, and not a sinner; be merciful, and not oppressive; be sincere, and not perverse; be long-suffering, and not prone to wrath. And the enemy shall be afraid of thee, and your adversaries shall cast [p. 73] themselves under the sole of thy foot. And my Lady ZION, the holy and heavenly, the Tabernacle of the Law of God, shall be a guide unto thee at all times, a guide in respect of what thou should think in your heart and should do with thy fingers, whether it be far or near to thee, whether it be low or high to thee, whether it be strong or weak to thee, whether it be outside or inside thee, whether it be to thee in the house or in the field, whether it be visible or invisible to thee, whether it be away from or near to thee, whether it be hidden from or revealed to thee, whether it be secret or published abroad to thee—unto thee our Lady ZION, the holy and heavenly, the pure Tabernacle of the Law of God, shall be a guide." And DAVID was blessed, and he made obeisance, and departed.

53. How the Wagon was given to Ethiopia

And they halted by GĀZĀ, the city of the mother of the king, which SOLOMON the king had given to the Queen of ETHIOPIA when she came to him. And from there they came in one day to the border of ĠĒBĒṢ. (EGYPT), the name of which is "MESRĪN". And when the sons of the warriors of ISRAEL saw that they had come in one day a distance of thirteen days' march, and that they were not tired, or hungry, or thirsty, neither man nor beast, and that they all [felt] that they had eaten and drunk their fill, these sons of the warriors of ISRAEL knew and believed that this thing was from God. And they said unto their king, "Let us let down the wagons, for we have come to the water of ETHIOPIA. This is the TAKKAZĪ which flows down from ETHIOPIA, and waters the Valley of EGYPT"; and they let down their wagons there, and set up their tents.

And the sons of the warriors of ISRAEL went and drove away all the people, and they said unto [DAVID] their king, "Shall we tell thee a matter? Can you hold it [secret]?" And the King said unto them, "Yes, I can [hold it secret]. And if ye will tell it to me I will never let it go forth or repeat it to the day of my death." And they said unto him, "The sun descended from heaven, and was given on SINAI to ISRAEL, and it became the salvation of the race of ADAM, from MOSES to the seed of JESSE, and behold, it is with thee by the Will of God. It is not through us that this hath been done, but by the Will of God; it is not through us that this [p. 79] hath been done, but by the Will of Him that fashioned it and made it hath this happened. We wished, and God hath fulfilled [our wish]; we agreed concerning it, and God made it good; we held converse [concerning it], and God performed; we meditated [upon it], and God devised the plan; we spoke, and God was well pleased; we directed our gaze, and God directed it rightly; we meditated, and God hath justified. And now God hath chosen thee, and is well pleased with thy city, to be the servant of the holy and heavenly ZION, the Tabernacle of the Law of God; and it shall be to thee a guide for ever, to thee and thy seed after thee if thou wilt keep His command and perform the Will of the Lord thy God. For you will not be able to

take it back, even if you wish, and thy father cannot seize it, even if he wishes, for it goes of its own free will however it wishes, and it cannot be removed from its seat if it doth not desire it. And behold, it is our Lady, our Mother and our salvation, our fortress and our place of refuge, our glory and the haven of our safety, to those who lean upon it."

And AZÂRYÂS made a sign to ÊLMEYÂS, and he said unto him, "Go, beautify, and dress our Lady, so that our King may see her." And when AZÂRYÂS had said this, King DAVID was perturbed and he laid both hands upon his breast, and he drew breath three times and said, "Have You in truth, O Lord, remembered us in Your mercy, the castaways, the people whom You have rejected, so that I may see Your pure habitation, which is in heaven, the holy and heavenly ZION? With what shall we requite the Lord in return for all the good things which He hath done for us? there being with Him no glory and praise! He hath crowned us with His grace, so that we may know upon earth His praise and may all serve Him according to His greatness. For He is the Good One to His chosen ones, and unto Him belongs praise for ever."

[p. 80]

And King [DAVID] rose up and skipped about like a young sheep and like a kid of the goats that has sucked milk in abundance from his mother, even as his grandfather DAVID rejoiced before the Tabernacle of the Law of God. He smote the ground with his feet, and rejoiced in his heart, and uttered cries of joy with his mouth. And what shall I say of the great joy and gladness that were in the camp of the King of ETHIOPIA? One man told his neighbor, and they smote the ground with their feet like young bulls, and they clapped their hands together, and marveled, and stretched out their hands to heaven, and they cast themselves down with their faces to the ground, and they gave thanks unto God in their hearts.

54. How DAVID [*the King of ETHIOPIA*] *Prophesied and Saluted ZION*

And King [DAVID] came and stood up before ZION, and he saluted it, and made obeisance to it, and said, "O Lord God of ISRAEL, to You be praise, because You do Your will and not the will of men. You make the wise man to forget his wisdom, and You destroy the counsel of the counselor, and You raise the poor man from the depth, and You set the sole of his foot upon a strong rock. For a full cup of glory is in Thy hand for those who love Thee, and a full cup of shame for those who hate Thee. As for us, our salvation shall go forth out of ZION, and He shall remove sin from His people, and goodness and mercy shall be poured out in all the world. For we are the work of His hands, and who shall rebuke us if He loves us as ISRAEL His people? And who shall reprove Him if He raises us up to heaven His throne? For death and life are from Him, and glory and dishonor are in His hand, He hath the power to punish and to multiply His compassion, and He can be wroth and multiply His mercy, for it is He who tries the heart and the reins. [p. 81] He gives and He takes away, He plants and He uproots. He builds up and He throws down. He beautifies and He deforms; for everything belongs to Him, and everything is from Him, and everything exists in Him. And as for thee, O Tabernacle of the Law of God, salvation be whither you go, and from the place whence you go forth; salvation be in the house and in the field, salvation be here and be there, salvation be in the palace and in the lowly place, salvation be on the sea and on the dry land, salvation be in the mountains and in the hills, salvation be in the heavens and on the earth, salvation be in the firm grounds and in the abysses, salvation be in death and in life, salvation be in thy coming and in thy going forth, salvation be to our children and to the tribe of thy people, salvation be in thy countries and in thy cities, salvation be to

the kings and to the nobles, salvation be to the plants and to the fruits, salvation be to men and to beasts, salvation be to the birds and to the creeping things of the earth; be salvation, be an intercessor, and a merciful one, and have regard for thy people. Be unto us a wall, and we will be unto thee a fence; be thou a king unto us and we will be thy people; be thou a guide unto us and we will follow after thee. And be not impatient, and mark not closely, and be not angry at the multitude of our sins, for we are a people who have not the Law, and who have not learned Your praise. And from this time forward guide us, and teach us, and make us to have understanding, and make us to have wisdom that we may learn Your praise. And Your name shall be praised by us at all times, and all the day, and every day, and every night, and every hour, and all the length of time. Give us power that we may serve You. Rise up, ZION, and put on thy strength, and conquer your enemies, and give us strength, our queen, and put thou to shame those who hate thee, and make to rejoice those who love thee."

[p. 82]

And then he made a circuit and said, "Behold ZION, behold salvation, behold the one who rejoices, behold the splendor like the sun, behold the one adorned with praise, behold the one who is decorated like a bride, not with the apparel of fleeting glory, but the one who is decorated with the glory and praise which are from God, whom it is meet that [men] shall look upon with desire and shall not forsake; whom [men] shall desire above all things and shall not reject; whom [men] shall love willingly and shall not hate; whom [men] shall approach willingly and shall not keep afar off. We will draw nigh unto thee, and do not thou withdraw far from us; we will support ourselves upon thee, and do not thou let us slip away; we will supplicate thee, and do not thou be deaf to us; we will cry out to thee; hear thou our cry in all that we ask of thee, and desire not to withdraw thyself from us, until thy Lord cometh and reigns over thee; for thou art the habitation of the God of heaven."

Thus spoke DAVID the King, the son of SOLOMON, King of ISRAEL. For the spirit of prophecy descended upon him because of his joy, and he knew not what he said and he was like PETER and JOHN on the top of Mount TÂBÔR.¹⁴ And they all marveled and said, "This, the son of a prophet, is he to be numbered among the prophets?"

- For a faithful audience in medieval Ethiopia, what does David's prophecy confirm for them?

55. How the People of ETHIOPIA *Rejoiced*

And [the people of ETHIOPIA] took flutes, and blew horns, and [beat] drums, and [played on] pipes, and the Brook of EGYPT was moved and astonished at the noise of their songs and their rejoicings; and with them were mingled outcries and shouts of gladness. And their idols, which they had made with their hands and which were in the forms of men, and dogs, and cats, fell down, and the high towers,¹⁵ and also the [p. 83] figures of birds, [made] of gold and silver, fell down also and were broken in pieces. For ZION shone like the sun, and at the majesty thereof they were dismayed. And they arrayed ZION in her apparel, and they bore the gifts to her before her, and they set her upon a wagon, and they spread out purple beneath her, and they draped her with draperies of purple, and they sang songs before her and behind her.

Then the wagons rose up (i.e., resumed their journey) as before, and they set out early in the morning, and the people sang songs to ZION, and they were all raised up the space of a cubit, and

as the people of the country of EGYPT bade them farewell, they passed before them like shadows, and the people of the country of EGYPT worshipped them, for they saw ZION moving in the heavens like the sun, and they all ran with the wagon of ZION, some in front of her and some behind her. And they came to the sea AL-AḤMAR, which is the Sea of ERITREA (i.e., the RED SEA), which was divided by the hand of MOSES, and the children of ISRAEL marched in the depths thereof, going up and down. Now at that time the Tabernacle of the Law of God had not been given unto MOSES, and therefore the water only gathered itself together, a wall on the right hand and a wall on the left, and allowed ISRAEL to pass with their beasts and their children and their wives. And after they had crossed the sea God spoke to MOSES and gave him the Tabernacle of the Covenant with the Book of the Law. And when the holy ZION crossed over with those who were in attendance on her, and who sang songs to the accompaniment of harps and flutes, the sea received them and its waves leaped up as do the high mountains when they are split asunder, and it roared even as a lion roars when he is enraged, and it thundered as doth the winter thunder of DAMASCUS and ETHIOPIA when the lightning smites the clouds, and the sound thereof mingled with the sounds of the musical instruments. p. 84 And the sea worshipped ZION. And whilst its billows were tossing about like the mountains their wagons were raised above the waves for a space of three cubits, and among the sound of the songs the [noise of the] breaking of the waves of the sea was wonderful. The breaking of the waves of the sea was exceedingly majestic and stupefying, and it was mighty and strong. And the creatures that were in the sea, those that could be recognized, and those that were invisible, came forth and worshipped ZION; and the birds that were on it flapped their pinions and overshadowed it. And there was joy to the Sea of ERITREA, and to the people of ETHIOPIA, who went forth to the sea and rejoiced exceedingly, and with a greater joy than did ISRAEL when they came out of EGYPT. And they arrived opposite Mount SINAI, and dwelt in KÂDÊS, and they remained there whilst the angels sang praises; and the creatures of the spirit mingled their praises with [those] of the children of earth, with songs, and psalms, and tambourines joyfully.

And then they loaded their wagons, and they rose up, and departed, and journeyed on to the land of MEDYÂM, and they came to the country of BÊLÔNTÔS, which is a country of ETHIOPIA. And they rejoiced there, and they encamped there, because they had reached the border of their country with glory and joy, without tribulation on the road, in a wagon of the spirit, by the might of heaven and of MICHAEL the Archangel. And all the provinces of ETHIOPIA rejoiced, for ZION sent forth a light like that of the sun into the darkness wheresoever she came.

58. How SOLOMON Rose up to Slay them

Thus spoke King SOLOMON. And the King rose up in wrath and set out to pursue [the men of ETHIOPIA]. And when the King, and his nobles, and his mighty men of war rose up (i.e., had set out), the elders of ISRAEL, and the widows, and the virgins gathered together in the house of God, and they wept for ZION, for the Tabernacle of the Law of God had been taken away [p. 87] from them. Now after ZADOK had remained [senseless] for a season, his heart returned to him. And then the King commanded that the soldiers should go forth on the right hand and on the left, on the chance that some of the [fugitives] might turn aside through fear of the theft. And the King himself rose up and followed the track of the road of the men of ETHIOPIA, and he sent out mounted horsemen, so that they might [ride on before him and] find out where they were, and might return and bring him news [of them]. And the horsemen journeyed on and came to the country of MESR (EGYPT), where the men of ETHIOPIA had encamped with their king, and where they had made peace with ZION,

and they rejoiced. And the soldiers of King SOLOMON questioned the people, and the men of the country of EGYPT said unto them, "Some days ago certain men of ETHIOPIA passed here; and they traveled swiftly in wagons, like the angels, and they were swifter than the eagles of the heavens." And the King's soldiers said unto them, "How many days ago is it since they left you?" And the men of EGYPT said unto them, "This day is the ninth day since they left us." And some of the King's horsemen who returned said unto King SOLOMON, "Nine days have passed since they left EGYPT. Some of our companions have gone to seek for them at the Sea of ERITREA, but we came back that we might report this to thee. Bethink thyself, O King, I beseech thee. On the second day they went forth from thee, and they arrived on the third day at the river TAKKAZÎ [of] the land of MESR (EGYPT). And we being sent forth by thee from JERUSALEM, arrived on the day of the Sabbath. And we came back to thee to-day [which is] the fourth day of the week. Consider in thy wisdom the distance which those men traversed." And the King was wroth and said, "Seize the five of them, until we find out the truth of their words."

[p. 88]

And the King and his soldiers marched quickly, and they came to GÂZÂ. And the King asked the people, saying, "When did my son leave you?" And they answered and said unto him, "He left us three days ago. And having loaded their wagons none of them traveled on the ground, but in wagons that were suspended in the air; and they were swifter than the eagles that are in the sky, and all their baggage traveled with them in wagons above the winds. As for us, we thought that you had, in thy wisdom, made them to travel in wagons above the winds." And the King said unto them, "Was ZION, the Tabernacle of the Law of God, with them?" And they said unto him, "We did not see anything."

60. How SOLOMON *Lamented for ZION*

And SOLOMON entered into his tent, and wept bitterly, and said,

"O God, will You take away the Tabernacle of Thy Covenant from us in my days? If only You had taken away my life before this which You have taken away in my days! For You cannot make Your word to be a lie, and You cannot break Your Covenant which You made with our fathers, with NOAH Your servant who kept righteousness, [p. 90] and with ABRAHAM who did not transgress Your commandment, and with ISAAC Your servant who kept his body pure from the pollution of sin, and with ISRAEL, Your holy one, whom You made many by the Holy Spirit, and called ISRAEL, and with MOSES and AARON Your priests, in whose days You made the Tabernacle of the Law to come down from heaven upon earth, to the children of JACOB Your inheritance, with Your Law and Your Commandment, in the form of the constitution of the angels. For You had already founded ZION as the habitation of Your glory upon the mountain of Your sanctuary. And again You gave it to MOSES that he might serve it nobly upon the earth, and might make it to dwell in the 'Tent of Witness', so that You Yourself might come there from the mountain of Your sanctuary, and might make the people to hear Your voice, so that they might walk in Thy Commandments."

Now I know that You esteem Your inheritance more lightly than your people ISRAEL. And until this present it was with us, and we did not minister unto it rightly, and for this reason You are angry with us, and You have turned Your face from us. O Lord, look not upon our evil deeds, but consider the goodness of our forefathers. My father DAVID, Thy servant, wished to build a house to Your Name, for he had heard the word of Your prophet, who said, 'Which is the house for My habitation, and

which is the place for Me to rest in? Is it not My hands that have made all this, says the Lord,¹⁶ Who rules everything?' And when he had meditated upon this You said to him, 'It is impossible for thee to build this, but he who has gone forth from thy loins shall build a house for me.'¹⁷ And now, O Lord, Your word hath not been made a lie, and I have built Your house, You being my helper. And when I had finished building Your house, [p. 91] I brought the Tabernacle of the Covenant into it, and I offered up sacrifices to Your thrice-holy Name, and You looked on these [benevolently]. And the house was full of Your glory, the whole world being filled with Your Godhead, and we Your people rejoiced at the sight of Your glory therein. And this day it is three years since that time, and Thou hast snatched away Thy light from us that You may illumine those that are in darkness. Thou hast removed our honor that You might honor those who are unworthy; You hast blotted out our majesty that You may make majestic him that is not majestic; Thou hast taken away our life that You may build up him whose life is far from Thee.¹⁸

[...]

O Queen, we have been negligent in respect of the Commandment of God. We have loved the words of the liars more than the word of the priests. We have wished to gaze upon the face of our women rather than upon the face of God in repentance. We have loved to look upon our children rather than to hear the word of God. We have consoled ourselves more with the *sardius* stone¹⁹ than with the administering right judgment to the orphans. We have loved to look upon our honour rather than to hear the voice of God. We have loved the word of foolishness more than the words of the wise. We have loved the words of fools more than hearing the words of the Prophets. Woe be unto us! Of our own free will we have polluted our life. Woe be unto us! Woe be unto us! The repentance and mercy which God loveth we have not done. Woe be unto us! He gave us glory, and we have thrown it away. He made us very wise, and of our own free will we have made ourselves more foolish than the beasts. He gave us riches, and we have beggared ourselves even [to asking for] alms. We looked upon our horses, and forgot our coming back. We have loved fleeting things, and we have not recognized those that abide. We have made our days to deride our life, we have preferred the luxuriousness of food, which becomes dung, to the food of life which endures for ever. [We have put on] the garments of apparel which benefit not the soul, and have put off the apparel of glory which is for ever. Our governors and the people do what God hates, and they love not what God loves, love of their neighbors, and lowliness, and graciousness, and mercy for the poor, and patient endurance, and love of the house of God, and the adoration [p. 94] of the Son. But what God hates is, augury by birds,²⁰ and idolatry, and enquiry of witches, and divination, and magic, and flies, and 'akarîno,²¹ the animal that hath been torn, and the dead body of a beast,²² and theft, and oppression, and fornication, and envy, fraud, drink and drunkenness, false swearing [against] neighbors, and the bearing of false testimony [against] neighbors.

All these things which God hates they do. And it is because of them that God has taken the Tabernacle of His Covenant away from us and hath given it to the people who do His Will and His Law, and His Ordinance. He hath turned His face from us and hath made His face to shine upon them. He hath despised us and hath loved them. He hath shown mercy unto them and hath blotted us out, because He hath taken away the Tabernacle of His Covenant from us. For He hath sworn an oath by Himself that He will not abrogate winter and summer, seed time and harvest, fruit and work, sun and moon, as long as ZION is on the earth, and that He will not in wrath destroy heaven and earth, either by flood or fire, and that He will not blot out man, and beast, and reptiles and creeping

things, but will show mercy to the work of His hands, and will multiply His mercy on what He hath formed. And when God takes away the Tabernacle of His Covenant He will destroy the heavens, and the earth, and all His work; and this day hath God despised us and taken from us the Tabernacle of His Law."

And while SOLOMON was saying these things he ceased not to weep, and the tears ran down his cheeks continually.

And the Spirit of Prophecy answered and said unto him, "Why are you sorrowful? For this has happened by the Will of God. And [ZION] hath not been given to an alien, but to thy firstborn son who shall [p. 95] sit upon the throne of DAVID thy Father. For God swore unto DAVID in truth, and He does not repent, that of the fruit of his body He would make to sit upon his throne for ever, in the Tabernacle of His Covenant, the Holy ZION. And I will set him above the kings of the earth, and his throne shall be like the days of heaven and like the ordinance of the moon for ever.²³ And He who sits on the throne of the Godhead in the heavens shall rule the living and the dead in the flesh for ever. And angels and men shall serve Him, and every tongue shall praise Him, and every knee shall bow to Him in the abysses and in the rivers. Comfort yourself with this [word], and get thee back to thy house, and let not thy heart be wholly sad."

And the King was comforted by this [word], and he said, "The Will of God be done, and not the will of man." And again the Angel of God appeared unto him openly, and said unto him, "As for thyself, thou shalt build the house of God, and it shall be glory and as a support for thee; and if thou wilt keep His Commandment and wilt not serve other gods thou shalt be beloved by God, even as DAVID thy father."

- Analyze the language, images, and references Solomon uses to describe his sorrow at having lost the Ark of the Covenant. How does the "Spirit of Prophecy" answer him, and how does this connect to the overall argument of the *Kebra Nagast*?

The Odes of Solomon

The Odes date from the second century, and were probably written in Greek or Aramaic. At least one scholar has suggested they may have an origin in Valentinian Gnosticism, though this is of course speculative. The Church Father Lactantius (third century) quoted from them, and the *Pistis Sophia* mentions about five complete Odes.

In 1909 the English Scholar J. Rendel Harris discovered an old Syriac manuscript with contained all but the second of the 42 Odes. These texts evidence the close inter-relationship of Christian and Gnostic church piety. Translation below is by James H. Charlesworth. (Another more poetic translation of several odes -- from an unknown source -- follows the Charlesworth translation.)

In his commentary on the Odes, Charlesworth notes :

The date of the *Odes* has caused considerable interest. H. J. Drijvers contends that they are as late as the 3d century. L. Abramowski places them in the latter half of the 2d century. B. McNeil argued that they are contemporaneous with *4 Ezra*, the *Shepherd of Hermas*, Polycarp, and Valentinus (ca. 100 C.E.). Most scholars date them sometime around the middle of the 2d century, but if they are

heavily influenced by Jewish apocalyptic thought and especially the ideas in the Dead Sea Scrolls, a date long after 100 is unlikely....

The 11th ode was found among the Bodmer Papyri in a 3d-century Gk manuscript (no. 11). Five were translated into Coptic in the 4th century and used to illustrate the *Pistis Sophia* (*Odes Sol.* 1, 5, 6, 22, and 25). Also in the 4th century Ode 19 was quoted by Lactantius (*Div. Inst.* 4.12.3). In the 10th century a scribe copied the *Odes* in Syriac, but only *Odes Sol.* 17:7-42:20 are preserved (British Museum ms. Add. 14538). In the 15th century another scribe copied them into Syriac, but again the beginning is lost (John Rylands Library Cod. Syr. 9 contains only *Odes Sol.* 3.1b-42:20). [-*The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, v. 6, p. 114]

The Odes of Solomon

Ode 1

1. The Lord is on my head like a crown, and I shall never be without Him.
2. Plaited for me is the crown of truth, and it caused Your branches to blossom in me.
3. For it is not like a parched crown that blossoms not;
4. For You live upon my head, and have blossomed upon me.
5. Your fruits are full and complete; they are full of Your salvation....

Ode 2

[There is no extant copy of Ode 2]

Ode 3

1. ... I am putting on the love of the Lord.
2. And His members are with Him, and I am dependent on them; and He loves me.
3. For I should not have known how to love the Lord, if He had not continuously loved me.
4. Who is able to distinguish love, except him who is loved?
5. I love the Beloved and I myself love Him, and where His rest is, there also am I.
6. And I shall be no stranger, because there is no jealousy with the Lord Most High and Merciful.
7. I have been united to Him, because the lover has found the Beloved, because I love Him that is the Son, I shall become a son.
8. Indeed he who is joined to Him who is immortal, truly shall be immortal.
9. And he who delights in the Life will become living.

10. This is the Spirit of the Lord, which is not false, which teaches the sons of men to know His ways.
11. Be wise and understanding and awakened.
Hallelujah.

Ode 4

1. No man can pervert Your holy place, O my God; nor can he change it, and put it in another place.
2. Because he has no power over it; for Your sanctuary You designed before You made special places.
3. The ancient one shall not be perverted by those which are inferior to it. You have given Your heart, O Lord, to Your believers.
4. Never will You be idle, nor will You be without fruits;
5. For one hour of Your faith is more excellent than all days and years.
6. For who shall put on Your grace and be rejected?
7. Because Your seal is known; and Your creatures are known to it.
8. And Your hosts possess it, and the elect archangels are clothed with it.
9. You have given to us Your fellowship, not that You were in need of us, but that we are always in need of You.
10. Shower upon us Your gentle rain, and open Your bountiful springs which abundantly supply us with milk and honey.
11. For there is no regret with You; that You should regret anything which You have promised;
12. Since the result was manifest to You.
13. For that which You gave, You gave freely, so that no longer will You draw back and take them again.
14. For all was manifest to You as God, and was set in order from the beginning before You.
15. And You, O Lord, have made all.
Hallelujah.

Ode 5

1. I praise You, O Lord, because I love You.
2. O Most High, forsake me not, for You are my hope.
3. Freely did I receive Your grace, may I live by it.
4. My persecutors will come but let them not see me.

5. Let a cloud of darkness fall upon their eyes; and let an air of thick darkness obscure them.
6. And let them have no light to see, so that they cannot seize me.
7. Let their designs become hardened, so that whatever they have conspired shall return upon their own heads.
8. For they have devised a plan, but it was not for them.
9. They prepared themselves maliciously, but they were found to be impotent.
10. Indeed my confidence is upon the Lord, and I will not fear.
11. And because the Lord is my salvation, I will not fear.
12. And He is as a woven crown upon my head, and I shall not be shaken.
13. Even if everything should be shaken, I shall stand firm.
14. And though all things visible should perish, I shall not die;
15. Because the Lord is with me, and I with Him.
Hallelujah.

Ode 6

1. As the wind glides through the harp and the strings speak,
2. So the Spirit of the Lord speaks through my members, and I speak through His love.
3. For He destroys whatever is alien, and everything is of the Lord.
4. For thus it was from the beginning, and will be until the end.
5. So that nothing shall be contrary, and nothing shall rise up against Him.
6. The Lord has multiplied his knowledge, and He was zealous that those things should be known which through His grace have been given to us.
7. And His praise He gave us on account of His name, our spirits praise His Holy Spirit.
8. For there went forth a stream, and it became a river great and broad; indeed it carried away everything, and it shattered and brought it to the Temple.
9. And the barriers which were built by men were not able to restrain it, nor even the arts of them who habitually restrain water.
10. For it spread over the surface of all the earth, and it filled everything.
11. Then all the thirsty upon the earth drank, and thirst was relieved and quenched;
12. For from the Most High the drink was given.
13. Blessed, therefore, are the ministers of that drink, who have been entrusted with His water.

14. They have refreshed the parched lips, and have aroused the paralyzed will.
15. Even living persons who were about to expire, they have held back from death.
16. And limbs which have collapsed, they have restored and set up.
17. They gave strength for their coming, and light for their eyes.
18. Because everyone recognized them as the Lord's, and lived by the living water of eternity.
Hallelujah.

Ode 7

1. As is the course of anger over wickedness, so is the course of joy over the Beloved; and brings in of its fruits unhindered.
2. My joy is the Lord and my course is towards Him, this path of mine is beautiful.
3. For there is a Helper for me, the Lord. He has generously shown Himself to me in His simplicity, because His kindness has diminished His dreadfulness.
4. He became like me, that I might receive Him. In form He was considered like me, that I might put Him on.
5. And I trembled not when I saw Him, because He was gracious to me.
6. Like my nature He became, that I might understand Him. And like my form, that I might not turn away from Him.
7. The Father of knowledge is the Word of knowledge.
8. He who created wisdom is wiser than His works.
9. And He who created me when yet I was not knew what I would do when I came into being.
10. On account of this He was gracious to me in His abundant grace, and allowed me to ask from Him and to benefit from His sacrifice.
11. For He it is who is incorrupt, the perfection of the worlds and their Father.
12. He has allowed Him to appear to them that are His own; in order that they may recognize Him that made them, and not suppose that they came of themselves.
13. For towards knowledge He has set His way, he has widened it and lengthened it and brought it to complete perfection.
14. And has set over it the traces of His light, and it proceeded from the beginning until the end.
15. For by Him He was served, and He was pleased by the Son.
16. And because of his salvation He will possess everything. And the Most High will be known by His holy ones:

17. To announce to those who have songs of the coming of the Lord, that they may go forth to meet Him and may sing to Him, with joy and with the harp of many tones.
18. The Seers shall go before Him, and they shall be seen before Him.
19. And they shall praise the Lord in His love, because He is near and does see.
20. And hatred shall be removed from the earth, and with jealousy it shall be drowned.
21. For ignorance was destroyed upon it, because the knowledge of the Lord arrived upon it.
22. Let the singers sing the grace of the Lord Most High, and let them bring their songs.
23. And let their heart be like the day, and their gentle voices like the majestic beauty of the Lord.
24. And let there not be anyone who breathes that is without knowledge or voice.
25. For He gave a mouth to His creation: to open the voice of the mouth towards Him, and to praise Him.
26. Confess His power and declare His grace.
Hallelujah.

Ode 8

1. Open, open your hearts to the exultation of the Lord, and let your love abound from the heart to the lips.
2. In order to bring forth fruits to the Lord, a holy life; and to talk with watchfulness in His light.
3. Rise up and stand erect, you who sometimes were brought low.
4. You who were in silence, speak, for your mouth has been opened.
5. You who were despised, from henceforth be lifted up, for your Righteousness has been lifted up;
6. For the right hand of the Lord is with you, and He will be your Helper.
7. And peace was prepared for you, before what may be your war.
8. Hear the word of truth, and receive the knowledge of the Most High.
9. Your flesh may not understand that which I am about to say to you; nor your garment that which I am about to show you.
10. Keep my mystery, you who are kept by it; keep my faith, you who are kept by it.
11. And understand my knowledge, you who know me in truth; love me with affection, you who love;
12. For I turn not my face from my own, because I know them.
13. And before they had existed, I recognized them; and imprinted a seal on their faces.

14. I fashioned their members, and my own breasts I prepared for them, that they might drink my holy milk and live by it.
15. I am pleased by them, and am not ashamed by them.
16. For my workmanship are they, and the strength of my thoughts.
17. Therefore who can stand against my work? Or who is not subject to them?
18. I willed and fashioned mind and heart, and they are my own. And upon my right hand I have set my elect ones.
19. And my righteousness goes before them, and they shall not be deprived of my name; for it is with them.
20. Pray and increase, and abide in the love of the Lord;
21. And you who were loved in the Beloved, and you who are kept in Him who lives, and you who are saved in Him who was saved.
22. And you shall be found incorrupt in all ages, on account of the name of your Father.
Hallelujah.

Ode G

1. Open your ears, and I shall speak to you.
2. Give me yourself, so that I may also give you myself.
3. The word of the Lord and His desires, the holy thought which He has thought concerning His Messiah.
4. For in the will of the Lord is your life, and His purpose is eternal life, and your perfection is incorruptible.
5. Be enriched in God the Father; and receive the purpose of the Most High. Be strong and redeemed by His grace.
6. For I announce peace to you, His holy ones, so that none of those who hear shall fall in the war.
7. And also that those who have known Him may not perish, and so that those who received Him may not be ashamed.
8. An everlasting crown is Truth; blessed are they who set it on their head.
9. It is a precious stone, for the wars were on account of the crown.
10. But Righteousness has taken it, and has given it to you.
11. Put on the crown in the true covenant of the Lord, and all those who have conquered will be inscribed in His book.

12. For their book is the reward of victory which is for you, and she sees you before her and wills that you shall be saved.
Hallelujah.

Ode 10

1. The Lord has directed my mouth by His Word, and has opened my heart by His Light.
2. And He has caused to dwell in me His immortal life, and permitted me to proclaim the fruit of His peace.
3. To convert the lives of those who desire to come to Him, and to lead those who are captive into freedom.
4. I took courage and became strong and captured the world, and the captivity became mine for the glory of the Most High, and of God my Father.
5. And the Gentiles who had been dispersed were gathered together, but I was not defiled by my love for them, because they had praised me in high places.
6. And the traces of light were set upon their heart, and they walked according to my life and were saved, and they became my people for ever and ever.
Hallelujah.

Ode 11

1. My heart was pruned and its flower appeared, then grace sprang up in it, and my heart produced fruits for the Lord.
2. For the Most High circumcised me by His Holy Spirit, then He uncovered my inward being towards Him, and filled me with His love.
3. And His circumcising became my salvation, and I ran in the Way, in His peace, in the way of truth.
4. From the beginning until the end I received His knowledge.
5. And I was established upon the rock of truth, where He had set me.
6. And speaking waters touched my lips from the fountain of the Lord generously.
7. And so I drank and became intoxicated, from the living water that does not die.
8. And my intoxication did not cause ignorance, but I abandoned vanity,
9. And turned toward the Most High, my God, and was enriched by His favors.
10. And I rejected the folly cast upon the earth, and stripped it off and cast it from me.
11. And the Lord renewed me with His garment, and possessed me by His light.
12. And from above He gave me immortal rest, and I became like the land that blossoms and rejoices in its fruits.

13. And the Lord is like the sun upon the face of the land.
14. My eyes were enlightened, and my face received the dew;
15. And my breath was refreshed by the pleasant fragrance of the Lord.
16. And He took me to His Paradise, wherein is the wealth of the Lord's pleasure.
I beheld blooming and fruit-bearing trees,
And self-grown was their crown.
Their branches were sprouting and their fruits were shining.
From an immortal land were their roots.
And a river of gladness was irrigating them,
And round about them in the land of eternal life.
17. Then I worshipped the Lord because of His magnificence.
18. And I said, Blessed, O Lord, are they who are planted in Your land, and who have a place in Your Paradise;
19. And who grow in the growth of Your trees, and have passed from darkness into light.
20. Behold, all Your laborers are fair, they who work good works, and turn from wickedness to your pleasantness.
21. For the pungent odor of the trees is changed in Your land,
22. And everything becomes a remnant of Yourself. Blessed are the workers of Your waters, and eternal memorials of Your faithful servants.
23. Indeed, there is much room in Your Paradise. And there is nothing in it which is barren, but everything is filled with fruit.
24. Glory be to You, O God, the delight of Paradise for ever.
Hallelujah.

Ode 12

1. He has filled me with words of truth, that I may proclaim Him.
2. And like the flowing of waters, truth flows from my mouth, and my lips declare His fruits.
3. And He has caused His knowledge to abound in me, because the mouth of the Lord is the true Word, and the entrance of His light.
4. And the Most High has given Him to His generations, which are the interpreters of His beauty,
And the narrators of His glory,
And the confessors of His purpose,
And the preachers of His mind,
And the teachers of His works.

5. For the subtlety of the Word is inexpressible, and like His utterance so also is His swiftness and His acuteness, for limitless is His progression.
6. He never falls but remains standing, and one cannot comprehend His descent or His way.
7. For as His work is, so is His expectation, for He is the light and dawning of thought.
8. And by Him the generations spoke to one another, and those that were silent acquired speech.
9. And from Him came love and equality, and they spoke one to another that which was theirs.
10. And they were stimulated by the Word, and knew Him who made them, because they were in harmony.
11. For the mouth of the Most High spoke to them, and His exposition prospered through Him.
12. For the dwelling place of the Word is man, and His truth is love.
13. Blessed are they who by means of Him have perceived everything, and have known the Lord in His truth.
Hallelujah.

Ode 13

1. Behold, the Lord is our mirror. Open your eyes and see them in Him.
2. And learn the manner of your face, then declare praises to His Spirit.
3. And wipe the paint from your face, and love His holiness and put it on.
4. Then you will be unblemished at all times with Him.
Hallelujah.

Ode 14

1. As the eyes of a son upon his father, so are my eyes, O Lord, at all times towards You.
2. Because my breasts and my pleasure are with You.
3. Turn not aside Your mercies from me, O Lord; and take not Your kindness from me.
4. Stretch out to me, my Lord, at all times, Your right hand, and be to me a guide till the end according to Your will.
5. Let me be pleasing before You, because of Your glory, and because of Your name let me be saved from the Evil One.
6. And let Your gentleness, O Lord, abide with me, and the fruits of Your love.
7. Teach me the odes of Your truth, that I may produce fruits in You.
8. And open to me the harp of Your Holy Spirit, so that with every note I may praise You, O Lord.

9. And according to the multitude of Your mercies, so grant unto me, and hasten to grant our petitions.
10. For You are sufficient for all our needs.
Hallelujah.

Ode 15

1. As the sun is the joy of them who seek its daybreak, so is my joy the Lord;
2. Because He is my Sun, and His rays have lifted me up; and His light has dismissed all darkness from my face.
3. Eyes I have obtained in Him, and have seen His holy day.
4. Ears I have acquired, and have heard His truth.
5. The thought of knowledge I have acquired, and have enjoyed delight fully through Him.
6. I repudiated the way of error, and went towards Him and received salvation from Him abundantly.
7. And according to His generosity He gave to me, and according to His excellent beauty He made me.
8. I put on immortality through His name, and took off corruption by His grace.
9. Death has been destroyed before my face, and Sheol has been vanquished by my word.
10. And eternal life has arisen in the Lord's land, and it has been declared to His faithful ones, and has been given without limit to all that trust in Him.
Hallelujah.

Ode 16

1. As the occupation of the ploughman is the ploughshare, and the occupation of the helmsman is the steering of the ship, so also my occupation is the psalm of the Lord by His hymns.
2. My art and my service are in His hymns, because His love has nourished my heart, and His fruits He poured unto my lips.
3. For my love is the Lord; hence I will sing unto Him.
4. For I am strengthened by His praises, and I have faith in Him.
5. I will open my mouth, and His Spirit will speak through me the glory of the Lord and His beauty,
6. The work of His hands, and the labor of His fingers;
7. For the multitude of His mercies, and the strength of His Word.
8. For the Word of the Lord investigates that which is invisible, and reveals His thought.

9. For the eye sees His works, and the ear hears His thought.
10. It is He who made the earth broad, and placed the waters in the sea.
11. He expanded the heaven, and fixed the stars.
12. And He fixed the creation and set it up, then He rested from His works.
13. And created things run according to their courses, and work their works, for they can never cease nor fail.
14. And the hosts are subject to His Word.
15. The reservoir of light is the sun, and the reservoir of darkness is the night.
16. For He made the sun for the day so that it will be light; but night brings darkness over the face of the earth.
17. And by their portion one from another they complete the beauty of God.
18. And there is nothing outside of the Lord, because He was before anything came to be.
19. And the worlds are by His Word, and by the thought of His heart.
20. Praise and honor to His name.
Hallelujah.

Ode 17

1. Then I was crowned by my God, and my crown was living.
2. And I was justified by my Lord, for my salvation is incorruptible.
3. I have been freed from vanities, and am not condemned.
4. My chains were cut off by His hands, I received the face and likeness of a new person, and I walked in Him and was saved.
5. And the thought of truth led me, and I went after it and wandered not.
6. And all who saw me were amazed, and I seemed to them like a stranger.
7. And He who knew and exalted me, is the Most High in all His perfection.
8. And He glorified me by His kindness, and raised my understanding to the height of truth.
9. And from there He gave me the way of His steps, and I opened the doors which were closed.
10. And I shattered the bars of iron, for my own shackles had grown hot and melted before me.
11. And nothing appeared closed to me, because I was the opening of everything.
12. And I went towards all my bound ones in order to loose them; that I might not leave anyone bound or binding.

13. And I gave my knowledge generously, and my resurrection through my love.
14. And I sowed my fruits in hearts, and transformed them through myself.
15. Then they received my blessing and lived, and they were gathered to me and were saved;
16. Because they became my members, and I was their Head.
17. Glory to You, our Head, O Lord Messiah.
Hallelujah.

Ode 18

1. My heart was lifted up and enriched in the love of the Most High, so that I might praise Him with my name.
2. My members were strengthened, that they may not fall from His power.
3. Infirmities fled from my body, and it stood firm for the Lord by His will; because His kingdom is firm.
4. O Lord, for the sake of those who are in need, do not dismiss Your Word from me.
5. Nor, for the sake of their works, withhold Your perfection from me.
6. Let not light be conquered by darkness, nor let truth flee from falsehood.
7. Let Your right hand set our salvation to victory, and let it receive from every region, and preserve it on the side of everyone who is besieged by misfortunes.
8. You are my God, falsehood and death are not in Your mouth; only perfection is Your will.
9. And vanity You know not, because neither does it know You.
10. And You know not error; because neither does it know You.
11. And ignorance appeared like dust, and like the foam of the sea.
12. And vain people thought that it was great, and they became like its type and were impoverished.
13. But those who knew understood and contemplated, and were not polluted by their thoughts;
14. Because they were in the mind of the Most High, and mocked those who were walking in error.
15. Then they spoke the truth, from the breath which the Most High breathed into them.
16. Praise and great honor to His name.
Hallelujah.

Ode 1G

1. A cup of milk was offered to me, and I drank it in the sweetness of the Lord's kindness.

2. The Son is the cup, and the Father is He who was milked; and the Holy Spirit is She who milked Him;
3. Because His breasts were full, and it was undesirable that His milk should be ineffectually released.
4. The Holy Spirit opened Her bosom, and mixed the milk of the two breasts of the Father.
5. Then She gave the mixture to the generation without their knowing, and those who have received it are in the perfection of the right hand.
6. The womb of the Virgin took it, and she received conception and gave birth.
7. So the Virgin became a mother with great mercies.
8. And she labored and bore the Son but without pain, because it did not occur without purpose.
9. And she did not require a midwife, because He caused her to give life.
10. She brought forth like a strong man with desire, and she bore according to the manifestation, and she acquired according to the Great Power.
11. And she loved with redemption, and guarded with kindness, and declared with grandeur. Hallelujah.

Ode 20

1. I am a priest of the Lord, and Him I serve as a priest;
2. And to Him I offer the offering of His thought.
3. For His thought is not like the world, nor like the flesh, nor like them who worship according to the flesh.
4. The offering of the Lord is righteousness, and purity of heart and lips.
5. Offer your inward being faultlessly; and let not your compassion oppress compassion; and let not yourself oppress a self.
6. You should not purchase a stranger because he is like yourself, nor seek to deceive your neighbor, nor deprive him of the covering for his nakedness.
7. But put on the grace of the Lord generously, and come to His Paradise, and make for yourself a garland from His tree.
8. Then put it on your head and be joyful, and recline upon His rest.
9. For His glory will go before you; and you shall receive of His kindness and of His grace; and you shall be anointed in truth with the praise of His holiness.
10. Praise and honor to His name. Hallelujah.

Ode 21

1. I lifted up my arms on high on account of the compassion of the Lord.
2. Because He cast off my bonds from me, and my Helper lifted me up according to His compassion and His salvation.
3. And I put off darkness, and put on light.
4. And even I myself acquired members. In them there was no sickness or affliction or suffering.
5. And abundantly helpful to me was the thought of the Lord, and His everlasting fellowship.
6. And I was lifted up in the light, and I passed before Him.
7. And I was constantly near Him, while praising and confessing Him.
8. He caused my heart to overflow, and it was found in my mouth; and it sprang forth unto my lips.
9. Then upon my face increased the exultation of the Lord and His praise.
Hallelujah.

Ode 22

1. He who caused me to descend from on high, and to ascend from the regions below;
2. And He who gathers what is in the Middle, and throws them to me;
3. He who scattered my enemies, and my adversaries;
4. He who gave me authority over bonds, so that I might unbind them;
5. He who overthrew by my hands the dragon with seven heads, and set me at his roots that I might destroy his seed;
6. You were there and helped me, and in every place Your name surrounded me.
7. Your right hand destroyed his evil venom, and Your hand leveled the Way for those who believe in You.
8. And It chose them from the graves, and separated them from the dead ones.
9. It took dead bones and covered them with flesh.
10. But they were motionless, so It gave them energy for life.
11. Incorruptible was Your way and Your face; You have brought Your world to corruption, that everything might be resolved and renewed.
12. And the foundation of everything is Your rock. And upon it You have built Your kingdom, and it became the dwelling-place of the holy ones.
Hallelujah.

Ode 23

1. Joy is for the holy ones. And who shall put it on but they alone?
2. Grace is for the elect ones. And who shall receive it but they who trusted in it from the beginning?
3. Love is for the elect ones. And who shall put it on but they who possessed it from the beginning?
4. Walk in the knowledge of the Lord, and you will know the grace of the Lord generously; both for His exultation and for the perfection of His knowledge.
5. And His thought was like a letter, and His will descended from on high.
6. And it was sent like an arrow which from a bow has been forcibly shot.
7. And many hands rushed to the letter, in order to catch it, then take and read it.
8. But it escaped from their fingers; and they were afraid of it and of the seal which was upon it.
9. Because they were not allowed to loosen its seal; for the power which was over the seal was greater than they.
10. But those who saw the letter went after it; that they might learn where it would land, and who should read it, and who should hear it.
11. But a wheel received it, and it came over it.
12. And a sign was with it, of the kingdom and of providence.
13. And everything which was disturbing the wheel, it mowed and cut down.
14. And it restrained a multitude of adversaries; and bridged rivers.
15. And it crossed over and uprooted many forests, and made an open way.
16. The head went down to the feet, because unto the feet ran the wheel, and whatever had come upon it.
17. The letter was one of command, and hence all regions were gathered together.
18. And there was seen at its head, the head which was revealed, even the Son of Truth from the Most High Father.
19. And He inherited and possessed everything, and then the scheming of the many ceased.
20. Then all the seducers became headstrong and fled, and the persecutors became extinct and were blotted out.
21. And the letter became a large volume, which was entirely written by the finger of God.

22. And the name of the Father was upon it; and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, to rule for ever and ever.
Hallelujah.

Ode 24

1. The dove fluttered over the head of our Lord Messiah, because He was her head.
2. And she sang over Him, and her voice was heard.
3. Then the inhabitants were afraid, and the foreigners were disturbed.
4. The bird began to fly, and every creeping thing died in its hole.
5. And the chasms were opened and closed; and they were seeking the Lord as those who are about to give birth.
6. But He was not given to them for nourishment, because He did not belong to them.
7. But the chasms were submerged in the seal of the Lord, and they perished in the thought with which they had remained from the beginning.
8. For they were in labor from the beginning, and the end of their travail was life.
9. And all of them who were lacking perished, because they were not able to express the word so that they might remain.
10. And the Lord destroyed the devices, of all those who had not the truth with them.
11. For they were lacking in wisdom, they who exalted themselves in their mind.
12. So they were rejected, because the truth was not with them.
13. For the Lord revealed His way, and spread widely His grace.
14. And those who understood it knew His holiness.
Hallelujah.

Ode 25

1. I was rescued from my chains, and I fled unto You, O my God.
2. Because You are the right hand of salvation, and my Helper.
3. You have restrained those who rise up against me, and no more were they seen.
4. Because Your face was with me, which saved me by Your grace.
5. But I was despised and rejected in the eyes of many, and I was in their eyes like lead.
6. And I acquired strength from You, and help.
7. A lamp You set for me both on my right and on my left, so that there might not be in me anything that is not light.

8. And I was covered with the covering of Your Spirit, and I removed from me my garments of skin.
9. Because Your right hand exalted me, and caused sickness to pass from me.
10. And I became mighty in Your truth, and holy in Your righteousness.
11. And all my adversaries were afraid of me, and I became the Lord's by the name of the Lord.
12. And I was justified by His kindness, and His rest is for ever and ever.
Hallelujah.

Ode 26

1. I poured out praise to the Lord, because I am His own.
2. And I will recite His holy ode, because my heart is with Him.
3. For His harp is in my hand, and the odes of His rest shall not be silent.
4. I will call unto Him with all my heart, I will praise and exalt Him with all my members.
5. For from the East and unto the West is His praise;
6. Also from the South and unto the North is His thanksgiving.
7. Even from the crest of the summits and unto their extremity is His perfection.
8. Who can write the odes of the Lord, or who can read them?
9. Or who can train himself for life, so that he himself may be saved?
10. Or who can press upon the Most High, so that He would recite from His mouth?
11. Who can interpret the wonders of the Lord? Though he who interprets will be destroyed, yet that which was interpreted will remain.
12. For it suffices to perceive and be satisfied, for the odists stand in serenity;
13. Like a river which has an increasingly gushing spring, and flows to the relief of them that seek it.
Hallelujah.

Ode 27

1. I extended my hands and hallowed my Lord,
2. For the expansion of my hands is His sign.
3. And my extension is the upright cross.
Hallelujah.

Ode 28

1. As the wings of doves over their nestlings, and the mouths of their nestlings towards their mouths, so also are the wings of the Spirit over my heart.
2. My heart continually refreshes itself and leaps for joy, like the babe who leaps for joy in his mother's womb.
3. I trusted, consequently I was at rest; because trustful is He in whom I trusted.
4. He has greatly blessed me, and my head is with Him.
5. And the dagger shall not divide me from Him, nor the sword;
6. Because I am ready before destruction comes, and have been set on His immortal side.
7. And immortal life embraced me, and kissed me.
8. And from that life is the Spirit which is within me. And it cannot die because it is life.
9. Those who saw me were amazed, because I was persecuted.
10. And they thought that I had been swallowed up, because I seemed to them as one of the lost.
11. But my injustice became my salvation.
12. And I became their abomination, because there was no jealousy in me.
13. Because I continually did good to every man I was hated.
14. And they surrounded me like mad dogs, those who in stupidity attack their masters.
15. Because their thought is depraved, and their mind is perverted.
16. But I was carrying water in my right hand, and their bitterness I endured by my sweetness.
17. And I did not perish, because I was not their brother, nor was my birth like theirs.
18. And they sought my death but did not find it possible, because I was older than their memory; and in vain did they cast lots against me.
19. And those who were after me sought in vain to destroy the memorial of Him who was before them.
20. Because the thought of the Most High cannot be prepossessed; and His heart is superior to all wisdom.
Hallelujah.

Ode 2G

1. The Lord is my hope, I shall not be ashamed of Him.
2. For according to His praise He made me, and according to His grace even so He gave to me.
3. And according to His mercies He exalted me, and according to His great honor He lifted me up.

4. And he caused me to ascend from the depths of Sheol, and from the mouth of death He drew me.
5. And I humbled my enemies, and He justified me by His grace.
6. For I believed in the Lord's Messiah, and considered that He is the Lord.
7. And He revealed to me His sign, and He led me by His light.
8. And He gave me the scepter of His power, that I might subdue the devices of the people, and humble the power of the mighty.
9. To make war by His Word, and to take victory by His power.
10. And the Lord overthrew my enemy by His Word, and he became like the dust which a breeze carries off.
11. And I gave praise to the Most High, because He has magnified His servant and the son of His maidservant.
Hallelujah.

Ode 30

1. Fill for yourselves water from the living fountain of the Lord, because it has been opened for you.
2. And come all you thirsty and take a drink, and rest beside the fountain of the Lord.
3. Because it is pleasing and sparkling, and perpetually refreshes the self.
4. For much sweeter is its water than honey, and the honeycomb of bees is not to be compared with it;
5. Because it flowed from the lips of the Lord, and it named from the heart of the Lord.
6. And it came boundless and invisible, and until it was set in the middle they knew it not.
7. Blessed are they who have drunk from it, and have refreshed themselves by it.
Hallelujah.

Ode 31

1. Chasms vanished before the Lord, and darkness dissipated before His appearance.
2. Error erred and perished on account of Him; and contempt received no path, for it was submerged by the truth of the Lord.
3. He opened His mouth and spoke grace and joy; and recited a new chant to His name.
4. Then He lifted his voice towards the Most High, and offered to Him those that had become sons through Him.
5. And His face was justified, because thus His Holy Father had given to Him.

6. Come forth, you who have been afflicted, and receive joy.
7. And possess yourselves through grace, and take unto you immortal life.
8. And they condemned me when I stood up, me who had not been condemned.
9. Then they divided my spoil, though nothing was owed them.
10. But I endured and held my peace and was silent, that I might not be disturbed by them.
11. But I stood undisturbed like a solid rock, which is continuously pounded by columns of waves and endures.
12. And I bore their bitterness because of humility; that I might redeem my nation and instruct it.
13. And that I might not nullify the promises to the patriarchs, to whom I was promised for the salvation of their offspring.
Hallelujah.

Ode 32

1. To the blessed ones the joy is from their heart, and light from Him who dwells in them;
2. And the Word of truth who is self-originate,
3. Because He has been strengthened by the Holy Power of the Most High; and He is unshaken for ever and ever.
Hallelujah.

Ode 33

1. But again Grace was swift and dismissed the Corruptor, and descended upon him to renounce him.
2. And he caused utter destruction before him, and corrupted all his work.
3. And he stood on the peak of a summit and cried aloud from one end of the earth to the other.
4. Then he drew to him all those who obeyed him, for he did not appear as the Evil One.
5. However, the perfect Virgin stood, who was preaching and summoning and saying:
6. O you sons of men, return, and you their daughters, come.
7. And leave the ways of that Corruptor, and approach me.
8. And I will enter into you, and bring you forth from destruction, and make you wise in the ways of truth.
9. Be not corrupted nor perish.
10. Obey me and be saved, for I am proclaiming unto you the grace of God.

11. And through me you will be saved and become blessed. I am your judge;
12. And they who have put me on shall not be falsely accused, but they shall possess incorruption in the new world.
13. My elect ones have walked with me, and my ways I will make known to them who seek me; and I will promise them my name.
Hallelujah.

Ode 34

1. There is no hard way where there is a simple heart, nor barrier for upright thoughts,
2. Nor whirlwind in the depth of the enlightened thought.
3. Where one is surrounded on every side by pleasing country, there is nothing divided in him.
4. The likeness of that which is below is that which is above.
5. For everything is from above, and from below there is nothing, but it is believed to be by those in whom there is no understanding.
6. Grace has been revealed for your salvation. Believe and live and be saved.
Hallelujah.

Ode 35

1. The gentle showers of the Lord overshadowed me with serenity, and they caused a cloud of peace to rise over my head;
2. That it might guard me at all times. And it became salvation to me.
3. Everyone was disturbed and afraid, and there came from them smoke and judgment.
4. But I was tranquil in the Lord's legion; more than shade was He to me, and more than foundation.
5. And I was carried like a child by its mother; and He gave me milk, the dew of the Lord.
6. And I was enriched by His favor, and rested in His perfection.
7. And I spread out my hands in the ascent of myself, and I directed myself towards the Most High, and I was redeemed towards Him.
Hallelujah.

Ode 36

1. I rested on the Spirit of the Lord, and She lifted me up to heaven;
2. And caused me to stand on my feet in the Lord's high place, before His perfection and His glory, where I continued glorifying Him by the composition of His Odes.
3. The Spirit brought me forth before the Lord's face, and because I was the Son of Man, I was named the Light, the Son of God;

4. Because I was the most glorified among the glorious ones, and the greatest among the great ones.
5. For according to the greatness of the Most High, so She made me; and according to His newness He renewed me.
6. And He anointed me with His perfection; and I became one of those who are near Him.
7. And my mouth was opened like a cloud of dew, and my heart gushed forth like a gusher of righteousness.
8. And my approach was in peace, and I was established in the Spirit of Providence.
Hallelujah.

Ode 37

1. I stretched out my hands towards the Lord, and towards the Most High I raised my voice.
2. And I spoke with the lips of my heart, and He heard me when my voice reached Him.
3. His Word came towards me, in order to give me the fruits of my labors;
4. And gave me rest by the grace of the Lord.
Hallelujah.

Ode 38

1. I went up into the light of Truth as into a chariot, and the Truth led me and caused me to come.
2. And caused me to pass over chasms and gulfs, and saved me from cliffs and valleys.
3. And became for me a haven of salvation, and set me on the place of immortal life.
4. And He went with me and caused me to rest and did not allow me to err; because He was and is the Truth.
5. And there was no danger for me because I constantly walked with Him; and I did not err in anything because I obeyed Him.
6. For Error fled from Him, and never met Him.
7. But Truth was proceeding on the upright way, and whatever I did not understand He exhibited to me:
8. All the poisons of error, and pains of death which are considered sweetness.
9. And the corrupting of the Corruptor, I saw when the bride who was corrupting was adorned, and the bridegroom who corrupts and is corrupted.
10. And I asked the Truth, Who are these? And He said to me: This is the Deceiver and the Error.
11. And they imitate the Beloved and His Bride, and they cause the world to err and corrupt it.

12. And they invite many to the wedding feast, and allow them to drink the wine of their intoxication;
13. So they cause them to vomit up their wisdom and their knowledge, and prepare for them mindlessness.
14. Then they abandon them; and so they stumble about like mad and corrupted men.
15. Since there is no understanding in them, neither do they seek it.
16. But I have been made wise so as not to fall into the hands of the Deceivers, and I myself rejoiced because the Truth had gone with me.
17. For I was established and lived and was redeemed, and my foundations were laid on account of the Lord's hand; because He has planted me.
18. For He set the root, and watered it and endowed it and blessed it, and its fruits will be forever.
19. It penetrated deeply and sprang up and spread out, and it was full and was enlarged.
20. And the Lord alone was glorified, in His planting and in His cultivation;
21. In His care and in the blessing of His lips, in the beautiful planting of His right hand;
22. And in the attainment of His planting, and in the understanding of His mind.
Hallelujah.

Ode 3G

1. Raging rivers are the power of the Lord; they send headlong those who despise Him.
2. And entangle their paths, and destroy their crossings.
3. And snatch their bodies, and corrupt their natures.
4. For they are more swift than lightnings, even more rapid.
5. But those who cross them in faith shall not be disturbed.
6. And those who walk on them faultlessly shall not be shaken.
7. Because the sign on them is the Lord, and the sign is the Way for those who cross in the name of the Lord.
8. Therefore, put on the name of the Most High and know Him, and you shall cross without danger; because rivers shall be obedient to you.
9. The Lord has bridged them by His Word, and He walked and crossed them on foot.
10. And His footsteps stand firm upon the waters, and were not destroyed; but they are like a beam of wood that is constructed on truth.

11. On this side and on that the waves were lifted up, but the footsteps of our Lord Messiah stand firm.
12. And they are neither blotted out, nor destroyed.
13. And the Way has been appointed for those who cross over after Him, and for those who adhere to the path of His faith; and who adore His name.
Hallelujah.

Ode 40

1. As honey drips from the honeycomb of bees, and milk flows from the woman who loves her children, so also is my hope upon You, O my God.
2. As a fountain gushes forth its water, so my heart gushes forth the praise of the Lord, and my lips bring forth praise to Him.
3. And my tongue becomes sweet by His anthems, and my members are anointed by His odes.
4. My face rejoices in His exultation, and my spirit exults in His love, and my nature shines in Him.
5. And he who is afraid shall trust in Him, and redemption shall be assured in Him.
6. And His possessions are immortal life, and those who receive it are incorruptible.
Hallelujah.

Ode 41

1. Let all the Lord's babes praise Him, and let us receive the truth of His faith.
2. And His children shall be acknowledged by Him, therefore let us sing by His love.
3. We live in the Lord by His grace, and life we receive by His Messiah.
4. For a great day has shined upon us, and wonderful is He who has given to us of His glory.
5. Let us, therefore, all of us agree in the name of the Lord, and let us honor Him in His goodness.
6. And let our faces shine in His light, and let our hearts meditate in His love, by night and by day.
7. Let us exult with the exultation of the Lord.
8. All those who see me will be amazed, because I am from another race.
9. For the Father of Truth remembered me; he who possessed me from the beginning.
10. For His riches begat me, and the thought of His heart.
11. And His Word is with us in all our way, the Savior who gives life and does not reject ourselves.

12. The Man who humbled Himself, but was exalted because of His own righteousness.
13. The Son of the Most High appeared in the perfection of His Father.
14. And light dawned from the Word that was before time in Him.
15. The Messiah in truth is one. And He was known before the foundations of the world, that He might give life to persons for ever by the truth of His name.
16. A new chant is for the Lord from them that love Him.
Hallelujah.

Ode 42

1. I extended my hands and approached my Lord, for the expansion of my hands is His sign.
2. And my extension is the upright cross, that was lifted up on the way of the Righteous One.
3. And I became useless to those who knew me not, because I shall hide myself from those who possessed me not.
4. And I will be with those who love me.
5. All my persecutors have died, and they sought me, they who declared against me, because I am living.
6. Then I arose and am with them, and will speak by their mouths.
7. For they have rejected those who persecute them; and I threw over them the yoke of my love.
8. Like the arm of the bridegroom over the bride, so is my yoke over those who know me.
9. And as the bridal chamber is spread out by the bridal pair's home, so is my love by those who believe in me.
10. I was not rejected although I was considered to be so, and I did not perish although they thought it of me.
11. Sheol saw me and was shattered, and Death ejected me and many with me.
12. I have been vinegar and bitterness to it, and I went down with it as far as its depth.
13. Then the feet and the head it released, because it was not able to endure my face.
14. And I made a congregation of living among his dead; and I spoke with them by living lips; in order that my word may not be unprofitable.
15. And those who had died ran towards me; and they cried out and said, Son of God, have pity on us.
16. And deal with us according to Your kindness, and bring us out from the bonds of darkness.

17. And open for us the door by which we may come out to You; for we perceive that our death does not touch You.
 18. May we also be saved with You, because You are our Savior.
 19. Then I heard their voice, and placed their faith in my heart.
 20. And I placed my name upon their head, because they are free and they are mine.
Hallelujah.
-

And a second, more poetic translation of several of the Odes:

The Odes of Solomon

Ode I

The Lord is on my head like a crown
and I shall not be without him.

The Crown of truth was woven for me,
and caused your branches to blossom in me.

The Crown is not dry and sterile.

You live
and blossomed on my head.

Your fruits are full and perfect
and filled with salvation.

Ode III

I Clothe his limbs, his own limbs
and hang from them.
He loves me.

How would I know how to love the Lord
if he did not love me?
And who can tell us about love?
Only one who is loved.

I love the beloved and my soul loves him
and I am where he reposes,
and will be no stranger to him,
because he is not petty, my high merciful Lord.

I have gone to join him
for the lover has found
his beloved.

Whoever joins the Immortal becomes Immortal.
Whoever delights in the living one is living.

This is the spirit of the Lord.
It does not lie, it teaches us his ways.

Be wise,
Be understanding
and your eyes open.

Ode VI

As the hand moves over the harp and the strings speak,
so the Spirit of the Lord speaks in my members and
I speak by his love.

For he destroys what is foreign
and bitter.

So he was from the beginning and
will be to the end.
Nothing will be his adversary

The Lord multiplies his knowledge
and was zealous to make us know what he gives us
through his grace.

He gave us praise for his name
and our Spirits praise his Holy Spirit.

A stream went forth
and became a long and broad river.
It flooded and broke and carried away the temple.

Ordinary men could not stop it,
nor could those whose art is to halt the waters,
and it spread over the face of the whole earth,
filling everything,
And the thirsty of the earth drank
and their thirst was quenched.

The drink came from the highest one.
Blessed are the Ministers of that drink,
those who guard his water.

They assuage dry lips
They raise up those who have fainted.

Souls that were about to depart,
they have drawn back from death.

and limbs that had become crooked
they made straight.

They gave strength to our feebleness
and light to our eyes.
Everyone knew them in the Lord,
and by the water they lived forever.

Ode VII

As anger moves over evil
so joy moves over the beloved
and floods us with fruits.

My joy is the Lord and I move towards him
,The Way is excellent.

My helper is the Lord
who in his candor lets me know him thoroughly.
His kindness has humbled his magnitude.

He became like me so I could receive him,
He thought like me so I could become him
and I did not tremble when I saw him,
for he was gracious to me.

He took on my nature so I could learn from him,
took on my form so I would not turn away.

The father of knowledge,
is the word of knowledge.

He who gave birth to Wisdom,
is wiser than his works.

Ode XI

My heart was cloven and there appeared a flower,
and grace sprang up
and fruit from the Lord,

for the highest one split me with his holy spirit,
exposed my love for him
and filled me with his love.

His splitting of my heart was my salvation
and I followed the way of his peace,
the way of truth.

From the beginning to the end
I received his knowledge.

and sat on the rock of truth
where he placed me.

Speaking waters came near my lip
from the vast fountain of the Lord,

and I drank and was drunk
with the living water that never dies,
and my drunkenness gave me knowledge.

I threw off vanity,
turned to my God
and his bounty made me rich.

I threw off the madness of the earth,
I stripped it from me and cast it away,
and the Lord renewed me in his raiment
and held me in his light.

From above he gave me uncorrupt ease
and I was like land deep and happy in its orchards,
and the Lord was sun on the face of the land.

My eyes were clear,
dew was on my face.

and my nostrils enjoyed
the aroma of the Lord.

He took me to Paradise
where I knew Joy
and worshipped his glory.

Blessed are they
planted in your land,
in Paradise,
who grow in the growth of your trees
and change from gloom to light.

Your Servants are lovely.
They do good,
they abjure evil and turn to your pleasantness.

They are free of the bitterness of trees
ancient in their land.

You are everywhere,
always before your servants.

There is much space in Paradise
but no wasteland,
All is fruit.

Glory, Lord, and the eternal delight of Paradise.

Ode XIV

As the eyes of a son to his father,
so my eyes turn to you, O Lord, at all times,
for with you are my consolation and joy.

Do not turn your mercy from me, O Lord,
nor your kindness,
but stretch out your right hand,
and be my guide to the end.

Care for me,
save me from evil.

and let your gentleness
and love be with me.

Teach me to sing of truth,
that I may engender fruit in you.

Open the harp of your holy spirit
so I may praise you, Lord, with all its notes.

From your sea of mercy,
help me,
help me in my hour of need.

Ode XV

As the sun is joy for those who seek daybreak,
so my joy is the Lord.

He is my sun and his rays have lifted me up
and chased all darkness from my face.

In him I have acquired eyes
and seen his sacred day.

I have acquired ears
and heard his truth.

I have acquired knowledge
and been made happy in him.

I left the way of error and went to him
and was saved.

According to his bounty he gave me,
according to his beauty he made me.

I found purity through his name,
I shed corruption through his grace.

Death has died before my countenance,
hell is abolished by my word.

A deathless life appears in the land of the Lord,
is known to those with faith,
and given those with faith, uncessantly.

Ode XVII

I was crowned by God,
by a crown alive.

and my Lord justified me.
He became my certain salvation.

I was freed from myself
and uncondemned.
The chains fell from my wrists.

I took on the face and ways of a new person,
walked in him and was redeemed.

The thought of truth drove me.
I walked to it and did not wander off.

Those who saw me were amazed,
supposing me to be a strange person.

He who knew me and brought me up
is the summit of perfection.

He glorified me by kindness
and lifted my thought to truth

and showed me his way.
I opened closed doors,

shattered bars of iron.
My own shackles melted.

Nothing appeared closed
because I was the door to everything.

I freed slaves,
left no man in bonds,

I spread my knowledge
and love

and sowed my fruits in hearts
and transformed them.

I blessed them. They lived.
I gathered them and saved them.

They became the limbs of my body
and I was their head.

Glory to you, our head, Our Lord Messiah.

Ode XIX

A cup of milk I was offered
and I drank its sweetness as the delight of the Lord.

The Son is the cup
and he who was milked is the Father,
and he who milked him is the Holy Ghost.

His breasts were full
and his milk should not drip out wastefully.

The Holy Ghost opened the Father's raiment
and mingled the milk from the Father's two breasts.

and gave that mingling to the world, which was unknowing.
Those who drink it are near his right hand.

The Spirit opened the Virgin`s womb
and she received the milk.

The Virgin became a mother of great mercy;
she labored, but not in pain, and bore a son.
No midwife came.

She bore him as if she were a man,
openly, with dignity, with kindness.
She loved him, and swaddled him, and revealed his majesty.

Ode XXI

I raised my arms high
to the grace of the Lord,

for he had cast off my bonds.
My helper had lifted me to his grace and salvation.

I discarded darkness
and clothed myself in Light.

My soul acquired a body
free from sorrow,
affliction or pain.

The thought of the Lord restored me.
I fed on his incorruptible fellowship.

And I was raised in the Light
and went to him,
near him,
praising and proclaiming him.

He made my heart flood into my mouth,
made it shine on my lips.

On my face the exultation of the Lord increased,
and his praise.

Ode XXIV

The dove flew over the head of the Messiah
who was her head,
and she sang over him
and her voice was heard.

The inhabitants were afraid
and travelers shuddered.

Birds took flight
and all creeping things died in their holes.

Abysses opened and closed.
They were seeking God like women in labor.

They had no food.
None belonged to them.

The abysses sank and were sealed by the Lord
and people perished in their own thought,
ancient and new.

Everyone was imperfect and died.
They could say nothing.

The Lord destroyed the imagination
of all who did not have his truth.

They were weak in wisdom
and were rejected. They lacked his truth.

The Lord disclosed his way,
and spread his grace in alien lands.

Those who understood
know holiness.

The Miracles of Mary

Benedictine College's consecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary on Sept. 8, 2013, is just the most recent chapter in the story of the school's relationship with Mary.

"Our Lady's intercessions date as far back as 1856 when she saved the founder of St. Benedict's Abbey, Fr. Henry Lemke's life during a torrential thunderstorm and flood, to most recently when we implored her help in increasing our enrollment and growth," said Minnis. "Thus, we believe that it is very appropriate to formally Consecrate Benedictine College to the Blessed Virgin Mary."

Here is a brief summary of the founding miracle at Benedictine College and the more recent manifestations of Mary's relationship with the school.

Lady Dressed in White

Father Henry Lemke wrote in his diary about an 1856 incident where he was lost in a storm and prayed for Mary's intercession. As soon as he said the prayer, a light appeared on the horizon. He stumbled toward it and found that it was a lantern hanging in the window of a cottage.

The mother and daughter who lived in the cottage sheltered him and told him that a lady dressed in white had appeared to the child in the night. This had awakened the mother, who hung the lantern.

Wrote Lemke: "O, you dearest Mother of God, it was through the pure and unsullied soul of a child that you effected that the mother would place a lamp in the window just about the very time when I was calling out for help because I feared for my life. The Mother of God worked a miracle."

Two years later, Benedictine College was founded and the "lady dressed in white" appeared to another little girl in a small town — St. Bernadette of Lourdes, France.

Watch a dramatization of this story [here](#).

The Memorare Army

Again and again, the college has relied on its Memorare Army prayer campaign to fulfill Benedictine College's mission to educate students in a community of faith and scholarship. [More about the Memorare Army](#)

Our Lady of Mount Carmel

In addition to daily Memorare prayers, President Minnis began praying for the campaign with a prayer his wife Amy gave him. "Oh most beautiful flower of Mt. Carmel," said the prayer, "assist me in this necessity." The prayer at one point includes a line that Minnis began targeting to the quest for particular resources the college lacked: "Our needs cannot withstand your power."

On several occasions, the prayer coincided with the receipt of necessary resources the college needed, and he began to consider Our Lady of Carmel a partner in his presidency.

On Monday, June 7, 2010, Minnis was expecting a call that would answer a great need. At 10 a.m., Minnis prayed a rosary and 10 memorares in the Guadalupe Chapel, adding the prayer to Our Lady of Mount Carmel, with its reminder that "Our needs cannot withstand your power." He later learned that while he was saying the prayer, a benefactor was answering a seven-figure need at the College.

Basilica della Santissima Annunziata

In 2006, Minnis visited the beautiful Basilica Santissima Annunziata (the Basilica of the Most Holy Annunciation) near Benedictine College's Florence, Italy, campus.

The Investing in Excellence campaign was new then, and the \$50 million needs it had identified seemed unachievable to many.

Minnis visited an altar there known for its unique image of Our Lady. As the story goes, in 1252 a monk began to paint an image of the Annunciation but felt unequal to the task of painting Mary. The monk went to bed and an angel finished the painting in his sleep. The altar is now the center of devotion to the Blessed Mother.

It was at that altar that President Minnis offered the Investing in Excellence campaign to Mary and asked that the campaign might surpass its goal and bring \$60 million for the needs of the college.

In March 2011, he scheduled a return visit to Florence. The week he booked the flight, Minnis' prayer was answered. A gift put the amount raised over \$60 million (it eventually topped \$70 million).

Minnis returned to the altar and placed a bouquet of flowers, a Raven Rosary, pictures of the new Academic Center and Mary's Grotto, and a Grotto medal and St. Benedict Medal at the altar.

The Tandem Bicycle

In 2019, Ravens at their graduation heard from the man behind the tandem bicycle symbols at Benedictine College.

The keynote speaker for the college's 2019 Commencement ceremony at its Atchison, Kansas, campus was five-time Major League Baseball All Star and former Kansas City Royals player Mike Sweeney.

Because of Sweeney, President Minnis has used the tandem bicycle as a symbol of trust in God in his life ever since 2006. In February that year, David Moritz, a 1957 alumnus in Dallas, gave the college a million dollars and a challenge. He said he would add a million more if the college raised \$6 million by June 15.

That was a tall order, but on June 15, after an extraordinary outpouring of generosity from donors, the college was almost there — just \$650,000 short.

Mike Sweeney, then-captain of the Kansas City Royals, spoke on campus that day and told the story of how much he struggled early in his career. At one dark point, a friend gave him a picture of a tandem bicycle—a two-seater. She told Mike that he was on the front pedaling hard and guiding the bike, but that real success would only come if he got on the back seat, peddled as hard as he could, and let God guide from the front. Sweeney said his career, and faith, took off after that.

President Minnis was inspired by the story. "I walked outside and made the decision that I was going to peddle hard the rest of the day and let his will be done," he said.

Almost immediately, the President's cell phone rang. It was a \$300,000 donation to the campaign. Then it rang again with a \$100,000 donation. Then a call came for \$50,000, putting the college within \$200,000 of the goal.

The President peddled. He called Steve Dunn of JE Dunn Construction and asked if their family would help out. They had already committed a quarter of a million dollars to the building, but they understood the need to meet the challenge, and gave the rest.

In total, \$8 million dollars were raised in four short months, and tandem bicycles became a key symbol for trust in God on campus.

Mary is a model of trust in God.

"I wanted to thank the Blessed Virgin for all she has done for the college. Little did I know that the superabundance of her generosity would allow us to do more than we ever dreamed of," said Minnis. "We put Mary in the heart of campus with the Grotto and it is clear that she has made a place for us in her heart, as well."

The Ethiopian Synaxarium (Selections)

THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 677 THE TWELVETH MONTH Nehasse 01 (August 07) IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD. AMEN. On this day the blessed Saint Abba 'Aboli, the son of Justus, became a martyr. To this holy man belonged the kingdom of Rome. When he had fought in the war, and returned to the city of Antioch, he found that Diocletian had denied Christ, and had set up the worship of idols. He was able to destroy Diocletian and to take his kingdom from him, but he meditated upon a heavenly kingdom, which never passeth away; and Diocletian urged him, with many persuasive words, [to worship idols,] but he would not hearken unto him. And after this Justus urged the saint, until Diocletian wrote the order, and sent it to Justus, and his wife Theoklera, and his son 'Aboli, who is commemorated this day, and he sent them to the country of Egypt, to Herminius, governor of the city of Alexandria, and he said in his letter, "When Justus, and his wife, and his son 'Aboli arrive, persuade them to offer sacrifice to the gods, and if they will not do so, separate them from each other, and send them each alone into the city." And that night our Lord Jesus Christ appeared unto Justus and his wife, and his son, and comforted them and encouraged them, and He told them what was going to happen to them, and He promised [to receive] them in His heavenly abode. And when they arrived in the city of Alexandria, and Herminius the governor saw them, he marveled greatly at them, and wondered why they had forsaken their royal position. And the governor did not dare to speak abusive words to them, but he addressed them with words of courtesy, and persuaded them earnestly to return to their honorable estate; but they would not hearken unto him. And straightway he became filled with wrath at Justus, and he separated them from each other; Justus he sent to the city of Antioch, and his wife to the city of Sa, and his son 'Aboli to the city of Basta; and he gave to each of them one of their servants to minister unto them. And when Abba 'Aboli had arrived in the city of Basta, he confessed our Lord Jesus Christ before the governor, who tortured him severely, and burnt him with fire, and put him on the wheel, and cut off his limbs, and cast him to the lions. And God gave him strength, and delivered him, and raised him up whole and uninjured from the tortures. And when many of the men who were there saw what happened to Saint 'Aboli, after the torturing, they marveled exceedingly, and they believed on our Lord Jesus Christ and became martyrs. And the governor was wroth with the saint, and he commanded his soldiers to flay off his skin, and to dip rags of sackcloth in vinegar and salt, and to rub all his wounds therewith; [and they did so,] and then they laid his skin upon his shoulders, and took him round through all the city. And the saint prayed and said, "O my Lord Jesus Christ, Thou Son of the Living God, help me and deliver me from this tribulation"; and forthwith the angel Michael came to him, and touched his body, and healed his wounds; and the governor commanded the soldiers to take him into the prison house until he could decide what he should do with him. And the saint stood up and prayed in prison, and whilst he was praying our Lord Jesus Christ appeared unto him, and He said unto him, "Peace be unto thee, O My chosen one 'Aboli, be strong and fear not, for I will be with thee until the end of thy fight"; and when He had said this unto him He went up into heaven in great glory. And Saint 'Aboli rejoiced with a great joy when he saw our Lord Jesus Christ. And there was a certain rich man whose name was 'Abskiron, THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 678 and who had two sons, and he brought some workmen to pull down the wall of his house and to rebuild it; and he commanded his two sons to stand by them until they finished their work. And when the workmen went up on the wall it fell down and killed twelve of the workmen, and the two sons of the rich man; and when the rich man heard what had happened he rent his garments, and cried out and wept. And he went to Saint Abba 'Aboli,

and bowed low at his feet and said unto him, "Have compassion upon me, for my two sons are dead with the seventeen (sic) workmen, if thou wilt raise them up from the dead I will believe on thy God." And when he had said this unto him, the holy man rose up and prayed, saying, "O my Lord Jesus Christ, Who hast chosen me to suffer for Thy holy Name's sake, do Thou make manifest Thy power over the men who are dead, and raise them up from the dead, so that all men may believe, and that all men may know that there is no other God beside Thee; for Thine is the glory for ever and ever. Amen." And he took his skin and spread it out over those men, saying, "In the Name of my Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, do ye all rise up alive"; and he took them by their hands, and raised them up, and all the people were looking on. And straightway they all cried out, saying, "One is the God of the Christians, Jesus Christ, the God of Saint 'Aboli." And straightway 'Abskiron bowed down before the saint, saying, "Now do I know that Jesus Christ is the Great God: I believe on Him": and all the men of his house believed with him, and the governor was put to shame. And our Lord Jesus Christ appeared unto the saint and made him a promise, saying, "O My chosen one 'Aboli, whosoever shall ask Me for help in thy name when tribulation cometh upon him, I will hear his prayer and will fulfill all his petition and desire. And I will make to dwell in My kingdom whosoever shall build a church in thy name. And I will write upon the lips of the four beasts, and I will make to rest in the bosom of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and will make to eat of the dainty things of the Garden of Delight, every one who shall write down the story of thy fight, or shall read it, or shall make someone else to hear it. And even if he hath committed many sins, but doth repent, I will forgive him his sins. And I will forgive the sins of every one who shall feed the hungry in thy name, and I will make him to eat of the fruits of the Garden; and My peace shall be with thee. Amen." And when our Redeemer had said these things unto him, He gave him the salutation "Peace," and went up into heaven with great glory. And when the governor became tired of torturing him he commanded the soldiers to cut off his head with the sword, and they cut off his holy head with the sword, and he received the crown of martyrdom in the kingdom of the heavens. And his body resteth in the monastery of Handak, outside the city of Mesr (Cairo), and many signs and wonders take place through it, and great healings. Salutation to 'Aboli. Salutation to you, O ye company of two hundred and forty men and women who were tortured and beheaded with Saint 'Aboli. And on this day also are commemorated Saint Hannah, the mother of our Lady Mary, and Hannah the prophetess, the daughter of Panuel. Salutation to the three virgins Pistis (Faith), 'Alapis (Hope), and 'Agapis (Charity), who suffered martyrdom, but whose beauty was unspoiled by the smoke, and whose bodies were unconsumed by the fire. And the fathers have commanded that on this day the people shall celebrate the commemoration of the honorable men Joseph and Nicodemus, who were held to be worthy to become ministers of the Divine Mystery. And they brought down from the Cross the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, when He had fulfilled the Law THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 679 of the Incarnation in every respect, with the exception of sin, and He had accepted suffering and death for the sake of the salvation of the [world]. So little did the terror of the Jews frighten them that they asked Pilate to give them His Body, and when Pilate gave them permission to carry Him away, they took Him down from the Cross, having withdrawn the nails from out of His hands, and His feet, and they bore Him away on their shoulders. And they heard a voice which came forth from His dead Body, saying, "Holy is the Lord, Holy is the Power, Holy is the Life Which dieth not, and which the holy Virgin Mary bore! Have compassion upon us, O Lord. Holy is the Lord, Holy is the Power, Holy is the Life Which dieth not, which was baptized in the Jordan, and was hung upon the wood of the Cross. Have compassion upon us, O Lord. Holy is the Lord,

Holy is the Power, Holy is the Life Which dieth not, Which was raised up from the dead on the third day, Who went up into heaven with praise and sat down on the right hand of His Father, Who shall come again to judge the living and the dead. Have compassion upon us, O Lord. Glory be to the Father. Glory be to the Son. Glory be to the Holy Spirit, now and henceforth and forever. Amen. So be it! So be it!" And when they heard this their Faith in Christ was strengthened. And Joseph brought linen cloths, and Nicodemus brought perfumed unguents, and they wrapped our Lord in them, and buried Him in a new grave. And this Joseph was kinsman to Nicodemus, the brother of Cleophas, the kinsman of Stephen the martyr. And Nicodemus was the Phrisee, and the legate of the Jews, who went by night to our Lord Jesus Christ, and . . . His coming from heaven. And our Lord told him that it was impossible for a man to enter into the kingdom of the heavens, who was not born of water and of the Holy Spirit; and Nicodemus used frequently to rebuke the Jews when they derided the words of our Lord. And after His Resurrection, as they were travelling along the road to Emmaus, it was these two, Cleophas and Nicodemus, whom our Lord met; and they told Him everything which had happened in Jerusalem, without recognizing Him. And He told them that the prophets had prophesied concerning His Death and Resurrection; and then when they recognized Him, He disappeared from them. And they brought His words to His disciples. And Joseph the Jews bound fast in prison, and they wanted to kill him, because he had buried our Lord. And although the door of the prison was sealed with the seal of Pilate, and with the seals of the high priests, our Lord Jesus came to the place where Joseph was, and He was mounted on the chariot of the Cherubim, and with Him there were thousands of thousands, and tens of thousands of tens of thousands of angels, and Seraphim standing round about Him, and burning incense before Him. And the thief who was on His right hand stood on the right of Him wearing shining raiment, and he was making intercession for sinners, because he had found favor before Him; and the keepers of the house were terrified, and trembling seized them. And then our Lord cried out to Joseph and said unto him, "Be not afraid of the terrors of the Jews. Behold I have come to unloose thy bonds. I am that Jesus, the Nazarene, in Whose suffering thou didst participate. Look at the nail [marks] in My hands and feet, and the mark of the spear in My side, so that thou mayest know that of a truth I am He." Then He caught up Joseph from that place, and took him to the city of 'Armatyas. And the keepers of the prison house, having gone to Pilate, told him everything, which they had seen, and what they had heard from the mouth of our Lord, and how He had set free Joseph and taken him away with Him. And when the high priests went [there] they found the doors of the prison open and their seals unbroken. And these saints continued to preach the Gospel with the Disciples, and very much tribulation came upon them; and then they died in peace. Salutation to Joseph the rich man who begged the Body of Jesus from Pilate. Salutation to Nicodemus who believed on the Son of Mary. Glory be to God Who is glorified in His Saints. Amen. THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 680 Nehasse 02 (August 08) IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD. AMEN. On this day died Saint Athanasia. This holy woman was a native of the city of Manuf, and her parents were rich. When they died she arrived in her mind at the wise decision to make her house a dwelling place for monks and pilgrims, and this she carried into effect. And she used to receive all those who came to her, and she gave them whatsoever they needed, and at length she came to the end of her money. And certain evil men, whose actions were abominable, gathered together, and they corrupted her mind and induced her to commit sin, which she used to do continually, instead of doing what was good. And the holy elders of the desert of Scete heard the story of her, and they sorrowed for her with very great sorrow. And they called Abba John the Short and informed him of

what had happened to her, and they asked him to go to her, and to show her affection in return for the many kind acts, which she had done to them, and to save her soul. And he submitted unto them in this matter, and asked them to help him by their prayers. And Saint Abba John rose up and departed, and came to the place where Athanasia was, and he said unto the woman who kept the door of her house, "Inform thy mistress of my arrival." And when the woman had informed her about the arrival of the saint, she thought that he had come to her for the purpose of committing sin, and she adorned herself and sat upon her couch. Then she called him, and he came unto her singing these words, "Even if I have to go amid the shadows of death I will fear [no] evil, for Thou art with me" (Psalm xxii, 4). And when the saint came to her she made him to sit by her side upon her bed, and he looked at her and said unto her, "Why dost thou belittle our Lord Jesus Christ? Why hast thou forsaken thy good deeds and turned thyself to this evil course of life?" And when she heard his words she trembled, and she knew that her heart was melting; and the saint bowed his head and wept. And she asked him, saying, "Why dost thou weep?" And he answered and said unto her, "Because I see the Satans playing on thy face, and therefore I weep for thee." And she answered and said unto him, "Is it necessary for me to repent?" And the saint said unto her, "Yea." And she said unto him, "Take me away, and carry me whithersoever thou wishest": and he said unto her, "Come," and she followed him, and they departed and came into the desert. And when the eventide was come he said unto her, "Sleep by thyself," and after he had finished his prayer he lay down at a distance from her. And when he rose up at midnight to pray he saw pillar of light shining upon her, and the pillar reached from earth to heaven, and he saw the angel of God bearing away her soul. And he rose up and went to her, and he found that she was dead, and he cast himself upon the ground and prayed to God to give him information concerning her. And there came unto him a voice, saying, "God accepted her repentance when she repented more readily than He did the repentance of those who were in a state of repentance for many years, and who repented even like her." And Saint John went and told the holy elders everything, which had happened unto her, and the saints came and made her ready for burial and buried her. Salutation to Athanasia. And on this day also are commemorated Saint Demiana and her brother. And on this day also died Saint Eupraxia. This holy woman belonged to a race of kings. Then name of her father, who was a royal councilor, was "Atekhanos," and the name of her mother was "Eupraxia," and they fasted, and prayed to God that He would give them a son; and when they had gotten this saint, they called her by her mother's name "Eupraxia." And after a few days her father died, and the king and queen mourned for him, and her mother took Saint Eupraxia to a house of virgins when she was six years old. And when she saw the beauty of the excellence of the virgins, she said unto them, "Why do ye lead this life of service?" And they told her, saying, "It is for Christ's sake." And she said unto them, "Where is Christ?" And they showed her a picture of Christ, and she came up to it, and bowed low before it, and kissed its feet. And she went to the deacons, and asked [them] to receive her as a nun, and they told her mother, and her mother gave her to the deaconess; and her mother, having handed her over to the care of all the virgins, left her and departed. And after a few days Eupraxia, her mother, died, and the saint assumed the garb of the monastic life; and she fought the spiritual fight continually and fasted every eighth day. And Satans was envious of her, and tempted her, and sometimes he threw her into the water, and sometimes he wounded her with the axe when she was cutting up wood, and sometimes he poured boiling water over her, but nothing harmed her. And she continued to minister unto the virgins, to each in her turn. Sometimes they commanded her to tend the furnace, and sometimes to bake the bread, and sometimes to draw water, and she

never hesitated to perform these works. She never lay down upon the ground, but stood upright for forty days at a time, until at length the virgins marveled at the severity of her fight. And God made manifest by her hands signs and wonders, and the sick were healed, and the devils went out, and the lame walked, and the blind saw, when she prayed over them. And there was a certain virgin whose name was Iyalya, and it was she who taught Eupraxia to read and to write, and the duties of the ascetic life; she was her companion in every work, and they loved each other very much. And when she was thirty years of age she saw a vision wherein the deacons were taking up Eupraxia into the royal palace, wherein was the heavenly Bridegroom and never-ending joy; and when she woke up she knew that the death of Eupraxia was nigh. And on the following day she told the virgins, and when they went to Eupraxia they found that she was in a high fever. And they wept over her, and asked her to pray over them, and she blessed them, and died, and she was buried in the tomb of her mother, at whose tomb she had prayed three days before. Salutation to Eupraxia. Glory be to God Who is glorified in His Saints. Amen. Nehasse 03 (August 09) IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD. AMEN. On this day died the glorious holy father, the ascetic and fighter, Abba Simon of the Pillar. This saint came from the island of Sorya. When his days were three years, his father set him to tend his sheep. And he used to go to church frequently and hear the Holy Scriptures, and the grace of God moved him, and he went to a certain monastery and became a monk, and devoted himself to the ascetic life and fought the spiritual fight for many years. And he used to carry loads of dust and ashes upon his head, and he afflicted his soul with fasting and much prayer, and with prolonged periods of thirst. And then he tied a cord so tightly about his waist that it sank into his body, and very stinking worms used to issue from the wound. And his brother monks were distressed at his filthy smell, THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 682 and at his dirtiness, and they all gathered together and came to the abbot, and said unto him, "If thou dost not expel this monk Simon from among us, we shall all forsake thee and depart." And the abbot said unto them, "What hath he done?" And they said unto him, "Call him, and see what he hath done"; and the abbot called Saint Abba Simon. And when Simon stood before him the abbot saw blood, mixed with pus, flowing down upon his feet, and it was an exceedingly hard matter for the abbot. And he opened Simon's apparel and saw the rope, which had cut, into his flesh, and the abbot was wroth with him, and said unto him, "Why hast thou dared to do this thing, which thou wishest to do with such toil?" And the abbot had the rope taken off the saint's body. And they continued to treat him in this saving manner for a space of fifty days, until his wound was healed. And the abbot said unto him, "O my son Simon, depart whithersoever thou wishest." And he went forth from them, and departed, and came unto a dry pit, and he dwelt therein with serpents and scorpions. And the abbot saw a vision by night wherein it seemed that one said unto him, "Why dost thou send away My servant Simon? Seek him, and bring him back, for it shall be better for him than for thee in the Day of Judgment"; and the voice rebuked him very severely because of the going forth of Abba Simon from the monastery. And when the morning had come, the abbot told all the brethren what he had seen, and how the voice had rebuked him because of Saint Simon; and the brethren were frightened, and were exceedingly sorry. And the abbot said unto them, "Depart ye and search for him in every place, and come not back to me until ye have found him." And they departed and searched for him in many places, but they found him not. And after this they went to that pit, and they lighted a lamp, and they saw him seated with the serpents and scorpions, without food and without drink; and they let down a rope to him, and they drew him up out of the pit, and they bowed low before him and said unto him, "Forgive us our sin." And Saint Abba Simon said unto them,

"Forgive ye me for having caused you all sorrow, for I have transgressed the command of my teacher the abbot." And from the time when he took up his abode in the pit until they took him out he had neither eaten bread nor drunken water; and they took him to the monastery, and he lived there a life of stern self-denial, and he fought many spiritual fights. And when they had set him in the monastery, he craved not for the glory of this fleeting world, and he left the brethren and fled from them, and departed secretly, and came to a certain rock, and stood up before it for sixty days without sleeping. And after this the angel of the Lord came unto him, and comforted him, and made him to know that Gad had called him for the salvation of many souls. And then he stood for fifteen years upon a pillar, the height whereof was thirty cubits, and he performed signs and many wonders, and great healings; and he used to teach all those who came unto him. And his father sought him but found him not, and he died before he could see him. And after many years his mother heard the report of him, and she came to him whilst he was standing on the pillar, and she wept greatly; and then she used to sleep under the pillar of the saint. And the saint asked God to deal graciously with her, and she died whilst she was sleeping, and they buried her under the pillar of the saint. And Satan became envious of the saint; and smote him a severe blow in one foot, and it became diseased, but he stood upon the other foot for many years, until the diseased foot rotted, and worms dropped on the ground from it. And the captain of a gang of thieves came to him and repented under his direction, and he lived a few days [there] and died. And the saint asked our Lord Jesus Christ, and a spring of water sprang up at the foot of the pillar, for the use of those people who used to come to him to drink water for their troubles. And after this he departed to another high pillar and he stood upon it for thirty years. And when he had completed eight and forty years, during which time he lived the ascetic life and fought the spiritual fight, he THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 683 departed to the God Whom he loved, having converted many infidels and pagans, and brought them into the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. And he taught many men, and arrayed them in the garb of the monastic life, and they became like angels of God; and he died in peace and inherited the kingdom of heaven. And when the Archbishop of Antioch heard that Saint Abba Simon was dead, he came, bringing with him priests, and deacons, and officers, and they took away the body of Saint Simon with great honor, and brought it to the city of Alexandria, with spiritual songs and psalms. And they laid it in a church there, and many signs, and wonders, and great healings took place through it. Salutation to Simon of the Pillar. And on this day also died Saint Sophia. This saint was a kinswoman of a race of kings, and she had riches and possessions, and she crossed the Sea of Rome with her three daughters to receive the seal of Christ. And the Emperor Andrianus, knowing that she was a Christian, had her and her daughters brought before him, and questioned her about her country and her name; and she said unto him, "The name which comes first with me is that of 'Christian'; as for what my kinsfolk call me, it is 'Sophia,' and I am of a noble family of Italy. And the Lord Jesus Christ hath in His mercy brought me into thy city, that I may offer myself and my daughters as an offering." And she encouraged her daughters, and bade them not to fear the tortures. And after this her three daughters finished their testimony, and she wrapped them in shrouds and buried them outside the city. And she went out to celebrate the commemoration of her three daughters with many other women of the city, and when she arrived at their graves, she bowed down and prayed, saying, "O my perfect daughters who are crowned with crowns incorruptible, may I too receive a crown with you!" And having said thee words she died in peace, and was buried with her daughters. Salutation to Sophia. Salutation to the translation of the body of Mercurius, the fighter, which was taken to a new grave on the backs of three oxen. Glory be to God

Who is glorified in His Saints. Amen. Nehasse 04 (August 10) IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD. AMEN. On this day died King Hezekiah, son of Ahaz, of the seed of David, of the tribe of Judah. After David, the prophet, there was never appointed any king over the children of Israel like unto this saint, for all the kings of Israel worshipped idols, and built altars to them, with the exception of this king. When he reigned he broke the idols, and laid waste their altars, and broke in pieces the serpent of brass because the children of Israel worshipped it; and because he had done the things which were good God rewarded him by adding greatly to his days. In the fourteenth year of his kingdom Sanakrem (Sennacherib), the King of Fars (Persia), came and besieged Jerusalem. Now Sanakrem (Sennacherib) was a very great and most powerful king, and there was no king as strong and mighty in his days, and all the [other] kings were afraid, and were subject unto him. And Hezekiah was afraid of him, and sent to him much money and tribute; but Sanakrem (Sennacherib) was not THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 684 pleased with him, and would receive nothing whatsoever from him. And Sanakrem (Sennacherib) sent an angry message to Hezekiah, and he uttered many threats against him, and promised that he would destroy him, and blot out his city. And he reviled God, the Glorious and Most High, with his foul tongue, saying, "God is not able to deliver thee out of my hand"; and then he sent to Hezekiah two letters, wherein were written wrathful blasphemies. And Hezekiah wept, and rent his garments, and he put on hair sackcloth, and sent into the house of God and prayed before Him, saying, "Thou O God knowest what Sanakrem (Sennacherib) the king and his messengers are saying, this king worshipeth the gods of the land which are of wood and stone, but Thou, O God, alone art the Lord God, the Sustainer of the Universe." And then Hezekiah sent a letter to Isaiah the prophet, and made him to know what Sanakrem (Sennacherib) the King of Fars (Persia), was saying; and he asked him to pray for him. And Isaiah answered him with the word of God, saying, "Be of good courage and fear not, for God is about to do unto Sanakrem (Sennacherib) an awful thing, the like whereof hath never been heard of in all the earth." And that night Michael, the angel of God, came down from heaven, and slew in the camp of Sanakrem (Sennacherib) one hundred and fourscore and five thousand men in a moment. And when [the Persians] woke up and found that their hosts were slain, those who were left of the slaughter fled to the country of Fars (Persia), together with the king. And Sanakrem (Sennacherib) came into [the temple of] his gods to pray, and his sons rose up against him and slew him, and Hezekiah escaped from his hand and praised God. And when the time drew nigh for Hezekiah to die, Isaiah the prophet came unto him, and found him lying sick of a most serious sickness, and he said unto him, "Give commands to thy sons, for behold, thou shalt die." And Hezekiah prayed before God, and God sent Isaiah unto him a second time, and made known to him that God had added to his days another fifteen years; and when he required from Isaiah a sign, he made the sun to go back for him on the sun-dial. And all the kings of the earth were afraid of Hezekiah, and they brought tribute unto him, because they knew that God was with him; and he continued in his kingdom nine and twenty years, and all the days of his life were four and fifty years, and he pleased God [and died] in peace. And the prayer of the saint, which he uttered through the Holy Spirit when he was healed of his sickness, is written in the Psalms of David. Salutation to Hezekiah. And on this day also the saints David and his brethren, and Philip, became martyrs in the city of Sengera, in the north of Egypt. Salutation to David and his brethren who became martyrs in the land of Sengar. And on this day also died Abba Matthew, the anchorite. This saint dwelt in the desert, and wore hair sackcloth, like a sheep, and he taught Marmehnam to believe on Christ, and he cleansed Sara of her leprosy. Salutation to Matthew. Glory be to God Who

is glorified in His Saints. Amen. THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 685 Nehasse 05 (August 11) IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD. AMEN. On this day died Abba Abraham, the second. The parents of this saint were exceedingly rich, and they brought him up in the admonition and fear of God. And when he was grown up, they brought in a wife for him against his will, and on the seventh day, when he was sitting on his couch, the grace of God moved him, and he went forth from his marriagechamber, the light guiding him, and he found an empty house, and he took up his abode therein. And he built up the door thereof, leaving only a small opening through which his food might be handed in to him. Ten years after he had left the world his father and his mother died, leaving him many possessions, which he distributed among the poor and needy. And he lived a life of fasting and prayer, and he possessed nothing except a head cloth, a tunic, a sackcloth coat, a bowl for water, and a coarse carpet for his bed; and in such circumstances he fought the fight for fifty years. The men in a certain city, from little to great, were pagans, and there was no man who was able to convert them to the True Faith. One day when the bishop remembered the faith and the wisdom of Abba Abraham, he urged him to become a priest, and to make the pagans believe; and with difficulty he appointed him a priest, and sent him thither. And having come into their city, he built a church, and made prayer therein, and he entreated God to convert them to the knowledge of Himself. And one day he came into the house of their idols, and cast them down from their seats. And when the men of the city saw this, they were filled with wrath, and beat him, and cast him out of the city, but when the night came they found him in the church praying. And they also bound him with a rope, and dragged him outside the city, and they cast stones at him, and left him well-nigh dead, and went away. And having risen up, by the might of God, they found him praying for their conversion; and being bound with ropes and dragged about by them he lived for three years. And when God saw his patience He turned their hearts to believe on Him, and they were baptized in the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, from the least of them to the greatest; and they became strong in the Faith of Christ. And when Abba Abraham saw the strength of their Faith, he was afraid lest they should bring upon him the pleasure of idleness, and he prayed to God, and made the sign of the Cross over the city. And he went forth, not knowing where to go, and he departed to another city. And Satan, the hater of good, set himself in opposition to him and frightened him with many infernal devices, but the saint conquered him by the power of his prayer. And he continued to fight many strenuous fights, and practiced severe abstinence, and not a day passed without his shedding tears; he never laughed with his teeth, he never smiled with his lips, he never anointed his face, he never washed his face and feet with water; and he thought each day that he might die that day. And when his brother, according to the flesh, died, he left a daughter, seven years old, whose name was Marta, and her kinsfolk took her to Abba Abraham, and she was brought up under his direction. And he taught her the fear of God, and how to pray, and to fast, and to weep, and she was under his authority until she was twenty years of age. And then Satan envied him, and he made her to be on such intimate terms with a certain monk that at length he destroyed her virginity; and she changed her apparel, and her nun's garb, and departed to another city. And that night the saint saw in a vision a huge serpent swallowing a dove, and there remained a little vomit under his feet. And on the following day when Mary (sic) was missing from her place, Abraham was frightened, and he prayed to God, with THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 686 tears, that He would enable him to find her. And after a few days he heard where she was, and he changed his apparel, and wrapped his face in cloth, so that [none] might know him, and he mounted a horse, and arrayed himself and departed to that city; and when he arrived there, he went

to the place where she was. And when he saw her dressed like a serving woman in a tavern, he was very sorry that she had left her seclusion, but he did not know how he could have prevented her flight. And then he gave the master of the house one dinar, which he had brought with him, so that he might prepare for him food and drink wherewith to make merry with Mary (sic), and he pretended to her that he wished to commit sin with her. And after supper he had her brought inside the house, and he took her hand and looked her in the face, and when she recognized him she became like a dead body. And he said unto her, "Fear not, O my daughter, for thy sin lieth upon me. There is no man without sin, except God. Come, return to thy old life and habit"; and she said unto him, "I will." And on the following day he took her with him, and he set her on a horse, which he led by the bridle, and he marched along rejoicing, because he had snatched his daughter (sic) out of the hand of Satan. And when he had come to his house, he shut her up in a chamber, and she repented in sackcloth and seclusion, and she submitted so completely to his authority that all those who heard about her marveled. And God made manifest through her signs and wonders in connection with the casting out of devils and the healing of the sick. And when Abba Abraham had watched her repentance for ten years, he died at the age of seventy winters, praising God. And Mary (sic) lived five years longer, and devoted herself more and more to the ascetic life, and to weeping by day and by night, and then she died; and those who saw her ascribed glory to God because of the great light which was on her face. Salutation to Abraham. And on this day also died Saint John, the fighter of the spiritual fight, the soldier. This saint had Christian parents. He was a soldier in the army of Julian, and with him were other soldiers, and [Julian] commanded them to afflict the Christian people wheresoever they went. And he was the soldier at the head of his companions, and pretended outwardly to them that he hated the Christians, and wished to make war upon them, but in secret he fought on their behalf, and did good unto them, and gave them whatsoever they wanted. And he used to fast and pray continually, and give alms. And he lived a life like unto the lives of the saints, and he pleased God, and died in peace, and many miracles were seen at his grave. Salutation to John, the soldier. And on this day also died Abba Philip of Debre Bizen. Salutation to Philip. Glory be to God Who is glorified in His Saints. Amen. Nehasse 06 (August 12) IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD. AMEN. On this day Saint Justa (Iyalota) became a martyr. This spiritual fighter came from the country of Caesarea in Cappadocia, and she inherited from her parents many possessions; but a certain oppressor robbed her and took away all her money, and possessions, and slaves, and handmaidens by bribery. And when that robber knew that the saint wished to THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 687 inform against him, and expose his sins, and his lying words, he informed the governor of Caesarea that she was a Christian. And she said within herself, "The possessions of this world are fleeting things; are they anything at all? And behold, they have robbed me, and taken them away by force; but if I gain possession of the habitation which is in heaven, no one will be able to take it from me." And when she came to the governor and stood up before him, she confessed boldly, saying, "I am a Christian, I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, and Creator of the heavens and the earth and of all that in them is." And the governor was wroth, and he commanded the soldiers, and they cast her into the fire, and she delivered up her soul into the hand of God. And the fire neither touched her, nor harmed her in the least degree, and they took her body out of the fire as if it had come forth from water. And instead of her money and possessions, she received an everlasting and never ending kingdom; and Saint Basil praised her greatly. Salutation to Justa. And on this day also died the holy father and spiritual fighter Abba Wisa, the disciple of Abba Sinoda, and he lived under

his authority for many years. And Saint Abba Sinoda revealed unto him many of the mysteries, which he had heard from our Lord Jesus Christ; and Abba Wisa wrote the history of the fight of Abba Sinoda, according to what he saw and what he heard from him. And having finished his good course, and pleased God, he died in peace. Salutation to Abba Wisa. And on this day also died Saint Mary Magdalene. This saint followed our Lord Jesus Christ, and He cast seven devils out of her, and she ministered unto our Lord and followed Him, and she also followed the Apostles; and she was present at the time of the Passion, and the Crucifixion, and Death and Burial of our Lord. And on the following day, at early dawn, she saw the stone rolled away, and the angel sitting upon it, and she and Mary, the mother of our Lord, being afraid, the angel said unto them, "Be not afraid, behold I know that ye are seeking Jesus, Who was crucified. Behold He hath risen, He is not here." And our Lord also appeared unto this Mary and said unto her, "Go ye and tell My brethren, that I have ascended to My Father, and your Father, and My God and your God." And this saint came and told the Apostles about the Resurrection of our Lord and Redeemer, and she told them how she had seen our Lord, and she told them how He had spoken to her; and she boasted over them how she had seen our Lord and told them how He had spoken unto her. And after the Ascension of our Lord, she continued to minister unto the Apostles, and the grace of the Holy Spirit Paraclete descended upon her together with them, even as Joel saith in his prophecy, "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and I will pour out my Spirit upon My menservants and maidservants" (Joel ii, 28). And she preached with the Apostles, and she converted many free women, and many slave women, to the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. And the Apostles made her a deaconess because of her teaching of women, and she baptized them; and great tribulation came upon her, and opprobrium, and scourging, and much disgrace through the Jews. And she continued to minister to the Apostles until she died. Salutation to Mary Magdalene. Salutation to Tekle Michael, the singer of hymns and psalms from his youth up. Salutation to the dedication of thy house and to the translation of thy body; neither the teeth nor the claws of wild beasts, or lions, or leopards could harm thee. Salutation to Tekle Iyesus. Salutation to Julia. Glory be to God Who is glorified in His Saints. Amen.

THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 688 Nehasse 07 (August 13) IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD. AMEN. On this day God sent the great angel Gabriel, and he spoke unto Joachim the righteous man, saying, "Behold, thy wife Hannah shall conceive, and she shall bear thee a daughter, and in her shall be joy and salvation for all the world"; which actually took place through Mary, the bearer of God in the flesh. This righteous man Joachim, and his wife Hannah, were very old in days, and they had produced no child, for Hannah was barren, and they were exceedingly sorrowful because of this, for the children of Israel used to thrust aside him that had not begotten a son, and would say unto him, "O thou who lackest the blessing of God." Because of this the hearts of this righteous man and his wife were sad, and they fasted, and prayed, and entreated God frequently by day and by night [for a child]; and they had reached old age and had become old. And they begged and entreated God frequently, and they vowed a vow to Him that if they got a child they would make him a ministrant in the Temple of God. And Joachim was in the sanctuary praying frequently and making supplication, and behold, slumber descended upon him and he slept, and Gabriel, the angel of God, appeared unto him, and told him that Hannah his wife would certainly conceive, and bear a daughter wherein he would rejoice, and because of whom his eyes would sparkle; and likewise all the world would rejoice, and be glad and would be saved through her. And when he woke from his dream he came to his house, and told his wife the vision which he had seen during sleep; and she conceived forthwith, and brought forth our holy Lady, the

Virgin Mary, the God-bearer, the object of boasting of all the world. Salutation to thy spiritual conception, O Mary. Salutation to Aaron, the brother of Moses. And on this day also is celebrated the festival of the honorable Apostle Peter, the head of the Apostles, for in it he confessed among the Disciples, saying, "Christ is the Son of God." And when our Lord had brought them outside the city of Caesarea of Philippi, even as the Holy Gospel saith, He asked them what men said about Him. He knew all the thoughts and hearts of men, but He took them outside the city by themselves, so that they might talk out what they were thinking in their hearts about Him. Now the Apostles were divided among themselves. Some of them said that He was Elias, and some said that He was one of the early prophets. And Peter was wroth with them, and said unto them, "Nay, He is Christ, the Son of the Living God." And when our Lord knew this He brought them outside the city by themselves, and He asked them, saying, "What do men say about Me?" And they said what was in their hearts, and some of them said, "One of the prophets." And our Lord said unto Peter, "And thou, what dost thou say and confess?" And he said, "The Apostles have talked when they were by themselves, and they say, 'Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God.'" And because of this our Lord entreated him kindly, and gave him the keys of the kingdom of heaven, that he might loose and bind; and from that hour Peter became the head of all the Apostles. And he took the place of our Lord in the city of Rome, and his position was above that of the chiefs of the world, and of Archbishops, and Bishops, and Priests, and Deacons, and every other order of the priesthood. Glory be to our Lord Jesus Christ. Salutation to Peter, the chief of the Apostles and of all the priesthood of the world. THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 689 And on this day also died the holy father, Abba Timothy, the twenty-sixth Archbishop of the city of Alexandria. God chose this saint, and appointed him Archbishop of the city of Alexandria, after the holy father and spiritual fighter Dioscoros died. And great tribulation came upon him, and they drove him out into exile in the island of Gagra, whither they had driven Dioscoros the Archbishop, who had lived there before Abba Timothy for six years. And then the Emperor Leo sent and brought him back from exile with great honor. And after Marcian had become emperor, he appointed an Archbishop of Alexandria. And after Marcian died, the men of Alexandria rose up against the archbishop whom Marcian had appointed, and killed him; and [they] appointed Timothy archbishop according to the command of Abba Dioscoros. When Leo, the son of Marcian, became emperor he appointed Archbishop of the city of Alexandria one who was called Timothy, and 'Abbas, the Archbishop, he exiled to the island of Gagra, the place where he exiled Dioscoros; and he lived there for ten years, till Leo died and Zeno reigned. And Timothy the wicked one fled from Alexandria, and Abba Timothy returned to the city by the emperor's command with great honor. And he taught the people continually, and rebuked them, and encouraged those who believed in the True Faith. He lived in peace and quietness all the days of his office, and he sat upon the throne of Mark the evangelist for two and twenty years; and he pleased God and died in peace. Salutation to Timothy. And on this day was born Joseph, the son of Rachel. Glory be to God Who is glorified in His Saints. Amen. Nehasse 08 (August 14) IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD. AMEN. On this day nine saints became martyrs, that is to say, Lazarus an aged man, and his wife Salome, which is being interpreted "Weeper," and their seven children, whose names are 'An'imo, Antonitus, and 'Ozya, and Lazarus, and 'Astibam and Semuna, and Marcolus. And this elder Lazarus was one of the teachers of the Law of Moses in his days, and his father was one of the Seventy-two translators who translated the Book of the Law and the Prophets for Ptolemy, King of Egypt. And this just man taught his children the Law of Moses. And when Antiochus, King of Rome, reigned over the country of Asia, and the land of Judah, he besieged

Jerusalem, and reigned over it, and he afflicted the people of Judah, and he punished them with many punishments. And he compelled them to break the Law of Moses and to eat what was forbidden to eat by the Law of Moses, that is to say the flesh of swine and such like; and there were many who broke the Law of Moses, and who set themselves under his authority. But these saints kept the Law of Moses, which had been given to them by God, and Antiochus tortured them severely, and he beat them, and sawed their bodies with an iron saw, and cut off their limbs; and the righteous woman Salome, their mother, encouraged them and made them to endure until they had finished their martyrdom. And after all of them [were dead], she cast herself into the fire of her own free will, and did not wait for them to throw her into it; and they received crowns of martyrdom in the kingdom of the heavens. And it is right that thou shouldst know, O thou who readest this, that our fathers and doctors of the Church have commanded us to THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 690 celebrate a festival in honor of the saints of the Old Dispensation, in their divers degrees, and to pay far more honor to them than to the fathers of the New Dispensation, because they did far more than the later fathers. Salutation to the God of the martyrs Lazarus and his wife. And on this day also Ammon became a martyr. And on this day also died the ascetic and father Abba John, Abbot of Debre Libanos, and he was the sixth from our father Takla Haymanot. Because of his great righteousness, and his strenuous spiritual fight, [the monks] chose him and set him upon the throne of Abba Takla Haymanot; and it is said of him that our Lady Mary, in the form of a dove, used to appear to him and wave her wing over him. And after pleasing God with his abundant labors, he died on the eighth day of Nahasse and departed to everlasting joy. Glory be to God Who is glorified in His Saints. Amen. Nehasse 09 (August 15) IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD. AMEN. On this day Saint Abba `Ori became a martyr. This saint was priest of Satanuf, and he was of an exceedingly merciful and compassionate disposition, and was pure in mind and in body, and he saw divine visions frequently. And our Lord Jesus Christ appeared unto him upon the altar, and revealed unto him the hidden things, which he wished [to know about]. And the report of Abba `Ori reached the ears of the governor of the city of Nakys, and he had the saint brought before him, and said unto him, "Offer incense to the gods and idols"; and the saint refused to do so, and he was unafraid of the governor; and although the governor was wroth with him he did not fear his wrath. And the governor tortured him severely, and after that sent him to the city of Alexandria, where the governor also tortured him severely, and cast him into prison. And he used to work signs and perform many wonderful things, and he healed the sick; and the report of him was noised abroad, and many men came unto him from all the cities. And when the governor heard this he commanded the soldiers to cut off his head with the sword, and they cut off the head of the saint with the sword, and he received the crown of martyrdom in the kingdom of the heavens. And Saint Julius came and took his body, and wrapped it in cloths, and sent it to the city of Satanuf, and after the end of the days of persecution they built a beautiful church for him, and laid his body therein, and great signs and miracles took place through it. And his body resteth there at the present time and it performeth great healings for all the sick folk who come unto him in faith. Salutation to `Ori. And on this day also is commemorated Pilate, the Archbishop. Glory be to God Who is glorified in His Saints. Amen. THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 691 Nehasse 10 (August 16) IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD. AMEN. On this day Saint Matra became a martyr in the days of Demetrius, Archbishop of the city of Alexandria, and in the days of the Emperor Decius, who denied Christ. When this saint had read the Edict which order [all men] to deny Christ, and to worship idols, he went and stole the arm of the idol Apollo, which was of gold,

and he broke it into little pieces, and gave them to the poor and needy; and when they (the priests) searched for the idol's arm, and could not find it, they seized many men because of the theft. And at that time this saint came to the governor and confessed before him, saying, "I am he who stole the arm of the unclean idol, and I gave it to the poor"; and when the governor heard this he punished him with great severity, and tortured him. And then he cast him into a red-hot oven, but God delivered him there from, and brought him out sound and uninjured. And then they cut off his hands and his feet, and they roasted his body with fire, and they hanged him upon a tree, head downwards, until much blood ran down from his mouth upon the ground. And at that moment the angel of God came down from heaven, and released Saint Matra from hanging, and touched his body with his hand, and healed his wounds. And a certain man who was blind came and took some of the blood which was flowing from the nose and mouth of Saint Matra, and he smeared his eyes therewith, and he saw forthwith. And when the governor was tired of punishing him, he commanded the soldiers to cut off his head with the sword, and they cut off his head and he received the crown of martyrdom in the kingdom of the heavens; and his body became a means of great healings for the sick. Salutation to Matra. And on this day also Saint Christopher became a martyr in the days of Maximianus, the wicked emperor. And when the emperor had him set before him, he said unto him, "Offer sacrifice to the gods," and Christopher said unto him, "I worship my Lord Jesus Christ and to Him I offer up sacrifice." And Maximianus was wroth with him, and commanded the soldiers to beat him with rods until his flesh dropped on the ground, and then they cast him into prison. And then he sent unto him two women to lead him astray with their beauty, but the saint taught them the Faith of Christ and made them believers. And when they came back Maximianus said unto them, "What did ye do?" And they said unto him, "We believe in Christ, the God of Saint Christopher." And when the governor heard this he commanded the soldiers to hang one of them on a tree and to burn her with fire, and to tie a stone to the neck of the other and to hang her, head downwards; and thus they finished their martyrdom. And then he called Christopher, and they gathered together old, dry wood, and set it on fire, and they cast the saint into the flames, his hands and his feet being bound, but the fire did not touch him. And when the people saw this, they all believed, and ten thousand men were slain. And they also brought plates of iron made red-hot, and they made the saint to stand upon them, but it injured him not. And when the men of Rome saw [this] they believed on our Lord Jesus Christ, and twenty-thousand and two hundred of them, and forty children, believed and became martyrs. And when Maximianus saw that all the people believed, he was wroth with Christopher and commanded the soldiers to cut off his head with the sword. And having gone forth from the emperor's presence, the saint made a prayer, and sealed his face with the sign of the Cross, and then the soldiers cut off his head with the sword and he finished his martyrdom. Salutation to Christopher. THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 692 And on this day also Saint Bikabos and John became martyrs. Bikabos was from the city of 'Esmutenakha, and he was a soldier; he was a Christian in secret, and one told Antiochus the governor about him and about the Bishop Abba 'Aklog, and about Abba Nakharew, who was from the city of Tarsa, and about Abba Philip. And when one informed the governor that they were Christians, he had them brought before him, and he said unto them, "Are ye Christians?" And they confessed our Lord before him and said, boldly, "Indeed we are Christians, and we believe on our Lord and Redeemer Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God." And the governor said unto them, "Put away this thing from you, and offer sacrifice to the gods." And the saints answered and said unto him, "We will not sacrifice to unclean idols, which are to be rejected, we will only sacrifice to our Lord Jesus Christ, the Creator of the heavens and the

earth." And when the governor heard this he was exceedingly angry, and he tortured them very severely. And he tortured Saint Bikabos severely, and often, and he bound him in iron fetters, and threw him on the wheel, and hanged him, head downwards, and cut off his limbs; and God strengthened him to endure, and He raised him up whole and uninjured. And after this the governor sent the saint, with many other martyrs, to the city of Baramun in a ship, and for sixteen days he neither ate bread nor drank water. And when they came to the city of Baramun the soldiers tortured the saint very severely, and then they hacked his body in pieces, and he finished his martyrdom, and received his crown in the kingdom of heaven. And a certain rich official of the city of Baramun took the body of the saint and wrapped it up in costly cloths, and sent it to the city of 'Esmunatekha. And in the days of his torturing an innumerable multitude of people became martyrs, and through his finishing his martyrdom five and ninety souls became martyrs. And they built a beautiful church for Saint Bikabos, and they laid his body therein, and many signs and wonders took place through it. Salutation to Abba Bikabos. Salutation to the ancient Lawgivers and to the Evangelists who followed after them. Salutation to the three thousand, two hundred, and twenty men and two women, who suffered martyrdom through Christopher. Glory be to God Who is glorified in His Saints. Amen. Nehasse 11 (August 17) IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD. AMEN. On this day three hundred people became martyrs with Basilides the martyr, general of the city of Antioch. And on this day also died the holy father Abba Mysis (Modosis), Bishop of the city of 'Awsim. This father was holy and chaste, and a virgin from his youth up, and learned all the doctrine of the Church, and was made a deacon; and then he went up to the desert of Hebayeb of Scete, and became a monk under the direction of a righteous man, and he lived with him and ministered unto him for eighteen years; and he devoted himself to the ascetic life, and fought the fight in the narrow way in respect of eating, and drinking, and sleeping, and he fasted, and prayed, and kept vigil constantly in his great humility and love. When THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 693 the report of him, and his virtues, and his righteousness became noised abroad, God chose him to be Bishop of the city of 'Awsim, after Saint Abba Gamel. When this father had been made bishop he fought a good fight, and he performed far more strenuous ascetic labors than he had performed as a monk. And he protected the Christian flock from the wolves of the Devil, and he watched unto prayer on their behalf, and he never made any money of this fleeting [world] all the days of his life. When Abba Michael was appointed Archbishop of the city of Alexandria, he became a martyr, without the shedding of blood. And this father was with those who were in prison, and great tribulation came upon him, and they beat him with many cruel stripes, and they shut him up in prison, with irons on his legs, for a long time. And God performed by the hands of this father many signs and wonders, and because of his miracles, those who knew nothing of his righteousness and virtues learned about him. And the gift of prophecy was bestowed upon him, and he declared many things before they came to pass; and they did happen, even as he prophesied. He prophesied to Abba Theodore, Bishop of the city of Mesr (Cairo), that the king would not come back in his splendor, and his prophecy was fulfilled; and he prophesied as to what would happen to the governor of Egypt, and his prophecy was fulfilled. And he healed many sick and suffering persons by his prayer. And having finished his fight at a good old age, and pleased God, he fell sick of a slight fever, and he knew that the time of his death [had come]. And he called the people, and blessed them, and absolved them, and asked them to pray to him, and they all wept and entreated him to pray for them. And he prayed over them and said unto them, "Take good heed to yourselves and be strong in the True Faith"; and when he had said this he died. And they wept over him with a great

weeping, and they wrapped him [in costly cloths] and buried him with great honor and with the singing of psalms and hymns in the manner which befitteth bishops; and many miracles and great cures took place through him. And all the days of his life were twenty years and more. Salutation to Mysis, Bishop of 'Awsim. And on this day also Saint Ptolemy, of the city of Upper Manuf, became a martyr. And one informed the governor that this saint was a Christian, and he had him brought before him, and Ptolemy confessed our Lord Jesus Christ; and the governor tortured him severely, and cut off his head with a sword, and the saint received the crown of martyrdom in the kingdom of the heavens. Salutation to Ptolemy. Glory be to God Who is glorified in His Saints. Amen. Nehasse 12 (August 18) IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD. AMEN. On this day is celebrated the festival of the glorious Archangel Michael, for on this day he appeared unto the righteous Constantine above the city of Rome, and gave him power over all his enemies, and the emperor conquered them, and his kingdom became strong. And he destroyed the houses of idols, and built churches, and decorated them with every kind of decoration. For this reason our Fathers, the doctors of the Church, have commanded us to celebrate the festival of the glorious angel, Michael the archangel, on the twenty-second (?) THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 694 day of this month. Salutation to thee, O Michael, angel of the covenant and counsel of God. And on this day also the righteous Emperor Constantine began to reign over the city of Rome, and over all the kingdoms of the countries, and the country of Syria, and Jerusalem, and the country of Egypt, and the Christian kingdoms. He reigned with his father Konesta in the city of Baranteya (Byzantium) and all the borders thereof for twelve years, and his father died, and he reigned in Baranteya (Byzantium) and the districts thereof. And he blotted out oppressors and the workers of iniquity in his kingdom, and his righteousness and justice were famous in all the ends of the world. And the chiefs of the city of Rome sent to him asking him to deliver them from the oppression of the Emperor Maximianus, who denied Christ, and to save them from his slavery. When Constantine read their letter he was very sorry, because the oppression of that infidel had come upon them, and he pondered in what way he could deliver them. And the honorable Cross appeared unto him, and he was helped thereby. He departed to fight against Maximianus, and he crushed him and conquered him, and Maximianus fled from him; and the bridge which was over the river split asunder and he died an evil death, and his soldiers were drowned in the river. Now this took place in the seventh year of his reign. And straightway the elders of the city of Rome, and all the men thereof, received Constantine with great honor, and with joy and gladness, and he made a festival to celebrate his victory for seven days. And all the learned men of the city of Rome, and the poets (?) thereof, whose words were sweet and who were skilful in declaiming them, pronounced encomiums on the Honorable Cross, and called it the "Savior of their city"; and they pronounced encomiums on Constantine, and called him, "Conqueror," and "Conqueror by the might of the Cross." And in the eleventh year of his reign Constantine was baptized with Christian baptism by the hand of Sal Peter (sic), Archbishop of the city of Rome. And his name was mentioned at the altar, as at this day, and how the Honorable Cross appeared unto him, and how he waged war on Maximianus, and how that infidel was drowned. And behold we have written the description of all this in the section for the eighteenth day of the month of Megabit, the day of the death of this righteous king. Salutation to the day when Constantine began to reign in Rome. And on this day twenty hundred men became martyrs with Basilides. Glory be to God Who is glorified in His Saints. Amen. Nehasse 13 (August 19) IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD. AMEN. On this day is celebrated the festival of our Lord Jesus Christ, and how His

appearance was changed on Mount Tabor, when there were with Him three of His disciples, that is to say, Peter, and James, and John. And our Lord said concerning them, "There stand here those who shall not taste death until they see the Son of God and of man coming in His glory." This is the glory wherein the Apostles saw Him. His apparel was white as snow, and His countenance was changed and became like lightning, emitting light. And behold Moses THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 695 and Elias came to Him, and they talked with Him that all men might know that He was the God of Moses, whom He had raised from the dead, and the God of Elias, whom He had brought down from heaven (sic). And because of this Peter said unto our Lord, "Dost Thou wish, O Lord, that we should make here three tabernacles, one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias?" In these words, which Peter spoke, there is a sign of lowliness and humility. He saw our Lord, and thought that He would live on the mountain . . . and he wished to make for Him a place where He could hide from the sun. Peter did not wish for himself, and for his fellow-apostles, as he wished for our Lord, and for Moses, and for Elias; but he made himself and his fellow-apostles like slaves of those lords. And marvel not at the little knowledge of the apostles, for they were not perfect in knowledge at that time. And when Peter said this, a cloud overshadowed them, so as to make it clear to Peter that He did not want a habitation made by the hand of man. And a voice came forth from the cloud which confirmed the belief in the Godhead of our Lord in the minds of the apostles, saying, "This is My Son, Whom I love, in Whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." And Moses and Elias talked with Him, and they confessed His grace and His goodness, for by the coming of our Lord and by His going up upon the mountain [the truth] of the prophecy of the prophets was made known of a certainty. And the apostles and the prophets rejoiced, for they saw His Incarnation which they had known not of, and the apostles rejoiced also when they heard the voice of the Father, which they had never before heard. They heard it at that time, and by the voice of the Father they became certain of the Incarnation of our God the Son, which was hidden from them; and when they heard the voice of the Father the glory of the kingdom appeared, and the apostles knew that it was our Lord Jesus Christ Who had raised up the soul of Moses, and that it was He Who had brought up Elias, for verily none save God Who buried him knew where the grave of Moses was, and none save He Who had brought him up to heaven knew where Elias was. And none was able to make the dead to live save Almighty God, Who hath dominion over the heavens and the earth. And Mount Tabor is a similitude of the Church, and our Lord gathered together therein the Two Laws, the New and the Old. And when the disciples heard the voice of the Father, they fell down and became like dead men; and Moses returned to his grave, and Elias went up to heaven. And our Lord Jesus Christ stood alone, for the voice came because of Him, and the prophets were frightened and the apostles fell down upon their faces, for the Father revealed the Name of His son, and that He existed for ever with His Father. Because of that voice the Apostles preached that He was God indeed, and also that the flesh (or, body), which He had put on, was of the race of the children of man. And in the Gospel our Redeemer preached saying..... If He was not flesh, why did the angel Gabriel say unto Mary, "God be with thee!" And if He was not flesh, Whom did they lay in the manger? And if He was not God, Whom did the angels praise when He went down from heaven on the day of His birth, saying, "Glory to God in the heights, and peace on earth, His goodwill to man." If He was not flesh, Whom did John baptize in the Jordan? And if He was not God, Who was it that raised up Lazarus from his grave? It was Christ, the Only Son, the Word of God. We confess that He is perfect God and perfect man, One Person without separation. And when the apostles fell down upon the earth, and became like dead men, our Lord touched them with His Lifegiving hand, and He said unto them, "Rise up, and

fear not." And they rose up straightway, and they lifted up their eyes and saw no one except our Lord Jesus Christ, Who was alone. Salutation to Debre Tabor, which is called Debre Telul. And on this day also was the martyrdom of Saint Safrira, the daughter of Moses the prophet. THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 696 And on this day also died Abba Galyon, the spiritual fighter. This saint was a spiritual fighter, and he ceased from prayer neither by day nor by night. He used to eat one meal only during the whole week, and from the time, when, as a young man, he became a monk until he became an old man, he never went outside the court of the monastery; and none of the brethren ever saw him except at prayers. And when Satan saw his spiritual fight, he took the forms of monks and they came to him at the time of midnight, and said unto him, "We are dwellers in the desert and recluses; one of us having died, we want to take thee with us, and we have come to thee." And Abba Galyon thought that their words were true, and he went with them until they brought him to the top of a desert mountain, where there was no food; and when he saw that they were making a mock of him, he made the sign of the Cross over his face, and they disappeared from him. And having turned to this side and to that, he lost the road whereon he should go, and he prayed a long prayer, and then there appeared unto him some holy monks from the monastery of Abba Sinoda, who were going about from one monastery to another singing the Psalms of David, and they asked him questions about his actions. And when he told them his story they took him with them, and he dwelt a full year with them, and ate fish dried in the sun. And Abba Isaac, his teacher, who had made him a monk, lacking news of him, asked God to be allowed to see his face [again]; and Abba Galyon knew this by the spirit, and went to him. And when Abba Isaac saw him, he rejoiced and said unto him, "Where hast thou been?" And Abba Galyon told him everything, from the beginning to the end. And then at the time of his death the brethren came, and wrapped him in cloths and buried him. Salutation to Abba Galyon. Salutation to Benjamin, who by reason of his spiritual excellence was caught up in the body [to heaven]. Glory be to God Who is glorified in His Saints. Amen.

Nehasse 14 (August 20) IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD. AMEN. On this day died Simon Shalusi and John his friend. These saints were in the kingdom of Yostos (Justus), the believing emperor, and their parents were rich and honorable; they wished to keep the festival of the Cross, and they departed to Jerusalem to worship at the holy places. And when they had finished celebrating the festival, as they were riding back to their own city on their horses, they drew nigh to Jericho, and John saw on the plain of the Jordan certain monasteries wherein monks dwelt. And he said unto Simon, "O my brother, these are the monasteries wherein live the angels of God." And Simon said unto him, "Can we see them?" And John said unto him, "If we were with them (i.e. the monks) we could see them." Then they got down from their horses, which they handed over to their servants, and they told them to go on slowly in front until they overtook them; now they pretended to them that they wanted to fulfill the law of the body. And when they had drawn nigh to the road of the Jordan they both said, "Come, let us make a prayer. Let one of us stand on the road to our city, and let one of us stand on the road which will bring [us] to the monastery of the monks; and let us cast lots, and where it pleaseth God [for us to go], let us go." And then Simon stood up on the road to the Jordan, and John stood up on THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 697 the road whereon their men had departed; and when they had cast lots, the lot went forth for the road of Simon. And they embraced each other and kissed, and they went along the road to the Jordan rejoicing. And one admonished the other to be vigilant in the doing of good works, and each feared that his companion would not attain to his end. John feared for Simon, that he would not attain to his end, [because of his] love for his parents, and Simon feared for John,

because of love for his parents, and because he had married in those days a beautiful and rich wife. And then they prayed and said, "O Lord our God, if we find a monastery, the doors of which are open, let this be a sign unto us that it is the monastery wherein we are to become monks." And there was a certain archimandrite, who was called Nikon, and he used to work many miracles, and the gift of prophecy had been given to him. That night he saw, as it were a man, who said unto him, "Open the doors of the monastery in order that sheep may come in." And when Simon and John came to him, he said unto them, "Welcome to you, O ye sheep of Christ"; and then he received them to himself as men who had been sent by God. And they asked the archimandrite to give them the tonsure, and to array them in the garb of the monk, for they had seen a monk, with a crown of light on his head, surrounded by angels, and therefore they longed to become monks quickly. And on the following day when the archimandrite put the holy garb upon them, their faces were shining with the grace of the Holy Spirit, and even in the night they could see each other's faces as they did by day; and they saw crowns of light upon their heads, like unto those they saw upon the head[s] of the monks. And then there came to them the spiritual thought that they should be separated from among the monks, and should go forth into the desert. That night a shining man appeared to the archimandrite, and said unto him, "Open the gates that the sheep of Christ may go forth." And when he woke up he went down straightway, and found the doors of the monastery open, and whilst [he stood] sad and sorrowing, behold the servants of Christ came, wishing to go forth. And he saw in front of them figures of eunuchs carrying lamps, and some of them were carrying staves of kings, and when he saw them he rejoiced greatly, and he joined them and they told him what was in their hearts, and they asked him to pray for them. And then he wept for a long time, and he turned his face towards the East, and he set Simon on his right hand and John on his left. Then stretching out his hands to heaven, he made a prayer, and committed them to the care of God, and he entreated Him to protect them from all evil; and he sent them away in peace. Then they departed by the road to the Dead Sea, and they came to a river which was called 'Arnon. And they found a cave wherein an old desert monk used to live, now he had recently died, and in it there was what they needed, that is to say, a store of grain and food from which the elder had eaten; and they rejoiced in God exceedingly Who had prepared this for them. And they lived there, and fought the spiritual fight for many days, and they lived apart from each other, the distance between them being a stone's throw. And Satan set himself in opposition to them, and he fought against them, and Saint Nikyos, their father, used to come to them in a vision, and pray on their behalf, and teach them psalms whilst they were asleep; and when they woke up they would recite everything which he had taught them during sleep, and they rejoiced exceedingly. And heavenly visions were granted unto them, and the power to perform miracles. And they dwelt in that desert nineteen years, and endured the cold of the night and the heat of the day, until they had vanquished Satan by the might of Christ. And then Simon said unto his brother John, "What doth it profit us to live by ourselves in the desert? Come let us go into the desert, that we may be profitable to others and deliver them." And John said unto him, "O my brother, this thought appeareth to me to be due to the envy of Satan." And Simon said unto him, "God hath commanded me to become the mockery of the world; come, let THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 698 us pray a prayer." And then they prayed, and they embraced each other, and they wept until they spoiled their apparel. And Simon went to Jerusalem, and he continued to pray for three days to God that He would keep hidden his work until he died. And then he went into the city, and pretended to be mad, and sometimes he healed those who were mad, and sometimes he carried fire in his hands. And he found by the gate a dead dog, and he dragged it about by his girdle

like people who amuse themselves, and at last the people reviled him and cried out, "The mad monk"; and they used to run after him and buffet him. One day, now it was the First Day of the week, he took a branch (?) of a nut-tree, and went into the church at the time of the Offering, and he broke the lamps, and beat the women until he drove them out of the church. And sometimes he seized women as if he were going to lie with them, and [he kept them fast] until their husbands beat them. And when the time of his death had drawn nigh God commanded His angel to tell him the day of his death, and of the death of John his brother. And he went in under a vine, and he and John his brother delivered up their souls into the hand of God. Salutation to Simon and John. And on this day God worked a great miracle in the city of Alexandria, (by reason of which many Jews believed,) by the hand of Saint Abba Theophilus, Archbishop of the city of Alexandria, brother of Saint Cyril. Now the miracle was this: There was in the city of 'Esmadreja a very rich Jew whose name was Falskinos, who feared God and performed the Law of Moses, according to his ability. And there were in the city of Alexandria two men who were Christians, and they were poor and earned their living with their hands. And Satan brought into the heart of one of them a blasphemous thought, and he said unto his companion, "O my brother, why do we serve Christ and [remain] poor, whilst this Falaksinos who is a Jew, is exceedingly rich?" And his companion answered and said unto him, "O my brother, know that the possessions of this world are nothing before God. For if He had power over them, He would not give them to the worshippers of idols, and to whoremongers, and to thieves, and to murderers. The prophets were poor men and lived in tribulation, and also the Apostles, and our Lord saith, 'The poor are My brethren.'" And Satan, the hater of good things, would not permit that man to receive any of these words, but he stirred him up, and he went to that Jew Falaksinos, and he asked him and said unto him, "Let me be thy servant." And the Jew answered and said unto him, "It is not convenient to me for thee to serve me. I only want a servant who believeth my Faith, and who is my own man. If thou dost want alms, I will give thee money, and [then] depart." And that wretched man answered and said unto him, "Take me into thy house, and I will do whatsoever thou commandest me." And the Jew Falaksinos answered and said unto him, "Wait until I take counsel with my teacher." And the Jew departed and he told his teacher how the man was a Christian. And his teacher said unto him, "If he hath denied Christ his Messiah, take him and circumcise him." And the Jew returned, and told the Christian what his teacher had said to him, and the wretched man accepted this condition, and the Jew took him and carried him to their synagogue. And the chief of the Jews questioned that wretched Christian before all the Jews, and he said unto him, "Is it true that thou wishest to deny thy Messiah, and become a Jew?" And the Christian said unto him, "Yea"; and that debased and contemptible man denied our Lord Jesus Christ, our God, before the Jews. Thus to poverty in money he added poverty in Faith. And the chief of the Jews commanded them to make for him a cross of wood, and they made one for him as the chief of the Jews commanded, and they gave him a reed, on the top of which was a sponge full of vinegar, and a spear. And he said unto the Christian, "Spit upon this cross." And he offered to him the vinegar and said, "Pierce [the cross] with this spear, [saying,] 'I have THE ETHIOPIAN SYNTAXIUM 699 pierced Thee, O Christ.'" And that debased man took the cross and the spear from them and did as he commanded him. And when he pierced the honorable cross with his cursed hand, much blood and water flowed forth, and ran down on the ground, and it continued to flow for a long time. And straightway that apostate fell down and died, and dried up like a stone. And great fear fell upon all those Jews, and they cried out, saying, "One is the Lord God of the Christians, and we believe on Him." And then the chief of the Jews took some of that blood, and made a sign

therewith over the eyes of a girl who was blind, and she saw straightway. And that Jew and all the men of his house believed, and very many of the [other] Jews believed. And then one went and told Abba Theophilus, the Archbishop, what had happened, and he rose up, and took with him Abba Cyril, and many of the priests, and many of the people, and went to the synagogue of the Jews. And the archbishop saw the cross with blood and water running down from it, and the saint blessed himself, and made the sign of the Cross with the blood on his forehead, and on the foreheads of all the people. And he commanded, and they took up that cross with great honor and brought it with the singing of hymns to the church, and laid it therein; and they gathered up the blood from the ground and laid it in a vessel for "blessing," and it healed the sick. And after this Falaksinos and all the men of his house, and many other Jews, followed the archbishop, and they confessed before him our Lord Jesus Christ, Whom their fathers in times of old had crucified, and then he baptized them with Christian baptism in the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And he associated them with him in prayer, and he administered to them the Holy Mysteries, and they departed to their houses rejoicing, and praising, and thanking God. Salutation to the conversion of the Jews. And on this day also died Damiates, the martyr, who worked a miracles at the time when he, together with his servants, were stoned to death. Salutation to the great miracle of making a blind man to see, and raising up to life a dead man on his bier. And on this day also Saint Basilicus became a martyr. To this saint our Lord Jesus Christ appeared when he was in prison, and He said unto him, "Depart, say farewell to thy kinsfolk, behold the time of thy martyrdom hath come." [The text is corrupt here.] And he passed the night in saying farewell to his mother and to his kinsfolk. And on the following day they brought Saint Basilicus, and tied him to two pillars, and beat him, and they made for him pegs of brass, and they fastened them to his feet like shoes so tightly that they pierced his feet, and the blood ran out on the ground; and all those who saw him wept for him. And then they tied him to a dry tree, and men struggled with each other to touch the hem of his garment, when they saw the miracles, which he performed on many sick folk. And then they took him to the city of Terlinos in a ship, and the soldiers said unto him, "Eat, that thou mayest not die." And the blessed Basilicus said unto them, "I am filled with heavenly food, and I do not choose [to eat] the food which perisheth." And on the following day they brought him to the governor, who said unto him, "Sacrifice to the gods." And Basilicus said unto him, "I offer offerings of praise to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit." And then the governor commanded the soldiers to bring him into the house of his idols, and the saint stood up and prayed to God and at length fire came down from heaven, and burnt up the idols. And the governor being afraid took to flight, and went outside the city, and he was wroth and commanded the soldiers to hang him [on a tree]. And the saint prayed, and gave thanks to God, and they cut off his head, and we saw his soul with many angels who were taking it up [to heaven], and our Lord Jesus Christ called to him and said unto him, "Come, ascend, Basilicus, for I am not a liar, and I fulfill all that I say." And thus he finished his martyrdom. Salutation to Basilicus. Glory be to God Who is glorified in His Saints. Amen. THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 700 Nehasse 15 (August 21) IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD. AMEN. On this day Saint Christina, the daughter of Rubanos, became a martyr. Her parents worshipped idols, and she herself offered incense to them according as her father had taught her. And one day the fear of God entered her heart, and she turned herself towards the East, and she asked Him to teach her the path of the kingdom of heaven; and the Holy Spirit taught her the Faith of the Trinity. And when her father came he said unto her, "What hath happened unto thee, O my daughter?" And she said, "I am going to live the life of Christ." And her

father was dismayed, and he said unto her, "What hath changed thy heart?" And she said unto him, "I am instructed by the God of heaven"; and then her father departed, being very sad and sorrowful. And Saint Christina rose up, and prayed to God, and straightway the angel of God came unto her, and he said unto her, "Be strong, for thou shalt be tortured by three governors." And then the angel of God sealed her with the seal of the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and he gave her the Holy Mysteries. And [she] went into the house of the idols, and broke the idols in pieces, and when her father saw her he commanded them to beat his daughter, until there went forth from her body honey instead of blood. And they also laid her upon an iron bed, and they lighted a fire under her, but the fire did not harm her and it consumed ten thousand pagans [who were there]. And then her father commanded his servants to cast her adrift on the sea on a raft. When she had prayed, our Lord Jesus Christ came with His angels, and baptized her, and Michael gave her, on a trident of fire, the Body and Blood of Christ, and cleansed her from the uncleanness of idols. And that night Rubanos her father died. And another governor, whose name was Dios, came, and he commanded the soldiers to bring Saint Christina, and to hang her on a tree, and to beat her, and to light a fire under her; and when the women saw her stripped naked they cursed the governor, and he cut off their heads with a sword. And Christina they cast into the prison house. And when the people saw her three thousand of them believed, and the wicked Dios died. And there came a third governor, whose name was Julius, and he seized Saint Christina, and forced her to sacrifice to the gods, and when she cursed him he cast her into a vessel filled with boiling pitch, and lead, and wax, but this did not harm her. And he also commanded the soldiers to cast her to the serpents, but they licked the dust at her feet, and bit the keeper of the serpents, who died. And they also slit open and cut her breasts, and cut out her tongue, and she took the piece of her tongue, which was cut off, and cast it into the eyes of the governor, and blinded him. And he was filled with wrath, and commanded the soldiers to cast her to the serpents; and one bit her in her heart, and one in her side, and thus she died by the Will of God; and innumerable miracles and wonders were made manifest at her grave.

Salutation to Christina, whom God baptized. Salutation to the three thousand companions of Christina who were martyred. Salutation to God Who helped the Apostles to be present at the burial of the Virgin. And on this day also died Saint Marina. This saint was the daughter of a man, who was very rich indeed, and he was a Christian; and the name of her mother was Mary. And Marina's mother died when she was a little girl, and her father brought her up with good teaching until she became a woman, and then he wanted to give her in marriage, and to go himself and become a monk in one of the monasteries of the desert of Scete. And she said THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 701 unto her father, "Why wouldst thou save thine own soul, and destroy mine?" And he answered and said unto her, "What shall I do with thee, seeing that thou art a woman?" And she said unto him, "O my father, I will take off my woman's dress, and will put on the garb of a man"; and she rose up straightway, and shaved off the hair of her head and put on the garb of a man. And when her father saw the strength of her will, and the earnestness wherewith she fought to carry out her will, he gave all his possessions to the poor and needy, keeping only a very little for himself, and he changed his daughter's name from Marina to 'Anba Marina; and then he took her with him and carried her to the desert of Scete. And he went into a certain monastery, and dwelt in a cave with his daughter for ten years, fighting the spiritual fight, and then her father, who was an old man, died; and Saint 'Anba Marina was left by herself, and she doubled her fasting, and prayers, and vigil. And the abbot sent the saint, together with three monks, to the city on certain business of the monastery, and he did not know that she was a woman, but by reason of the low sound of her voice,

which was due to her manifold ascetic labors, he thought that she was a young man. And having departed with the monks, she and they lodged in a guesthouse. And that same night there came one of the king's soldiers and lodged in that guest house, and he saw the daughter of the master of the house, and he destroyed her virginity, and he said unto her, "When thy father shall say unto thee, 'What hath happened unto thee?' do thou say unto him, 'It is the young monk 'Anba Marina who hath destroyed my virginity.'" And when she had conceived, and her father knew that she had done so, he asked her saying, "What hath happened unto thee, O my daughter? Who hath destroyed thy virginity?" And she answered and said unto him, "It is Anba Marina who hath destroyed my virginity." And her father rose up, and went to the monastery and began to curse the monks. And when the abbot heard him he asked him, saying, "Who dost thou curse the monks, and dost not fear God?" And the man told him what had happened to his daughter, and he said unto him, "Anba Marina the monk is he who hath destroyed the virginity of my daughter." And when the abbot heard this, he asked him questions, and the man answered believing that what he said was true. And the abbot asked the master of the guesthouse, and said unto him, "Hide this matter, and do not bring disgrace upon the monks in the eyes of the laity." And then the abbot summoned 'Anba Marina the monk, and rebuked him, and cursed him, and Saint 'Anba Marina did not know why the abbot cursed her. And when she knew what had happened, she wept and bowed down at the feet of the abbot, and she besought him, saying, "I am young, I have sinned, forgive me my sin"; and the abbot was furious with her, and cast her out from the monastery. And she sat outside the door of the monastery until the daughter of the master of the guest house had brought forth her child; and the parents of the girl took the child, and brought it to 'Anba Marina and set it down by her. And she took the child and went over to some shepherds, who were pasturing cattle and sheep, and she begged from them, and they gave her milk, and she made the child drink it. And she increased her fasting, and prayers, and spiritual fight, and she lived outside the gate of the monastery for three years. Then the monks gathered together, and asked the abbot to have mercy upon 'Anba Marina, and to bring her into the monastery; and he brought her in, and having laid heavy penalties upon her, she mingled with the monks. And the saint used to perform very hard labors, and she boiled the lentils, and cleaned the cells, and took up the dust and ashes and carried them away and cast them outside the monastery, and fetched water; and she gave the boy to drink. And he grew up and became a monk. And when four (?) days were fulfilled for Saint 'Anba Marina in that monastery, she was sick for three days, and then died in peace. And when the abbot knew that 'Anba Marina was dead, he commanded the monks to blow a trumpet before they THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 702 buried her. And when they removed her clothing, and found that she was a woman, all the monks cried out, saying, "God have mercy upon us"; and they marveled exceedingly and glorified God, and informed the abbot what had happened. And the abbot came and looked upon her and marveled, and he wept because of what he had done to her. And then he sent and had the master of the guest house brought, and told him that 'Anba Marina was a woman, and he took him in, and the master of the guest house saw and wondered; then the abbot prayed over her and they wrapped her up, weeping, and singing psalms and hymns; and when they had prayed for her blessing they buried her. Behold now, see what happened. God commanded a certain Satan, and he took the daughter of the master of the guesthouse, and the young man who had destroyed her virginity, and he tormented them until he brought them to her grave, where they confessed their sin before all the people. And innumerable miracles and wonders were made manifest at her grave. Salutation to Marina. And on this day also Saint Laurentius became a martyr in the days of Decius Caesar. This saint was a man in whom great

confidence was placed, and he was appointed an archdeacon, and he had charge of the revenues of the archbishop. And when the emperor had killed the archbishop because of his Christian Faith, he commanded his soldiers to bring Saint Laurentius before him, and when they had brought him, they took him into the prison house. And the saint found there, a blind man, and he said unto him, "Wilt thou believe in the Son of the Living God? And wilt thou be baptized in His Name, so that thine eyes may be opened?" And the blind man said unto him, "Yes, my lord." Then the saint prayed over some water in the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and washed his eyes therewith, and his eyes were opened, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Blessed be our Lord Jesus Christ Who hath given light to mine eyes, through the prayer of His servant Laurentius." And when the emperor heard this, he commanded his soldiers to bring Saint Laurentius before him, and he urged him to bow down to the idols; and when he refused to do so they broke his teeth with a stone, and tore off his garments, and laid him upon an iron bed, and kept a fire burning under him until his body melted. And the saint continued to pray to his God until he delivered up his soul into the hand of God, and the angels came to meet it, saying, "Hallelujah," and they brought it into the heavenly Jerusalem. Salutation to Laurentius. Glory be to God Who is glorified in His Saints. Amen.

Nehasse 16 (August 22) IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD. AMEN. On this day took place the Ascension of the body of our Lady Mary, the God-bearer, into heaven. After her death the Apostles continued to be sad and sorrowful, because of her separation from them, and because they were left orphans by her; for our Lord had given them the hope that they would see her in the flesh. Whilst John the evangelist was preaching in the country of Asia, on the sixteenth day of the month of Nahasse, he was caught up in the spirit to the Garden of Delight, and he saw our Lord Jesus Christ sitting by the Tree of Life, where was the body of our Lady Mary, and He commanded His Seven THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 703 Angels to summon her from earth. And they said unto her, "God, our Lord Jesus Christ, commandeth that the body of His pure mother shall go forth." And straightway the body of our Lady Mary went forth from the grave at the foot of the Tree of Life, and our Lord Jesus Christ comforted her, and He said unto her, "Come to Me, O My beloved mother, that thou mayest ascend to the kingdom of heaven, to the joy which is everlasting." And straightway all the trees of the Garden bowed their heads, and the angels and archangels took her up, and the righteous bowed low to her. And David, the prophet, sang a hymn of praise, saying, "And the Queen shall stand at Thy right hand, and her apparel shall be of fine needlework with gold woven through it" (Psalm xlv, 9). And she sat down at the right hand of the Son of God, with great glory, and she went up into the heavens sitting upon the chariot of the Cherubim. And John the evangelist was blessed by her, and he bowed low before her, and he turned and came down from heaven, and found the Apostles gathered together and sorrowing for the body of our holy Lady, Mary the Virgin. And John told them what he had seen, and how they had taken the body of our Lady Mary up into heaven, with great joy, and praise, and songs, and hymns. And when the Apostles heard this they were exceedingly sad and sorrowful because they had neither heard nor seen what John had heard and seen. And whilst the Apostles were sorrowing behold our Lord Jesus Christ appeared unto them, and said unto them, "Peace be unto you, O My children! Why are ye sad about the body of My mother Mary? Behold, I shall show her to you, and your hearts shall rejoice"; and having said these words He went up into heaven with great glory. And the Apostles continued [to wait] there for a full year. And on the first day of Nahasse John said unto the Apostles, "Come, let us fast for two weeks and let us entreat God, and make supplication unto Him, that He will consider us worthy and will show unto us the body of our holy Lady, the Virgin Mary, sitting on the right hand

of her beloved Son, that we may rejoice in her." And they fasted as John had said unto them, and it came to pass that when the sixteenth day of Nahasse had come, as it were to-day, our Lord Jesus Christ caught all the Apostles up to heaven, and they saw in her flesh our holy Lady, the Virgin Mary, sitting on the right hand of her beloved Son and God in great glory. And she stretched out her hands, and blessed each one of the Apostles, and the souls of the Disciples rejoiced exceedingly. And our Lord Jesus Christ served as priest in His holy Body, and Stephen the archdeacon ministered with Him, and John with Him, saying, "Stand up in fear"; and all the Apostles stood up around the altar. And there was great joy at that time, the like whereof before never was. And when our Lord had finished, He gave them the Holy Mysteries. And then [Mary] went up before them sitting upon the chariot of the Cherubim. And our Lord Jesus Christ said unto our Lady Mary, "Tell thy children, the Apostles, to preach in all the world the commemoration of thy Ascension into heaven," as it were on this day. "Whosoever shall celebrate thy commemoration, I will destroy his sins, and he shall never see the fire at all, for mercy shall find every soul who shall take heed and shall receive the Holy Mysteries on this day, which is the day of thy Ascension into heaven." And our Lady Mary said unto Him, "Behold, my sons, behold, they have seen with their eyes, and they have heard with their ears, and they have received with their hands, and they shall see other wonders greater than these"; and as the Virgin was saying these words she gave the salutation of "Peace" to the Apostles, and they returned to the Mount of Olives. And it is meet for us, O beloved brethren, to celebrate the commemoration of the Ascension of our Lady Mary into heaven with joy and gladness, so that she may make intercession for us, at all times, with her beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Salutation to the Ascension of Mary into heaven, and to Mary as the tree of knowledge, and to her body. THE ETHIOPIAN SYNAXARIUM 704 And on this day also took place the translation of the body of Saint George, the chief of the martyrs, from the country of Persia to the church of Lydda, with great splendor. The translation of his body took place at the same time as the translation of the body of our Lady Mary, and therefore those who know how to love her, paint his picture with her picture, so that it may be a port of salvation for those who pray in his name. Salutation to George. And on this day also Gegar, governor of Syria, [became a martyr]; and this was the reason for his martyrdom. When our Lord was with His mother Mary in the mountains of Libanos, and Gegar heard that Herod wanted to seize them and kill them, he sent horsemen to them to bring them away from the mountains. And because of this Herod seized him, and tortured him with every kind of torture, and he cut off all his limbs. And then our Lord Jesus Christ appeared unto him, and gave him a promise concerning everyone who should call upon his name, and celebrate his commemoration, and write the history of his strife. And then the soldiers cut off the head of Gegar, and he was crowned with three crowns. Salutation to Gegar, the governor of the martyrs. Glory be to God Who is glorified in His Saints. Amen.

The Hymn of the Pearl

The original title of this beautiful Gnostic Poem has been lost, and it is now generally referred to as *The Hymn of the Soul*. Preuschen, however, calls it *The Song of Deliverance* (*Das Lied von der Erlösung*); while in my *Fragments* (1900) I ventured to name it *The Hymn of the Robe of Glory*. I here, also, prefer to retain this title, as it seems the more appropriate.

The original text of the Poem is in Old Syriac, in lines of twelve syllables with a *cFsure*, and so in couplets, for the most part of six syllables. A text of a Greek version has recently been discovered by Bonnet at Rome (C. Vallicellanus B. 35) and published in his text of *The Acts of Thomas* (1903). It is partly literal, partly paraphrastic, with occasional doublets and omissions of whole lines. In addition there is a summary in Greek by a certain Nicetas, Archbishop of Thessalonica, who flourished prior to the XIth century (the date of the MS. in which his abridgment is found), but who is otherwise unknown. This seems to be based on another Greek version.

The copy of the original Syriac text is found in a single MS. only (Brit. Mus. Add. 14645), which contains a collection of Lives of Saints, and bears the precise date 936 A.D. Our Poem is found in the text of the Syriac translation from the Greek of *The Acts of Judas Thomas the Apostle*; it has, however, evidently nothing to do with the original Greek text of these Acts, and its style and contents are quite foreign to the rest of the matter. It is manifestly an independent document incorporated by the Syrian redactor, who introduces it in the usual naïve fashion of such compilations.

Judas Thomas on his travels in India is cast into prison. There he offers up a prayer. On its conclusion we read:

"And when he had prayed and sat down, Judas began to chant this hymn: The Hymn of Judas Thomas the Apostle in the Country of the Indians."

After the Poem comes the subscription:

"The Hymn of Judas Thomas the Apostle, which he spake in prison, is ended."

This literary phenomenon is precisely similar to that presented by *The Hymn of Jesus* (Vol. V.), to the introduction of which the reader is referred for a brief consideration of the nature of the Gnostic Acts.

Our Hymn is indubitably Gnostic; but of what school or tradition? Learned opinion is preponderatingly in favour of attributing it to the Syrian Gnostic Bardaisan (*Bardaiṣān*, also Latinized as Bardesanes, 154-222 A.D.), or, less precisely, to some Bardesanist poet. (For Bardesanes, see *F.* pp. 392-414).

This is borne out by the text of the Poem itself, in which the mention of the Parthians (38a) as the ruling race is decidedly in favour of its having been written prior to the overthrow of the Parthian dynasty in 224 A.D.

There are also other indications pointing to Bardaisan as the poet; not only are some of the leading doctrines peculiarly those of this distinguished teacher, as has been pointed out by Bevan and Preuschen, but also, as I have ventured to suggest, there is a certain personal note in the Poem.

Bardaisan's parents were rich and noble; and their young son not only received the best education in manners and learning procurable, but he was brought up at the court of Edessa with the crown prince, who afterwards succeeded to the throne as one of the Abgars. Not only so, but Bardaisan subsequently converted his friend and patron to Gnostic Christianity, and induced him to make it the state-religion; so that our Gnostic must have the credit indirectly of establishing the first Christian State.

The description of the trade-route from Parthia to Egypt and of the adventures of the hero in Egypt, moreover, has led me to ask whether a real piece of personal biography may not have been woven into the Poem. May there not be in it a lost page from the occult life of Bardaisan himself?

Filled with longing to penetrate the mysteries of the Gnosis, he joins a caravan to Egypt, and arrives at Alexandria. There he meets with a fellow-countryman on the same quest as himself, who gives him some useful hints about the many corrupt and charlatanesque schools of pseudo-gnosis that thrived in that centre of intellectual curiosity and religious enthusiasm. He, however, in spite of these warnings, seems to have fallen into the hands of the unscrupulous, and so, for a time, forgets his true spiritual quest, in the by-ways, perchance, of lower psychism and magic. Only after this bitter experience does he obtain the instruction he longs for, by initiation into the spiritual Gnosis of the inner circles of, it may have been, the Valentinian tradition.

Of course this speculation is put forward with all hesitation; but it is neither impossible, nor improbable.

In any case, it is the least important element, and need not detain us except as being a possible source of the local colouring matter. The Hymn itself is a truly poetic inspiration, and deals with far higher mysteries and experiences. But before we can venture to suggest an interpretation, the reader must be made acquainted with the Poem itself in a version based on a minute comparison of all the existing translations.

The Hynn

(The Hynn of Judas Thonas the Apostle
in the Country of the Indians)

Translated by G.R.S. Mead

I.

When, a quite little child, I was dwelling
In the House of my Father's Kingdom,

And in the wealth and the glories
Of my Up-bringers I was delighting,

From the East, our Home, my Parents
Forth-sent me with journey-provision.

Indeed from the wealth of our Treasure,
They bound up for me a load.

Large was it, yet was it so light
That all alone I could bear it.

II.

Gold from the Land of Beth-Ellaya,
Silver from Gazak the Great,

Chalcedonies of India,
Iris-hued [Opals?] from Kāshan.

They girt me with Adamant [also]
That hath power to cut even iron.

My Glorious Robe they took off me
Which in their love they had wrought me,

And my Purple Mantle [also]
Which was woven to match with my stature.

III.

And with me They [then] made a compact;
In my heart wrote it, not to forget it:

"If thou goest down into Egypt,
And thence thou bring'st the one Pearl –

"[The Pearl] that lies in the Sea,
Hard by the loud-breathing Serpent –

"[Then] shalt Thou put on thy Robe
And thy Mantle that goeth upon it,

"And with thy Brother, Our Second,
Shalt thou be Heir in our Kingdom."

IV.

I left the East and went down
With two Couriers [with me];

For the way was hard and dangerous,
For I was young to tread it.

I traversed the borders of Maish~n,
The mart of the Eastern merchants,

And I reached the Land of Babel,
And entered the walls of Sarbāg.

Down further I went into Egypt;
And from me parted my escorts.

V.

Straightway I went to the Serpent;
Near to his lodging I settled,
To take away my Pearl
While he should sleep and should slumber.

Lone was I there, yea, all lonely;
To my fellow-lodgers a stranger.

However I saw there a noble,
From out of the Dawn-land my kinsman,

A young man fair and well favoured,
Son of Grandees; he came and he joined me.

VI.

I made him my chosen companion,
A comrade, for sharing my wares with.

He warned me against the Egyptians,
'Gainst mixing with the unclean ones.

For I had clothed me as they were,
That they might not guess I had come

From afar to take off the Pearl,
And so rouse the Serpent against me.

VII.

But from some occasion or other
They learned I was not of their country.

With their wives they made my acquaintance;
Yea, they gave me their victuals to eat.

I forgot that I was a King's son,
And became a slave to their king.

I forgot all concerning the Pearl
For which my Parents had sent me;

And from the weight of their victuals
I sank down into a deep sleep.

VIII.

All this that now was befalling,
My Parents perceived and were anxious.

It was then proclaimed in our Kingdom,
That all should speed to our Gate –

Kings and Chieftains of Parthia,
And of the East all the Princes.

And this is the counsel they came to:
I should not be left down in Egypt.

And for me they wrote out a Letter;
And to it each Noble his Name set:

IX.

"From Us – King of Kings, thy Father,
And thy Mother, Queen of the Dawn-land,

"And from Our Second, thy Brother –
To thee, Son, down in Egypt, Our Greeting!

"Up an arise from thy sleep,
Give ear to the words of Our Letter!

"Remember that thou art a King's son;
See whom thou hast served in thy slavery.

Bethink thyself of the Pearl
For which thou didst journey to Egypt.

X.

"Remember thy Glorious Robe,
Thy Splendid Mantle remember,

"To put on and wear as adornment,
When thy Name may be read in the Book of the Heroes,

"And with Our Successor, thy Brother,
Thou mayest be Heir in Our Kingdom."

My Letter was [surely] a Letter
The King had sealed up with His Right Hand,

'Gainst the Children of Babel, the wicked,
The tyrannical Daimons of Sarbãg.

XI.

It flew in the form of the Eagle,
Of all the winged tribes the king-bird;

It flew and alighted beside me,
And turned into speech altogether.

At its voice and the sound of its winging,
I waked and arose from my deep sleep.

Unto me I took it and kissed it;
I loosed its seal and I read it.

E'en as it stood in my heart writ,
The words of my Letter were written.

XII.

I remembered that I was a King's son,
And my rank did long for its nature.

I bethought me again of the Pearl,
For which I was sent down to Egypt.

And I began [then] to charm him,
The terrible loud-breathing Serpent.

I lulled him to sleep and to slumber,
Chanting o'er him the Name of my Father,

The Name of our Second, [my Brother],
And [Name] of my Mother, the East-Queen.

XIII.

And [thereon] I snatched up the Pearl,
And turned to the House of my Father.

Their filthy and unclean garments
I stripped off and left in their country.

To the way that I came I betook me,
To the Light of our Home, to the Dawn-land.

On the road I found [there] before me,
My Letter that had aroused me –

As with its voice it had roused me,
So now with its light it did lead me –

XIV.

On fabric of silk, in letter of red [?],
With shining appearance before me [?],

Encouraging me with its guidance,
With its love it was drawing me onward.

I went forth; through Sarbāg I passed;
I left B~ bel-land on my left hand;

And I reached unto Maishan the Great,
The meeting-place of the merchants,
That lieth hard by the Sea-shore.

XV.

My Glorious Robe that I'd stripped off,
And my Mantle with which it was covered,

Down from the Heights of Hyrcania,
Thither my Parents did send me,

By the hands of their Treasure-dispensers
Who trustworthy were with it trusted.

Without my recalling its fashion, –
In the House of my Father my childhood had left it,--

At once, as soon as I saw it,
The Glory looked like my own self.

XVI.

I saw it in all of me,
And saw me all in [all of] it, –

That we were twain in distinction,
And yet again one in one likeness.

I saw, too, the Treasurers also,
Who unto me had down-brought it,

Were twain [and yet] of one likeness;
For one Sign of the King was upon them –

Who through them restored me the Glory,
The Pledge of my Kingship [?].

XVII.

The Glorious Robe all-bespangled
With sparkling splendour of colours:

With Gold and also with Beryls,
Chalcedonies, iris-hued [Opals?],

With Sardis of varying colours.
To match its grandeur [?], moreover, it had been completed:

With adamantine jewels
All of its seams were off-fastened.

[Moreover] the King of Kings' Image
Was depicted entirely all o'er it;

And as with Sapphires above
Was it wrought in a motley of colour.

XVIII.

I saw that moreover all o'er it
The motions of Gnosis abounding;

I saw it further was making
Ready as though for to speak.

I heard the sound of its Music
Which it whispered as it descended [?]:

"Behold him the active in deeds!
For whom I was reared with my Father;

"I too have felt in myself
How that with his works waxed my stature."

XIX.

And [now] with its Kingly motions
Was it pouring itself out towards me,

And made haste in the hands of its Givers,
That I might [take and] receive it.

And me, too, my love urged forward
To run for to meet it, to take it.

And I stretched myself forth to receive it;
With its beauty of colour I decked me,

And my Mantle of sparkling colours
I wrapped entirely all o'er me.

XX.

I clothed me therewith, and ascended
To the Gate of Greeting and Homage.

I bowed my head and did homage
To the Glory of Him who had sent it,

Whose commands I [now] had accomplished,
And who had, too, done what He'd promised.

[And there] at the Gate of His House-sons
I mingled myself with His Princes;

For He had received me with gladness,
And I was with Him in His Kingdom;

XXI.

To whom the whole of His Servants
With sweet-sounding voices sing praises.

* * * * *

He had promised that with him to the Court
Of the King of Kings I should speed,

And taking with me my Pearl
Should with him be seen by our King.

The Hymn of Judas Thomas the Apostle,
which he spake in prison, is ended.

The following alternative translation from the Syriac version of the text is by William Wright, *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles* (London, 1871), pp. 238-245. Illegible words are indicated by (...). The hymn has been arranged in couplets, following A. E. J. Klijn, *The Acts of Thomas* (Leiden, 1962), pp. 120-125. Klijn uses Wright's translation except for a few variant readings.

The Hynn of Judas Thonas the Apostle

Translated by William Wright

When I was a little child,
and dwelling in my kingdom,

in my father's house, and was content with the wealth and the
luxuries of my nourishers,

from the East, our home,
my parents equipped me (and) sent me forth;

and of the wealth of our treasury
they took abundantly, (and) tied up for me a load
large and (yet) light, which I myself could carry,
gold of Beth-Ellaya,
and silver of Gazak the great,
and rubies of India,
and agates from Beth-Kashan,
and they furnished me with the adamant,
which can crush iron.
And they took off from me the glittering robe,
which in their affection they made for me,
and the purple toga,
which was measured (and) woven to my stature.
And they made a compact with me,
and wrote it in my heart, that it might not be forgotten:
"If thou goest down into Egypt,
and bringest the one pearl,
which is in the midst of the sea
around the loud-breathing serpent,
thou shalt put on thy glittering robe
and thy toga, with which (thou art) contented,
and with thy brother, who is next to us in authority,
thou shalt be heir in our kingdom."
I quitted the East (and) went down,
there being two guardians,
for the way was dangerous and difficult,
and I was very young to travel it.
I passed through the borders of Maishan,
the meeting-place of the merchants of the East,
and I reached the land of Babel,
and I entered the walls of Sarbug.
I went down into Egypt,
and my companions parted from me.
I went straight to the serpent,
I dwelt in his abode,

(waiting) till he should lumber and sleep,
and I could take my pearl from him.

And when I was single and alone
(and) became strange to my family,

one of my race, a free-born man,
and Oriental, I saw there,

a youth fair and loveable,
the son of oil-sellers;

and he came and attached himself to me,
and I made him my intimate friend,

and associate with whom I shared my merchandise.
I warned him against the Egyptians,

and against consorting with the unclean;

And I dressed in their dress,
that they might not hold me in abhorrence,

because I was come from abroad in order to take the pearl,
and arouse the serpent against me.

But in some way other or another
they found out that I was not their countryman,

and they dealt with me treacherously,
and gave their food to eat.

I forget that I was a son of kings,
and I served their king;

and I forgot the pearl,
for which my parents had sent me,

and because of the burden of their oppressions
I lay in a deep sleep.

But all this things that befell me
my parents perceived, and were grieved for me;

and proclamation was made in our kingdom,
that every one should come to our gate [kingdom],

kings and princes of Parthia,
and all the nobles of the East.

And they wove a plan on my behalf,
that I might not be left in Egypt;

and they wrote to me a letter,
and every noble signed his name to it:

"From thy father, the king of kings,
and thy mother, the mistress of the East,

and from thy brother, our second (in authority),
to thee our son, who art in Egypt, greeting!

Call to mind that thou art a son of kings!
See the slavery,--whom thou servest!

Remember the pearl,
for which thou was sent to Egypt!

Think of thy robe,
and remember thy splendid toga,

which thou shalt wear and (with which) thou shalt be adorned,
when thy name hath been read out in the list of the valiant,

and thy brother, our viceroy,
thou shalt be in our kingdom."

My letter is a letter,
which the king sealed with his own right hand,

(to keep it) from the wicked ones, the children of Babel,
and from the savage demons of Sarbug.

It flew in the likeness of an eagle,
the king of all birds;

it flew and alight beside me,
and became all speech.

At its voice and the sound of its rustling,
I started and arose from my sleep.

I took it up and kissed it,
and I began (and) read it;

and according to what was traced on my heart
were the words of my letter.

I remembered that I was a son of royal parents,
and my noble birth asserted itself.

I remembered the pearl,
for which I had been sent to Egypt,

and I began to charm him,
the terrible loud breathing serpent.

I hushed him asleep and lulled him into slumber,
for my father's name I named over him,

and the name of our second (in power),
and the of my mother, the queen of the East.

And I snatched away the pearl,
and turned to go back to my father's house.

And their filthy and unclean dress I stripped off,
and left it in their country;

and I took my way straight to come
to the light of our home in the East.

And my letter, my awakener,
I found before me on the road;

and as with its voice it had awakened me,
(so) too with its light it was leading me.

It, that dwelt in the palace,
gave light before me with its form,

and with its voice and its guidance
it also encouraged me to speed,

and with its love it drew me on.

I went forth (and) passed by Sarbug;
I left Babel on my left hand;

and I came to the great Maisan,
to the haven of merchants,

which sitteth on the shore of the sea.

And my bright robe, which I had stripped off,
and the toga that was wrapped with it,

from Rantha and Reken(?)
my parents had sent thither

by the hand of their treasures,
who in their truth could be trusted therewith.

And because I remembered not its fashion,--
for in my childhood I had left it in my father's house,--
on a sudden, when I received it,
the garment seemed to me to become like a mirror of myself.

I saw it all in all,
and I to received all in it,
for we were two in distinction
and yet gain one in one likeness.

And the treasurers too,
who brought it to me, I saw in like manner
to be two (and yet) one likeness,
for one sign of the king was written on them (both),
of the hands of him who restored to me through them
my trust and my wealth,

my decorated robe, which
was adorned with glorious colors,

with gold and beryls
and rubies and agates

and sardonyxes, varied in color.
And it was skillfully worked in its home on high,

and with diamond clasps
were all its seams fastened;

and the image of the king of kings
was embroidered and depicted in full all over it,

and like the stone of the sapphire too
its hues were varied.

And I saw also that all over it
the instincts of knowledge were working,
and I saw too that it was preparing to speak.

I heard the sound of its tones,
which it uttered with its....., (saying):

"I am the active in deeds,
whom they reared for him before my father;

and I perceived myself,
that my stature grew according to his labors."

And in its kingly movements
it poured itself entirely over me,

and on the hand of its givers
it hastened that I might take it.

And love urged me too run
to meet it and receive it;

and I stretched forth and took it.
With the beauty of its colors I adorned myself,

and I wrapped myself wholly in my toga
of brilliant hues.

I clothed myself with it, and went up to the gate
of salutation and prostration;

I bowed my head and worshipped the majesty
of my father who sent me,--

for I had done his commandments,
and he too had done what he promised,--

and the gate of his ,
I mingled with his princes,

for he rejoiced in me and received me,
and I was with him in his kingdom,

and with the voice of....
all his servants praised him.

And he promised that to the gate too
of the king of kings with him I should go,

and with my offering and my pearl
with him should present myself to our king.

The Hymn of Judas Thomas the Apostles,
which he spake in prison, is ended.

The Gospel of Eve

Epiphanius makes this quotation from the Gospel of Eve (*Panarion*, 26.3.1):

I stood upon a high mountain and saw a tall man, and another of short stature, and heard as it were a sound of thunder and went nearer in order to hear. Then he spoke to me and said: I am thou and thou art I, and where thou art there am I, and I am sown in all things; and whence thou wilt, thou gatherest me, but when thou gatherest me, then gatherest thou thyself.

It's possible that this other quotation by Epiphanius derived from the Gospel of Eve: "I saw a tree which bore twelve fruits in the year, and he said to me: This is the Tree of Life." (*Panarion*, 26.5.1)

Henri-Charles Puech, as revised by Beate Blatz, writes concerning the contents of the Gospel of Eve: "The first passage quoted in Epiphanius appears to belong to the beginning of the document. It is however very difficult to make any precise statements about the identity of the speaker and the mythical interlocutor. Eve herself could be the narrator of the vision, but it could just as well be some anonymous seer. Several interpretations may likewise be offered for the two figures who appear in the vision. They may represent 'the Urmensch and his dwarfish earthly likeness', or the Urmensch and the Son of Man, or it may be a question of 'God the Father and Barbelo, who is stunted because the power has been taken from her'. Perhaps also the two figures are in reality one, seen at one and the same time under two different aspects, as is frequently the case in narratives of this type (cf. e.g. the beginning of the Apocryphon of John or appearances of Jesus Christ or other beings, divine or demonic, in manifold embodiments). All that is certain is that the Gospel of Eve belongs to the revelation documents, hence to the apocalyptic literature. It is constructed after the widespread pattern of the 'vision report' and employs the usual motifs of this kind of literature: the setting of the scene upon a mountain, the appearance of a figure of very great or gigantic stature, an address by this figure to the seer. The revealer, or divine being, discloses to his interlocutor his identity with him, by an almost stereotyped formula (*egw su kai su egw*) which is often employed in gnostic, Hermetic, magic or alchemical texts. This identity implies that the one is everywhere and always present to the other, and that there is consubstantiality between them. 'To gather oneself' (*eauton sullegein*), i.e. to gather the substance of one's spiritual 'light-nature' which is dispersed in the body and in matter, to recover and save one's 'ego' by disengaging it from the diversity of the world and restoring it to its original unity, is equivalent to saying that the one at the same time gathers and saves the substance, or a part of the substance, of the other, which is likewise scattered, dispersed and imprisoned in the world. There is a collaboration between the Saviour and the saved. Here again the theory and the language are gnostic.

The Apocalypse of Melchizedek

The Melchizedek Apocalypse is a Coptic text, written in the late second or early third century CE, by a Sethian gnostic author, and discovered near Nag Hammadi in Egypt. Only one extant copy of the document has survived, preserved in the translation of the original Greek, in Codex IX of the Nag Hammadi collection. Melchizedek has significant codicological issues, with only 19 of the approximately 745 lines of the original document completely extant, and even with a great deal of effort and scholarly conjecture, only about 47% of the text is at all recoverable. Perhaps because of the state of the manuscript itself, the Melchizedek Apocalypse has been examined by only a few scholars, those tasked with the production of the critical editions, translations and commentaries on the text, Birger A. Pearson (English), Hans-Martin Schenke (German), Wolf-Peter Funk, Jean-

Pierre Mahe (French), and Claudio Gianotto (French and Italian), in particular. The text presents Melchizedek, the king of Salem and priest of God Most High first seen in Genesis (14.18--20), as an apocalyptic and gnostic hero, assuming the authority of the character in order to present an understanding of the cosmos, reflective of both literary styles and their visions of this world and the next. The text is demonstrative of apocalyptic and gnostic conventions, as well as of the literary traditions surrounding Melchizedek speculation, and socio-historical elements having to do with its Egyptian milieu. In the present work I examine each of these designations on the way to establishing the literary and historical contexts of the text. Following the trajectory theory suggested by James M. Robinson and Helmut Koester, through the examination of the Melchizedek Apocalypse and its literary and historical contexts I will place it within the various trajectories of Judaism, early Christianity and Sethian gnosticism, seeking to demonstrate the over-lapping nature of the literary and religious distinctions of the early centuries of the Common Era. In order to do so, I address the difficult issue of "gnosticism" as a viable categorization, beginning with the arguments of Michael A. Williams, Karen L. King and Carl B. Smith. As Melchizedek can be seen as a clear example of the diversity of forms within the religious traditions of Egypt in late antiquity, it acts as an ideal test case.

The Dialogue of the Savior

The Savior said to his disciples, "Already the time has come, brothers, for us to abandon our labor and stand at rest. For whoever stands at rest will rest forever. And I say to you, be always above [...] time [...] you [...] be afraid of [...] you [...] anger is fearful [...] arouse anger [...] but since you have [...] they accepted these words concerning it with fear and trembling, and it set them up with governors, for from it nothing was forthcoming. But when I came, I opened the path, and I taught them about the passage which they will traverse, the elect and solitary, who have known the Father, having believed the truth and all the praises while you offered praise.

"So when you offer praise, do so like this: Hear us, Father, just as you heard your only-begotten son, and received him, and gave him rest from any [...] You are the one whose power [...] your armor [...] is [...] light [...] living [...] touch [...] the word [...] repentance [...] life [...] you. You are the thinking and the entire serenity of the solitary. Again: Hear us just as you heard your elect. Through your sacrifice, these will enter; through their good works, these have saved their souls from these blind limbs, so that they might exist eternally. Amen.

"I will teach you. When the time of dissolution arrives, the first power of darkness will come upon you. Do not be afraid and say "Behold! The time has come!" But when you see a single staff ... (3 *lines indecipherable*) ... understand [...] the work [...] and the governors [...] come upon you [...]. Truly, fear is the power [...]. So if you are going to be afraid of what is about to come upon you, it will engulf you. For there is not one among them who will spare you or show you mercy. But in this way, look at the [...] in it, since you have mastered every word on earth. It [...] take you up to the [...] place where there is no rule [...] tyrant. When you [...] you will see those who [...] and also [...] tell you [...] the reasoning power [...] reasoning power [...] place of truth [...] but [...]. But you [...] truth, this [...] living [...] and your joy [...]. So [...] in order that [...] your souls [...] lest it [...] the word [...] raise... (3 *lines indecipherable*) ... For the crossing place is fearful before you. But you, with a single mind, pass it by! For its depth is great; its height is enormous [...] single mind [...] and the fire [...] [...] all

the powers [...] you, they [...] and the powers [...] they [...] soul [...] in everyone [...] you are the [...] and [...] forget [...] son [...] and you [...]."

Matthew said, "How [...]?"

The Savior said "[...] the things inside you [...] will remain, you [...]."

Judas said, "Lord [...] the works [...] these souls, these [...], these little ones, when [...] where will they be? [...] the spirit [...]?"

The Lord said, "[...] receive them. These do not die, [...] they are not destroyed, for they have known their consorts and him who would receive them. For the truth seeks out the wise and the righteous."

The Savior said, "The lamp of the body is the mind. As long as the things inside you are set in order, that is, [...], your bodies are luminous. As long as your hearts are dark, the luminosity you anticipate [...] I have [...] I will go [...] my word [...] I send [...]."

His disciples said, "Lord, who is it who seeks, and [...] reveals?"

The Lord said to them, "He who seeks [...] reveals [...]."

Matthew said, "Lord, when I [...] and when I speak, who is it who [...] and who listens?"

The Lord said, "It is the one who speaks who also listens, and it is the one who can see who also reveals."

Mary said, "Lord, behold! Whence do I bear the body while I weep, and whence while I [laugh]?"

The Lord said, "[...] weeps on account of its works [...] remain and the mind laughs [...] spirit. If one does not [...] darkness, he will be able to see [...]. So I tell you [...] light is the darkness [...] stand in [...] not see the light [...] the lie [...] they brought them from [...]. You will give [...] and [...] exist forever. [...] ever. Then all the powers which are above, as well as those below, will [...] you. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth over the end of all these things."

Judas said, "Tell us, Lord, what was [...] before the heaven and the earth existed."

The Lord said, "There was darkness and water, and spirit upon water. And I say to you [...] what you seek after [...] inquire after [...] within you [...] the power and the mystery [...] spirit, for from [...] wickedness [...] come [...] mind [...] behold [...] [...]."

[...] said, "Lord, tell us where the [...] is established, and where the true mind exists."

The Lord said, "The fire of the spirit came into existence [...] both. On this account, the [...] came into existence, and the true mind came into existence within them [...]. If someone sets his soul up high, then he will be exalted."

And Matthew asked him, "[...] took [...], it is he who [...]."

The Lord said, "[...] stronger than [...] you [...] to follow you and all the works [...] your hearts. For just as your hearts [...], so [...] the means to overcome the powers above, as well as those below [...]. I say to you, let him who possesses power renounce it and repent. And let him who [...] seek and find and rejoice."

Judas said, "Behold! I see that all things exist [...] like signs upon [...]. On this account did they happen thus."

The Lord said, "When the Father established the cosmos, he [...] water from it, and his Word came forth from it, and it inhabited many [...]. It was higher than the path [...] surrounds the entire earth [...] the collected water [...] existing outside them. [...] the water, a great fire encircling them like a wall. [...] time once many things had become separated from what was inside. When the [...] was established, he looked [...], and said to it, 'Go, and [...] from yourself, in order that [...] be in want

from generation to generation, and from age to age.' Then it cast forth from itself fountains of milk and fountains of honey, and oil and wine and good fruits, and sweet flavor and good roots, in order that it might not be deficient from generation to generation, and from age to age. And it is above [...] standing [...] its beauty [...] and outside there was a great light, powerful [...] resemble it, for it [...] rules over all the aeons above and below. [...] was taken from the fire [...] it was scattered in the [...] above and below. All the works which depend on them, it is they [...] over the heaven above and over the earth below. On them depend all the works."

And when Judas heard these things, he bowed down, and he [...], and he offered praise to the Lord.

Mary hailed her brethren, saying, "Where are you going to put these things about which you ask the son [...]?"

The Lord said to her, "Sister, [no one] will be able to inquire about these things except for someone who has somewhere to put them in his heart. [...] to come forth [...] and enter [...], so that they might not hold back [...] this impoverished cosmos."

Matthew said, "Lord, I want to see that place of life, [the place] where there is no wickedness, but rather, there is pure light!"

The Lord said, "Brother Matthew, you will not be able to see it as long as you are carrying flesh around."

Matthew said, "Lord, even if I will not be able to see it, let me know it!"

The Lord said, "Everyone who has known himself has seen it in everything given to him to do, [...] and has come to [...] it in his goodness."

Judas responded, saying, "Tell me, Lord, how it is that [...] which shakes the earth moves."

The Lord picked up a stone and held it in his hand, saying "What am I holding in my hand?"

He said, "It is a stone."

He said to them, "That which supports the earth is that which supports the heaven. When a Word comes forth from the Greatness, it will come on what supports the heaven and the earth. For the earth does not move. Were it to move, it would fall. But it neither moves nor falls, in order that the First Word might not fail. For it was that which established the cosmos and inhabited it, and inhaled fragrance from it. For [...] which do not move, I [...] you, all the sons of men. For you are from that place. In the hearts of those who speak out of joy and truth, you exist. Even if it comes forth in the body of the Father among men, and is not received, still it [...] return to its place. Whoever does not know the work of perfection, knows nothing. If one does not stand in the darkness, he will not be able to see the light. If one does not understand how fire came into existence, he will burn in it, because he does not know the root of it. If one does not first understand water, he knows nothing. For what use is there for him to be baptized in it? If one does not understand how blowing wind came into existence, he will blow away with it. If one does not understand how body, which he bears, came into existence, he will perish with it. And how will someone who does not know the Son know the Father? And to someone who will not know the root of all things, they remain hidden. Someone who will not know the root of wickedness is no stranger to it. Whoever will not understand how he came will not understand how he will go, and he is no stranger to this cosmos which will [...], which will be humiliated."

Then he [...] Judas and Matthew and Mary [...] the edge of heaven and earth. And when he placed his hand upon them, they hoped that they might [...] it. Judas raised his eyes and saw an

exceedingly high place, and he saw the place of the abyss below. Judas said to Matthew, "Brother, who will be able to climb up to such a height or down to the bottom of the abyss? For there is a tremendous fire there, and something very fearful!" At that moment, a Word came forth from it. As it stood there, he saw how it had come down. Then he said to it, "Why have you come down?" And the Son of Man greeted them and said to them, "A seed from a power was deficient, and it went down to the abyss of the earth. And the Greatness remembered it, and he sent the Word to it. It brought it up into his presence, so that the First Word might not fail." Then his disciples were amazed at all the things he had said to them, and they accepted them on faith. And they concluded that it is useless to regard wickedness.

(38) Then he said to his disciples, "Have I not told you that like a visible voice and flash of lightning will the good be taken up to the light?"

Then all his disciples offered him praise and said, "Lord, before you appeared here, who was it who offered you praise? For all praises exist on your account. Or who is it who will bless you? For all blessing derives from you."

(40) As they stood there, he saw two spirits bringing a single soul with them in a great flash of lightning. And a Word came forth from the Son of Man, saying, "Give them their garment!" And the small one became like the big one. They were [...] those who received them [...] each other. Then [...] disciples, whom he had [...].

Mary said, "[...] see evil [...] them from the first [...] each other.

The Lord said, "[...] when you see them [...] become huge, they will [...]. But when you see the Eternal Existent, that is the great vision."

They all said to him, "Tell us about it!"

He said to them, "How do you wish to see it? By means of a transient vision or an eternal vision?" He went on and said, "Strive to save that which can follow you, and to seek it out, and to speak from within it, so that, as you seek it out, everything might be in harmony with you. For I say to you, truly, the living God [...] in you [...] in him."

Judas said, "Truly, I want [...]."

The Lord said to him, "[...] living [...] dwells [...] entire [...] the deficiency [...]."

Judas said, "Who [...]?"

The Lord said to him, "[...] all the works which [...] the remainder, it is they which you [...]."

Judas said, "Behold! The governors dwell above us, so it is they who will rule over us!"

The Lord said, "It is you who will rule over them! But when you rid yourselves of jealousy, then you will clothe yourselves in light and enter the bridal chamber."

Judas said, "How will our garments be brought to us?"

The Lord said, "There are some who will provide for you, and there are others who will receive [...]. For it is they who will give you your garments. For who will be able to reach that place which is the reward? But the garments of life were given to man because he knows the path by which he will leave. And it is difficult even for me to reach it!"

Mary said, "Thus with respect to 'the wickedness of each day,' and 'the laborer is worthy of his food,' and 'the disciple resembles his teacher.'" She uttered this as a woman who had understood completely.

The disciples said to him, "What is the fullness, and what is the deficiency?"
He said to them, "You are from the fullness, and you dwell in the place where the deficiency is. And lo! His light has poured down upon me!"

Matthew said, "Tell me, Lord, how the dead die, and how the living live."
The Lord said, "You have asked me about a saying [...] which eye has not seen, nor have I heard it, except from you. But I say to you that when what invigorates a man is removed, he will be called 'dead'. And when what is alive leaves what is dead, what is alive will be called upon."
Judas said, "Why else, for the sake of truth, do they <die> and live?"
The Lord said, "Whatever is born of truth does not die. Whatever is born of woman dies."

Mary said, "Tell me, Lord, why I have come to this place to profit or to forfeit."
The Lord said, "You make clear the abundance of the revealer!"
Mary said to him, "Lord, is there then a place which is [...] or lacking truth?"
The Lord said, "The place where I am not!"
Mary said, "Lord, you are fearful and wonderful, and [...] those who do not know you."

Matthew said, "Why do we not rest at once?"
The Lord said, "When you lay down these burdens!"
Matthew said, "How does the small join itself to the big?"
The Lord said, "When you abandon the works which will not be able to follow you, then you will rest."

Mary said, "I want to understand all things, just as they are!"
The Lord said, "He who will seek out life! For this is their wealth. For the [...] of this cosmos is [...], and its gold and its silver are misleading."

His disciples said to him, "What should we do to ensure that our work will be perfect?"
The Lord said to them, "Be prepared in face of everything. Blessed is the man who has found [...] the contest [...] his eyes. Neither did he kill, nor was he killed, but he came forth victorious."

Judas said, "Tell me, Lord, what the beginning of the path is."
He said, "Love and goodness. For if one of these existed among the governors, wickedness would never have come into existence."

Matthew said, "Lord, you have spoken about the end of everything without concern."
The Lord said, "You have understood all the things I have said to you, and you have accepted them on faith. If you have known them, then they are yours. If not, then they are not yours."

They said to him, "What is the place to which we are going?"
The Lord said, "Stand in the place you can reach!"
Mary said, "Everything established thus is seen."
The Lord said, "I have told you that it is the one who can see who reveals."

His disciples, numbering twelve, asked him, "Teacher, [...] serenity [...] teach us [...]."
The Lord said, "[...] everything which I have [...] you will [...] you [...] everything."

Mary said, "There is but one saying I will speak to the Lord concerning the mystery of truth: In this have we taken our stand, and to the cosmic are we transparent."

Judas said to Matthew, "We want to understand the sort of garments we are to be clothed with when we depart the decay of the flesh."

The Lord said, "The governors and the administrators possess garments granted only for a time, which do not last. But you, as children of truth, not with these transitory garments are you to clothe yourselves. Rather, I say to you that you will become blessed when you strip yourselves! For it is no great thing [...] outside."

[...] said [...] speak, I [...]."

The Lord said, "[...] your Father [...]."

Mary said, "Of what sort is that mustard seed? Is it something from heaven or is it something from earth?"

The Lord said, "When the Father established the cosmos for himself, he left much over from the Mother of the All. Therefore, he speaks and he acts."

Judas said, "You have told us this out of the mind of truth. When we pray, how should we pray?"

The Lord said, "Pray in the place where there is no woman."

Matthew said, "'Pray in the place where there is no woman,' he tells us, meaning 'Destroy the works of womanhood,' not because there is any other manner of birth, but because they will cease giving birth."

Mary said, "They will never be obliterated."

The Lord said, "Who knows that they will not dissolve and ... *[2 lines missing]*?"

Judas said to Matthew, "The works of womanhood will dissolve [...] the governors will [...]. Thus will we become prepared for them."

The Lord said, "Right. For do they see you? Do they see those who receive you? Now behold! A true Word is coming forth from the Father to the abyss, in silence with a flash of lightning, giving birth. Do they see it or overpower it? But you are even more aware of the path, this one, before either angel or authority has [...] Rather, it belongs to the Father and the Son, because they are both a single [...]. And you will go via the path which you have known. Even if the governors become huge, they will not be able to reach it. But listen - I tell you that it is difficult even for me to reach it!"

Mary said to the Lord, "When the works [...] which dissolve a work."

The Lord said, "Right. For you know [...] if I dissolve [...] will go to his place."

Judas said, "How is the spirit apparent?"

The Lord said, "How is the sword apparent?"

Judas said, "How is the light apparent?"

The Lord said, "[...] in it forever."

Judas said, "Who forgives the works of whom? The works which [...] the cosmos [...] who forgives the works."

The Lord said, "Who [...]? It behooves whoever has understood the works to do the will of the Father. And as for you, strive to rid yourselves of anger and jealousy, and to strip yourselves of your [...], and not to ...

(next 18 lines virtually indecipherable)

... he will live forever. And I say to you [...], so that you will not lead your spirits and your souls into error."

The Gospel of the Egyptians (Additional Fragments)

A Gospel of the Egyptians is mentioned among other apocryphal books by Origen (in Luc. hom. I). Two distinct works are known under this title: (1) a document quoted by Clement of Alexandria in Strom. III, where he was concerned with questions of marriage and sexual morality, and interalia joined issue with the Encratites and other groups. In so doing he mentions their use of this gospel and gives a few extracts from a dialogue between Christ and Salome. A fragment of this dialogue is quoted in II Clement 12.1, 2, but whether the other non-canonical sayings in II Clement also derive from the Gospel of the Egyptians is by no means certain. A further quotation occurs in Clement's Excerpta ex Theodoto (67), and according to Hippolytus (Ref. V. 7. 8f.) the book was used by the Naassenes. Epiphanius (Pan. 62. 4) mentions its use by the Sabellians, but gives no information of its character.

The evidence is not sufficient to provide a basis for conclusions about the nature, content and structure of the book, but it must go back to the 2nd cent. and seems to have been of a Gnostic, or at any rate, Encratite character. Clement quoted it against the Encratites, but had to read his own interpretation into the text; but while he clearly places it on a lower level than the canonical gospels there is no sign that he entirely disapproved of it. It was probably the gospel of Gentile Christians in Egypt, while the Gospel of the Hebrews (q.v.) was that of the Jewish Christians. Parallels in the Coptic Gospel of Thomas (q.v.) have led to the suggestion that the Gospel of the Egyptians was one of its sources, but this again remains uncertain..

(2.) Completely different is a document contained in Codices III and IV of the Nag Hammadi library. Both VSS have the title "Sacred Book of the Great Invisible Spirit," but Codex III also has in the colophon the title, "Gospel of the Egyptians." The description of the heavenly world from its opening pages has been tr. and discussed by A. Böhlig (Le Muséon 80 [1967] 5ff.). It begins with a description of the great invisible Spirit and of the emanations (Father, Mother, Son) which proceed from Him. The appearance of Barbelo and various points of agreement with the Apocryphon of John suggests a connection with the Barbelognostic sect.

Origen's Commentary on the Lord's Prayer

What I have said, according to my capacity to receive the grace which has been given by God through His Christ, and as I trust in the Holy Spirit also—whether it be so you will judge when you read it—may suffice by way of examination of the general subject of prayer. I shall now proceed to the next task, to consider how full of meaning is the prayer outlined by the Lord. It is first of all to be observed that to most people Matthew and Luke might seem to have recorded the same prayer sketched as a pattern for right prayer. Matthew's words run thus:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one.

But Luke's run as follows:

Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us. And do not bring us to the time of trial.

To those who suppose it to be the same prayer we may reply that the utterances, though they certainly resemble one another, also appear to differ, as I shall set forth in investigating them. In the second place it is not possible that the same prayer should be said on the mountain where "When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying"—for it is in the course of the recital of the Beatitudes and the subsequent injunctions that it is found recorded in Matthew. It also have been said, "He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples."

It is surely impossible that the same words should be described as having been spoken in the course of continuous utterance without any question to precede them and as being announced in response to a disciple's request. One might, however, say the prayers are equivalent and were spoken as one. On the one occasion in continuous discourse, on the other in response to the request of a different disciple who in all likelihood was not present when He spoke the form in Matthew or had not mastered what had earlier been spoken. But perhaps it is better that the prayers be regarded as different, with certain portions in common.

In Mark, though I have searched there also in case the record of an equivalent should escape me, I have not found so much as a vestige of a prayer contained. I have already said that before praying one must first be composed and disposed in a particular manner. Let us therefore glance at the words preceding the prayer contained in Matthew, which were uttered by our Savior. They are as follows: And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others.

Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

Pray then in this way: Our Savior often appears as inveighing against the love of glory as a deadly passion, just as He has done in this place where He dissuades us from the practice of actors at the season of prayer, for it is a practice of actors rather to plume themselves in piety before men rather than to have communion with God.

Remembering then the words, "How can you believe when you accept glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the one who alone is God?" we ought to despise all glory with men even though it be thought honorably gained and to seek the strict and true glory which is from Him alone who glorifies the deserving in a manner becoming to Himself and exceeding the desert of the person glorified. The very act which would in itself be thought honorable and is thought praiseworthy is polluted when we do it to be glorified by men or to appear to men, and on that account it is attended by no recompense from God. Unerring as the whole of Jesus' language is, it becomes even more so when it is spoken with His accustomed oath.

Of those who for human glory seem to do good to their neighbor, or pray in synagogues and at broadway corners, he says. "Truly I tell you, they have received their reward." For as the rich man according to Luke had good things in his human life, being no longer capable of obtaining them after the present life because he had had them, so he that has his reward, as having sown not "unto the spirit" but "unto the flesh" shall "reap corruption" but shall not "reap eternal life" in his giving or in his prayers.

It is sowing unto the flesh when one does alms, with trumpeting before him, in synagogues and thoroughfares to be glorified by men, or likes to pray standing in synagogues and at broadway corners to appear to men and thought a pious and a holy person among the onlookers. Indeed every wayfarer along the broad and spacious way leading to destruction without rightness or straightness but crooked and cornered throughout, (for the straight line is broken in it to the utmost), is standing no less than he who prays at broadway corners, not in one but through his love of pleasure in a number of streets in which beings who as men are perishing because they have fallen away from their divinity, are to be found glorifying and pronouncing blessed those whom they have thought to act piously.

There are always many who are rather pleasure-loving than God-loving in their seeming prayer who debauch prayer amid banqueting and carousing, standing in truth at the broadway corners and praying. For everyone who has made pleasure his rule of life has in his passion for the spacious fallen out of the narrow straitened way of Jesus Christ that is without a single bend and has no corner at all.

There is a certain difference between Church and Synagogue. The church in the strict sense is without "a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind," is holy and blameless. Into it enters neither child of harlot, nor eunuch or emasculate, nor yet Egyptian or Edomite unless sons born to them in the third generation enables them with difficulty to join the church, nor Moabite and Ammonite, unless the tenth generation is complete and the aeon passed.

The Synagogue on the other hand may be built by a centurion, as was the case in times preceding the sojourn of Jesus when as yet witness had not yet been borne that the man possessed faith such as the Son of God did not find even in Israel. Now he who likes to pray in synagogues is not far from broadway corners. But it is not so with the saint, for he loves, not likes to pray, in churches, not broadway corners, in the straightness of the narrow straitened way, not to appear to men, but to present himself before the Lord God, a male in the sense that he observes the acceptable year of the Lord and keeps the commandment which says, "Thrice in the year shall every male present himself before the Lord God."

We are to attend to the word "appear" carefully, since no appearance is a good inasmuch as it only seems to exist and not in truth, and misleads the senses and expresses nothing exactly and truly. As actors of plays in theatres are not what they profess nor are really what the mask they wear makes them look like, so too all who appear to assume the outward sensible form of goodness and are not righteous but actors of righteousness, acting moreover in a theatre of their own—namely synagogues and broadway corners. But he that is no actor but has cast off all that is alien to him and sets himself to please in that theatre which is inconceivably greater than any which has been mentioned, enters into his own storeroom to the riches therein treasured up, and shuts up after him his treasury of wisdom and knowledge.

Never turning his glance outwards or doting on things outside, having shut up every door of the senses that he may not be drawn away by sensations or have their sensible presentation stealing into his mind, prays to the Father who does not shun or desert a place so secret but dwells in it, the Only Begotten also being present with Him. For He says "I and the Father will come unto him and make abode with him." And plainly, if we do pray thus, we shall be interceding not only with a God but also with a Father who is righteous, who does not desert us as His children but is present in our secret place and watches it and increases the contents of the storeroom if we shut up its door.

When we pray let us not babble but use godly speech. We babble when, without scrutiny of ourselves or of the devotional words we are sending up, we speak of the corrupt in deed or word or thought, things which are mean and reprehensible and alien to the incorruptibleness of the Lord. He, then, that babbles in prayer is in a synagogic disposition worse than any yet described and in a harder way than those who are at Broadway corners, preserving not as much as a vestige even of acting in goodness.

For according to the passage in the Gospel only heathen babble, being quite insensible of great or heavenly petitions and therefore sending up every prayer for the material and the external. To a babbling heathen, then, is he like who asks for things below from the Lord who dwells in heaven and above the heights of the heavens.

He who is wordy also seems to be a babbler and he who babbles to be wordy. There is no unity in matter and in bodily substances, but every such supposed unity is split up and divided and disintegrated into many units to the loss of its union. Good is one; many are the base. Truth is one; many are the false. True righteousness is one; many are the states that act it as a part. God's wisdom is one; many are the wisdoms of this age and of the rulers of this age which come to nought. The word of God is one, but many are the words alien to God.

Therefore no one shall escape Sin as the result of wordiness, and no one who thinks to be heard as the result of wordiness can be heard. For this reason we ought not to make our prayers like heathen babbling or wordiness or other practice after the likeness of the serpent, for the God of saints, being a Father, knows of what things His children have need, since such things are worthy of Fatherly knowledge.

He who knows not God knows not the things of God also—knows not the things of which he has need, for the things of which he thinks he has need are mistaken. But he who has contemplated the better and diviner things of which he is in need shall obtain the objects of his contemplation which are known by God and which have been known by the Father even before asking. After these remarks upon the preface to the prayer in the Gospel according to Matthew, let us now proceed to consider what the prayer sets forth.

The Homily on the Paschal Feast by Melito of Sardis

Melito of Sardis (died c. 190 AD) was a Christian who lived in the second century. Little is known about Melito other than that he traveled to Palestine to visit the holy places. What is known is his love for the Lord Jesus Christ and his understanding that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old

Testament—that all the promises of the Scriptures find their “yes” in Jesus, the Messiah (2 Cor 1:20).

This understanding and commitment are articulated in Melito’s [*Homily on the Pasch*](#) (*On the Passover, or Peri Pascha*, written c. 170). About this *Homily* one concludes, “it is one of the most beautiful meditations ever written on the work of Christ. The word Pasch evoked for early Christians a number of themes: the Jewish Passover, the Passover meal, the lamb sacrificed and eaten at Passover, Holy Week, and Easter—sometimes all at once.” In sum, this homily shows how one early Christian saw Christ’s suffering, death and resurrection foreshadowed everywhere in the Old Testament, which was representative of the beliefs of early Christianity. What follows is the introduction (1-10) of Melito’s *Homily on the Pasch*. Read and ponder this Christ-focused exposition of the Scriptures on this day when we remember the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. First of all, the Scripture about the Hebrew Exodus has been read and the words of the mystery have been explained as to how the sheep was sacrificed and the people were saved.
2. Therefore, understand this, O beloved: The mystery of the passover is new and old, eternal and temporal, corruptible and incorruptible, mortal and immortal in this fashion:
3. It is old insofar as it concerns the law, but new insofar as it concerns the gospel; temporal insofar as it concerns the type, eternal because of grace; corruptible because of the sacrifice of the sheep, incorruptible because of the life of the Lord; mortal because of his burial in the earth, immortal because of his resurrection from the dead.
4. The law is old, but the gospel is new; the type was for a time, but grace is forever. The sheep was corruptible, but the Lord is incorruptible, who was crushed as a lamb, but who was resurrected as God. For although he was led to sacrifice as a sheep, yet he was not a sheep; and although he was as a lamb without voice, yet indeed he was not a lamb. The one was the model; the other was found to be the finished product.
5. For God replaced the lamb, and a man the sheep; but in the man was Christ, who contains all things.
6. Hence, the sacrifice of the sheep, and the sending of the lamb to slaughter, and the writing of the law—each led to and issued in Christ, for whose sake everything happened in the ancient law, and even more so in the new gospel.
7. For indeed the law issued in the gospel—the old in the new, both coming forth together from Zion and Jerusalem; and the commandment issued in grace, and the type in the finished product, and the lamb in the Son, and the sheep in a man, and the man in God.
8. For the one who was born as Son, and led to slaughter as a lamb, and sacrificed as a sheep, and buried as a man, rose up from the dead as God, since he is by nature both God and man.
9. He is everything: in that he judges he is law, in that he teaches he is gospel, in that he saves he is grace, in that he begets he is Father, in that he is begotten he is Son, in that he suffers he is sheep, in that he is buried he is man, in that he comes to life again he is God.
10. Such is Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever. Amen.

The Epistle of Polycarp to the Smyrnaeans

INTRODUCTION

For background, The Epistle of Ignatius to Polycarp, and the Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians, (both available on The Seraphim Files) should be read in connection with this epistle from the Smyrneans about the martyrdom of Polycarp.

The Apostle John, author of the Gospel of John and Revelation, was a "pillar" of the church in Jerusalem, and later moved to Ephesus for the rest of his ministry. During the reign of the tyrannical Roman Emperor Domitian (A.D. 81-96), he was exiled to the nearby island of Patmos, where he wrote Revelation about A.D. 95. Upon the emperor's death he returned to Ephesus to resume his episcopacy and to write his Gospel about A.D. 96. The last remaining of the Twelve Apostles, John was nearly a hundred when he died about A.D. 96-100. (The Epistle of Ignatius to Polycarp was written within a decade of St. John's death.)

It was this last of the Twelve Apostles who ordained Polycarp bishop of Smyrna, a city north of Ephesus. When St. Ignatius passed through Smyrna on his way to martyrdom, Polycarp was perhaps no more than thirty-five. The Epistles of Ignatius were collected by Polycarp, a fact mentioned by Irenaeus, Origen, Eusebius, Jerome, Athanasius, Theodoret, and other ancients.

After a lifetime of exemplary ministry, Polycarp was martyred at the age of eighty-six. This Epistle of the Smyrneans is the first example of Christian Martyrology.

One Item of Commentary

In 3:2 and 9:2 appears the phrase "Away with the atheists." Roman persecutors called the Christians "atheists" because they refused to worship the Roman gods. In 9:2 Polycarp says "Away with the atheists" in irony, referring to the unbelieving Romans in the stadium.

In a similar vein, early Christians were also called "agnostics" in contrast to the Gnostics, who claimed direct knowledge of God. (An atheist is one who believes God does not exist; an agnostic is one who doesn't know whether or not God exists.) The Christian religion is based on believing in revelation (faith), not on direct knowledge. Thus the startling (to modern ears) of St. Augustine to the effect that because he was an agnostic, he was a Christian!

Prologue

The church of God which sojourns (temporarily lives) at Smyrna to the Church of God which sojourns in Philomelium and to all the brotherhoods of the holy and universal Church sojourning in every place; mercy and peace and love from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ be multiplied.

1:1

We write unto you, brethren, an account of what befell those that suffered martyrdom and especially the blessed Polycarp, who stayed the persecution, having as it were set his seal upon it by his martyrdom. For nearly all the foregoing events came to pass that the Lord might show us once more an example of martyrdom which is conformable to the Gospel.

1:2

For he lingered that he might be delivered up, even as the Lord did, to the end that we too might be

imitators of him, not looking only to that which concerns ourselves, but also to that which concerns our neighbors. For it is the office of true and steadfast love, not only to desire that oneself be saved, but all the brethren also.

2:1

Blessed therefore and noble are all the martyrdoms which have taken place according to the will of God (for it behooves us to be very scrupulous and to assign to God the power over all things).

2:2

For who could fail to admire their nobility and patient endurance and loyalty to the Master? Seeing that when they were so torn by lashes that even as far as the veins and arteries and inward mechanism of their flesh were visible, they endured patiently, so that the very bystanders had pity and wept; while they themselves reached such a pitch of bravery that none of them uttered a cry or a groan, thus showing to us all that at that hour the martyrs of Christ being tortured were absent from the flesh, or rather that the Lord was standing by and conversing with them.

2:3

And giving heed unto the grace of Christ they despised the tortures of this world, purchasing at the cost of one hour a release from eternal punishment. And they found the fire of their inhuman torturers cold: for they set before their eyes the escape from the eternal fire which is never quenched; while with the eyes of their heart they gazed upon the good things which are reserved for those that endure patiently, things which neither ear has heard nor eye has seen, neither have they entered into the heart of man, but were shown by the Lord to them, for they were no longer men but angels already.

2:4

And in like manner also those that were condemned to the wild beasts endured fearful punishments, being made to lie on sharp shells and buffeted with other forms of manifold tortures, that the devil might, if possible, by the persistence of the punishment bring them to a denial; for he tried many wiles against them.

3:1

But thanks be to God; for He truly prevailed against all. For the right noble Germanicus encouraged their timorousness through the constancy which was in him; and he fought with the wild beasts in a signal way. For when the proconsul wished to prevail upon him and bade him have pity on his youth, he used violence and dragged the wild beast towards him, desiring the more speedily to obtain a release from their unrighteous and lawless life.

3:2

So after this all the multitude, marveling at the bravery of the God-beloved and God-fearing people of the Christians, raised a cry, "Away with the atheists; let search be made for Polycarp."

4:1

But one man, Quintus by name, a Phrygian newly arrived from Phrygia, when he saw the wild beasts, turned coward. He it was who had forced himself and some others to come forward of their own free will (and recant their faith). The proconsul by much entreaty persuaded this man to swear

the oath and to offer incense. For this cause therefore, brethren, we praise not those who volunteer to recant, since the Gospel does not so teach us.

5:1

Now the glorious Polycarp at the first, when he heard it, so far from being dismayed, wanted to remain in town; but the greater part persuaded him to withdraw. So he withdrew to a farm not far distant from the city, and there he stayed with a few companions, doing nothing else night and day but praying for all men and for the churches throughout the world, for this was his constant habit.

5:2

And while praying he fell into a trance three days before his arrest, and he saw his pillow burning with fire. He turned and said to those that were with him: "It must needs be that I shall be burned alive."

6:1

Since those that were in search of him persisted, he departed to another farm. Immediately they who were in search of him came up, and not finding him, they seized two slave lads, one of whom confessed under torture;

6:2

for it was impossible for him to lie concealed, seeing that the very persons who betrayed him were people of his own household. And the captain of the police, who chanced to have the very name, being called Herod, was eager to bring him into the stadium, that he might fulfill his appointed lot, being made a partaker with Christ, while they -- his betrayers -- underwent the punishment of Judas himself.

7:1

So taking the lad with them, on the Friday about the supper hour, the police and horsemen went forth with their accustomed weapons, hurrying as against a robber. And coming up in a troop late in the evening, they found the man himself (Polycarp) in bed in an upper chamber in a certain cottage; and though he might have departed from there to another place, he would not, saying, "The will of God be done."

7:2

So when he heard that they were come, he went down and conversed with them, the bystanders marveling at his age and his constancy, and wondering why there should be so much eagerness for the apprehension of an old man like him. At that, he immediately gave orders that a table should be spread for them to eat and drink at that hour, as much as they desired. And he persuaded them to grant him an hour so he might pray unmolested;

7:3

and on their consenting, he stood up and prayed, being so full of the grace of God, that for two hours he could not hold his peace, and those that heard were amazed, and many repented that they had come against such a venerable old man.

8:1

But when at length he brought his prayer to an end, after remembering all who at any time had come in his way, small and great, high and low, and all the universal Church throughout the world,

the hour of departure being come, they seated him on a donkey and brought him into the city, it being a high Sabbath.

8:2

And he was met by Herod the captain of police and his father Nicetes, who also removed him to their carriage and tried to prevail upon him, seating themselves by his side and saying, "Why, what harm is there in saying, Caesar is Lord, and offering incense," with more to this effect, "and saving yourself?" But he at first gave them no answer. When however they persisted, he said, "I am not going to do what you counsel me."

8:3

Then they, failing to persuade him, uttered threatening words and made him dismount with speed, so that he bruised his shin, as he got down from the carriage. And without even turning round, he went on his way promptly and with speed, as if nothing had happened to him, being taken to the stadium; there being such a tumult in the stadium that no man's voice could be so much as heard.

9:1

But as Polycarp entered into the stadium, a voice came to him from heaven; "Be strong, Polycarp, and play the man." And no one saw the speaker, but those of our people who were present heard the voice. And at length, when he was brought up, there was a great tumult, for they heard that Polycarp had been apprehended.

9:2

When then he was brought before him, the proconsul asked whether he were the man. And on his confessing that he was, he tried to persuade him to a denial saying, "Have respect to your age," and other things in accordance therewith, as it is their habit to say, "Swear by the genius of Caesar; repent and say, 'Away with the atheists.'" Then Polycarp with solemn countenance looked upon the whole multitude of lawless heathen that were in the stadium, and waved his hand to them; and groaning and looking up to heaven he said, "Away with the atheists."

9:3

But when the magistrate pressed him hard and said, "Swear the oath, and I will release you; revile the Christ," Polycarp said, "Eighty-six years have I been His servant, and He has done me no wrong. How then can I blaspheme my King who saved me?"

10:1

But on his persisting again and saying, "Swear by the genius of Caesar," he answered, "If you suppose vainly that I will swear by the genius of Caesar, as you say, and feign that you are ignorant who I am, hear you plainly: I am a Christian. But if you would learn the doctrine of Christianity, assign a day and give me a hearing."

10:2

The proconsul said, "Prevail upon the people." But Polycarp said, "As for yourself, I should have held you worthy of discourse; for we have been taught to render, as is proper, to princes and authorities appointed by God such honor as does us no harm; but as for these, I do not hold them worthy, that I should defend myself before them."

11:1

Whereupon the proconsul said: "I have wild beasts here and I will throw you to them, except you repent." But he said, "Call for them, for the repentance from better to worse is a change not permitted to us; but it is a noble thing to change from that which is improper to righteousness."

11:2

Then he said to him again, "If you despise the wild beasts, I will cause you to be consumed by fire, unless you repent." But Polycarp said: "You threaten that fire which burns for a season and after a little while is quenched: for you are ignorant of the fire of the future judgment and eternal punishment, which is reserved for the ungodly. But why do you delay? Come, do what you will."

12:1

Saying these things and more besides, he was inspired with courage and joy, and his countenance was filled with grace, so that not only did it not drop in dismay at the things which were said to him, but on the contrary the proconsul was astounded and sent his own herald to proclaim three times in the midst of the stadium, "Polycarp has confessed himself to be a Christian."

12:2

When this was proclaimed by the herald, the whole multitude both of Gentiles and of Jews who dwelt in Smyrna cried out with ungovernable wrath and with a loud shout, "This is the teacher of Asia, the father of the Christians, the puller down of our gods, who teaches multitudes not to sacrifice nor worship." Saying these things, they shouted aloud and asked the Asiarch Philip to let a lion loose upon Polycarp. But he said that it was not lawful for him, since he had brought the sports to a close.

12:3

Then they thought fit to shout out with one accord that Polycarp should be burned alive. For it must needs be that the matter of the vision should be fulfilled, which was shown him concerning his pillow, when he saw it on fire while praying, and turning round he said prophetically to the faithful who were with him, "I must needs be burned alive."

13:1

These things then happened with so great speed, quicker than words could tell, the crowds immediately collected timber and sticks from the workshops and baths, and the Jews more especially assisted in this with zeal, as is their custom.

13:2

But when the pile was made ready, divesting himself of all his upper garments and loosing his belt, he endeavored also to take off his shoes, though not in the habit of doing this before, because all the faithful at all times vied eagerly who should soonest touch his flesh. For he had been treated with all honor for his holy life even before his gray hairs came.

13:3

Immediately then the instruments that were prepared for the pile were placed about him. As they were going likewise to nail him to the stake, he said: "Leave me as I am; for He that has granted me to endure the fire will grant me also to remain at the pyre unmoved, even without the security which you seek from the nails."

14:1

So they did not nail him, but tied him. Then he, placing his hands behind him and being bound to the stake, like a noble ram out of a great flock for an offering, a burnt sacrifice made ready and acceptable to God, looking up to heaven said: "O Lord God Almighty, the Father of Your beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ, through whom we have received the knowledge of You, the God of angels and powers and of all creation and of the whole race of the righteous, who live in Your presence;

14:2

I bless You because You have granted me this day and hour, that I might receive a portion amongst the number of martyrs in the cup of Your Christ unto resurrection of eternal life, both of soul and of body, in the incorruptibility of the Holy Spirit. May I be received among these in Your presence this day, as a rich and acceptable sacrifice, as You did prepare and reveal it beforehand, and have accomplished it, You that art the faithful and true God.

14:3

For this cause, yea and for all things, I praise You, I bless You, I glorify You, through the eternal and heavenly High-priest, Jesus Christ, Your beloved Son, through Whom, with Him and the Holy Spirit, be glory both now and ever and for the ages to come. Amen."

15:1

When he had offered up the Amen and finished his prayer, the firemen lighted the fire. And, a mighty flame flashing forth, we to whom it was given to see, saw a marvel, yea and we were preserved that we might relate to the rest what happened.

15:2

The fire, making the appearance of a vault, like the sail of a vessel filled by the wind, made a wall round about the body of the martyr; and it was there in the midst, not like flesh burning, but like a loaf in the oven or like gold and silver refined in a furnace. For we perceived such a fragrant smell, as if it were the wafted odor of frankincense or some other precious spice.

16:1

So at length the lawless men, seeing that his body could not be consumed by the fire, ordered an executioner to go up to him and stab him with a dagger. And when he had done this, there came forth [a dove and] a quantity of blood, so that it extinguished the fire; and all the multitude marveled that there should be so great a difference between the unbelievers and the elect.

16:2

In the number of these latter was this man, the glorious martyr Polycarp, who was found an apostolic and prophetic teacher in our own time, a bishop of the holy Church which is in Smyrna. For every word which he uttered from his mouth was accomplished and will be accomplished.

17:1

But the jealous and envious Evil One, the adversary of the family of the righteous, having seen the greatness of his martyrdom and his blameless life from the beginning, and how he was crowned with the crown of immortality and had won a reward which none could gainsay, managed that not even his poor body should be taken away by us, although many desired to do this and to touch his holy flesh.

17:2

So he put forward Nicetes, the father of Herod and brother of Alce, to plead with the magistrate not to give up his body, "lest," so it was said, "they should abandon the crucified one and begin to worship this man" -- this being done at the instigation and urgent entreaty of the Jews, who also watched when we were about to take it from the fire, not knowing that it will be impossible for us either to forsake at any time the Christ who suffered for the salvation of the whole world of those that are saved -- suffered though faultless for sinners -- nor to worship any other.

17:3

For Him, being the Son of God, we adore, but the martyrs as disciples and imitators of the Lord we cherish as they deserve for their matchless affection towards their own King and Teacher. May it be our lot also to be found partakers and fellow-disciples with them.

18:1

The centurion therefore, seeing the opposition raised on the part of the Jews, set him in the midst and burnt him after their custom.

18:2

And so we afterwards took up his bones which are more valuable than precious stones and finer than refined gold, and laid them in a suitable place;

18:3

where the Lord will permit us to gather ourselves together, as we are able, in gladness and joy, and to celebrate the anniversary of his martyrdom for the commemoration of those that have already fought in the contest, and for the training and preparation of those that shall do so hereafter.

19:1

So it befell the blessed Polycarp, who having with those from Philadelphia suffered martyrdom in Smyrna -- twelve in all -- is especially remembered more than the others by all men, so that he is talked of even by the heathen in every place: for he showed himself not only a notable teacher, but also a distinguished martyr, whose martyrdom all desire to imitate, seeing that it was after the pattern of the Gospel of Christ.

19:2

Having by his endurance overcome the unrighteous ruler in the conflict and so received the crown of immortality, he rejoices in company with the Apostles and all righteous men, and glorifies the Almighty God and Father, and blesses our Lord Jesus Christ, the savior of our souls and helmsman of our bodies and shepherd of the universal Church which is throughout the world.

20:1

You indeed required that the things which happened should be shown unto you at greater length; but we for the present have certified you, as it were, in a summary through our brother Marcianus. When then you have informed yourselves of these things, send the letter likewise to the brethren which are farther off, that they also may glorify the Lord, who makes election from His own servants.

20:2

Now unto Him that is able to bring us all by His grace and bounty unto His eternal kingdom, through

His only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, be glory, honor, power, and greatness for ever. Salute all the saints. They that are with us salute you, and Euarestus, who wrote the letter, with his whole house.

21:1

Now the blessed Polycarp was martyred on the second day of the first part of the month Xanthicus, on the seventh before the calends of March, on a great Sabbath, at the eighth hour. He was apprehended by Herod, when Philip of Tralles was high priest, in the proconsulship of Statius Quadratus, but in the reign of the Eternal King Jesus Christ. To Whom be the glory, honor, greatness, and eternal throne, from generation to generation. Amen.

22:1

We bid you God speed, brethren, while you walk by the word of Jesus Christ which is according to the Gospel; with Whom be glory to God for the salvation of His holy elect; even as the blessed Polycarp suffered martyrdom, in whose footsteps may it be our lot to be found in the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

22:2

This account Gaius copied from the papers of Irenaeus, a disciple of Polycarp. The same also lived with Irenaeus.

22:3

And I Socrates wrote it down in Corinth from the copy of Gaius. Grace be with all men.

22:4

And I Pionius again wrote it down from the aforementioned copy, having searched it out (for the blessed Polycarp showed me in a revelation, as I will declare in the sequel), gathering it together when it was now well nigh worn out by age, that the Lord Jesus Christ may gather me also with His elect into His heavenly kingdom; to Whom be the glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

(The three preceeding verses appear in the Moscow Manuscript as follows:)

22:2

This account Gaius copied from the papers of Irenaeus. The same lived with Irenaeus who had been a disciple of the holy Polycarp. For this Irenaeus, being in Rome at the time of the martyrdom of the bishop Polycarp, instructed many; and many most excellent and orthodox treatises by him are in circulation. In these he makes mention of Polycarp, saying that he was taught by him. And he ably refuted every heresy, and handed down the catholic rule of the Church just as he had received it from the saint. He mentions this fact also, that when Marcion, after whom the Marcionites are called, met the holy Polycarp on one occasion, and said "Recognize us, Polycarp," he said in reply to Marcion, "Yes indeed, I recognize the firstborn of Satan." The following statement also is made in the writings of Irenaeus, that on the very day and hour when Polycarp was martyred in Smyrna Irenaeus being in the city of the Romans heard a voice as of a trumpet saying, "Polycarp is martyred."

22:3

From these papers of Irenaeus then, as has been stated already, Gaius made a copy, and from the copy of Gaius, Isocrates made another in Corinth.

22:4

And I Pionius again wrote it down from the copy of Isocrates, having searched for it in obedience to a revelation of the holy Polycarp, gathering it together, when it was well nigh worn out by age, that the Lord Jesus Christ may gather me also with His elect into His heavenly kingdom; to Whom be the glory with the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

The Apocalypse of Elijah

Wilhelm Schneemelcher makes these comments (*New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 2, p. 693):

Since 1885 the text of an Apoc. El. has gradually become known through some Coptic manuscripts. Since the publication of the Chester Beatty Papyrus 2018 this work is now accessible almost complete (cf. Schrage, op. cit. 198ff). The Coptic (Sahidic and Achmimic) versions go back to a Greek original text, of which we possess a papyrus fragment with six lines; but with this nothing much can be done. The papyri were written in the 4th or 5th century.

The Coptic Apoc. El. presents admonitions, predictions of the terrors of the endtime, a description of the Antichrist and his annihilation, etc.; it ends with the creation of a new heaven and a new earth and the thousand-year reign of Christ. Many elements of the older Apocalyptic are lacking, but on the other hand ancient conceptual material is abundantly used. The work is a typical example of later apocalypses: a Christian description of the end-time (to some extent with contemporary references) has been created on a Jewish foundation.

The dating of the Coptic Apoc. El. is difficult. There is much to be said for the view that the Jewish basic document originated in the second half of the 3rd century, and was taken over and reworked by Christians at the beginning of the 4th century (cf. Schrage, op. cit. 220ff.).

Concerning the external attestation for this text, Schneemelcher writes, "An Apocalypse of Elijah (Apoc. El.) is rejected in the Catalogue of the Sixty Books and probably also in the Stichometry of Nicephorus (cf. vol. 1, pp. 41f.). An apocryphon of Elijah is frequently mentioned in early Church literature, mostly in connection with the saying in 1 Cor. 2:9, of which Origen already affirms that it comes from an apocryphon of Elijah (cf. Schrage, op. cit. 195). Now on the one hand this saying is evidently a logion which frequently crops up (cf. Gos. Thom. log. 17; on this see H.-Ch. Puech in NTApoc I, 217). On the other hand this logion does not occur in the extant Elijah apocrypha." (*New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 2, p. 692)

This text has "nothing to do with" an apocryphal *Letter of Titus* which quotes words of Elias the prophet from an unclear source "in which the punishments of Hell are described" (*New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 2, p. 692). There is also mention of "an Elijah apocryphon 'On the Antichrist'" in "a Greek fragment," but this does not have "any connection with the extant Elijah texts" (*New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 2, p. 692). The Coptic Apocalypse of Elijah must be also distinguished from the Hebrew Apocalypse of Elijah, "a Jewish writing from the 3rd century A.D.; there are no connections with the Coptic Apoc. El." (*New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 2, p. 692)

The Testament of Isaac

James Charlesworth writes (*The Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research*, pp. 123-124):

While this writing is extant in Ethiopic and Arabic (see M. R. James, *The Testament of Abraham* [TCS 2] Cambridge: CUP, 1892; pp. 6f., 157), the major version is the Coptic, extant in Bohairic and Sahidic. The latter dialect is the most important and was edited recently by K. H. Kuhn ("The Sahidic Version of the Testament of Isaac," *JTS* n.s. 8 [1957] 226-39). English translations of the Arabic and both dialects of the Coptic have been published: of the Arabic by W. E. Barnes (extracts only in an appendix to James' *The Testament of Abraham*, pp. 140-51); of the Bohairic by S. Gaseles (in an appendix to G. H. Box's *The Testament of Abraham* [TED] London: S.P.C.K., 1927; pp. 57-75); and of the Sahidic by K. H. Kuhn (no. 904).

There is agreement that the Testament of Isaac, which is not mentioned in ancient lists of Old Testament apocryphal works, is dependent upon the Testament of Abraham, but the exact date is difficult to discern. P. Nagel (no. 907) thinks it was written around A.D. 400 and M. Delcor (no. 507, p. 83) affirms its earliness, suggesting because of affinities with the Dead Sea Scrolls that it may come from approximately the same milieu and date as the Testament of Abraham. Kuhn cautions, however, that there is really no convincing evidence for a precise dating of the Testament of Isaac (no. 904). Nagel (no. 907) argues that the Sahidic version, the earliest, is translated from Greek. Kuhn (no. 904) responds that Nagel's published argument is questionable.

The most intriguing question concerns the Christian elements in the text. Some of these, I am convinced, are interpolated because they are not grammatically linked to the contiguous sentences and appear to disrupt the flow of thought (viz. 14v, first sentence; from 16r, last sentence, to 17r, first sentence; 24v, second sentence; 25v, concluding statement). Other passages (e.g. 15r, third sentence) are similar to traditions in the New Testament, but it is difficult to trace the direction of influence, if any.

The Sahidic text covers 27 pages of about 80 words per page. The setting for the narrative is the events immediately before Isaac's death and the separation of his soul from the body. Isaac converses with angels, Jacob, a crowd, and a priest within the crowd, to whom he presents a series of ethical exhortations. He ascends to heaven under the guidance of 'the angel of Abraham.' He sees torments and tormentors, especially Abdemerouchos, who is in charge of punishments. Isaac is taken higher where he sees and worships Abraham, who receives from the Lord two conditions for becoming "a son in my kingdom." These requirements are provision for Isaac with reference for his testament, and compassionate deeds. Exceptions are allowed, by the mercy and love of the Lord, for those who cannot fulfill these requirements; the most important provision is the offering of a sacrifice in the name of Isaac. The Lord commands Michael to assemble the angels and saints before Isaac, who then sees "the face of our Lord" (*epho mpencoeis*). Jacob embraces his father and receives a blessing from the Lord, who then takes Isaac's soul from the body with his chariot and ascends into the heavens.

W. F. Stinespring writes: "There are pronounced Christian elements in the Testament of Isaac as it now stands, and in its present form it has the function of emphasizing the state of the deaths of Abraham and Isaac as commemorated in the Coptic Church. Thus it would be possible to see the work as springing from the Coptic Christian Church. The Christianizing is not thoroughgoing,

however, and it seems more likely that the original composition was a product of Egyptian Judaism." (*The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 1, p. 904)

The Testament of Jacob

Reference to an apocryphal book of Jacob is perhaps to be found in the Apostolical Constitutions 6:16 which speaks of "apocryphal books of... the three patriarchs." A testament of Jacob is to be found together with the testaments of Abraham and Isaac in Arabic, Ethiopic, and Coptic. This work is a patchwork of biblical verses, based substantially on Genesis 47:29–49:1. It was doubtless composed as a supplement to the extant testaments of Abraham and Isaac, both of which, and especially the former, contain important original material. This apocryphal work appears in a Paris Greek manuscript of the 12th century as a separate work under the title "Testament of Jacob." In Jerusalem, there is an Armenian manuscript 939, in which Gen. 47:27–50:26 precedes the Testaments of the 12 patriarchs, and under the same title as the preceding. The Testament was a common literary form in the period of the Second Temple, and doubtless the fact that Jacob is the one patriarch to whom the Bible assigns a last testament played a role in this development.

The Vision of Kenaz

After the death of Joshua the Israelites inquired to God whether they were to go up against the Canaanites in war. They were given the answer: "If ye are pure of heart, go forth unto the combat; but if your hearts are sullied with sin, then refrain." They inquired furthermore how to test the heart of the people. God ordered them to cast lots and set apart those designated by lot, for they would be the sinful among them. Again, when the people besought God to give it a guide and leader, an angel answered: "Cast lots in the tribe of Caleb." The lot designated Kenaz, and he was made prince over Israel.

His first act was to determine by lot who were the sinners in Israel, and what their inward thought. He declared before the people: "If I and my house be set apart by lot, deal with us as we deserve, burn us with fire." The people assenting, lots were cast, and 345 of the tribe of Judah were singled out, 560 of Reuben, 775 of Simon, 150 of Levi, 665 of Issachar, 545 of Zebulun, 380 of Gad, and 665 of Asher, 480 of Manasseh, 448 of Ephraim, and 267 of Benjamin. So 6110 persons were confined in prison, until God should let it be known what was to be done with them. The united prayers of Kenaz, Eleazar the high priest, and the elders of the congregation, were answered thus: "Ask these men now to confess their iniquity, and they shall be burnt with fire." Kenaz thereupon exhorted them: "Ye know that Achan, the son of Zabdi, committed the trespass of taking the anathema, but the lot fell upon him, and he confessed his sin. Do ye likewise confess your sins, that ye may come to life with those whom God will revive on the day of the resurrection."

One of the sinful, a man by the name of Elah, said in reply thereto: "If thou desirest to bring forth the truth, address thyself to each of the tribes separately." Kenaz began with his own, the tribe of Judah. The wicked of Judah confessed to the sin of worshipping the golden calf, like unto their forefathers in the desert. The Reubenites had burnt sacrifices to idols. The Levites said: "We desired to prove whether the Tabernacle is holy." Those of the tribe of Issachar replied: "We consulted idols to know

what will become of us." The sinners of Zebulon: "We desired to eat the flesh of our sons and daughters, to know whether the Lord loves them." The Danites admitted, they had taught their children out of the books of the Amorites, which they had hidden then under Mount Abarim, where Kenaz actually found them. The Naphtalites confessed to the same transgression, only they had concealed the books in the tent of Elah, and there they were found by Kenaz. The Gadites acknowledged having led an immoral life, and the sinners of Asher, that they had found, and had hidden under Mount Shechem, the seven golden idols called by the Amorites the holy nymphs the same seven idols which had been made in a miraculous way after the deluge by the seven sinners, Canaan, Put, Shelah, Nimrod, Elath, Diul, and Shuah. They were of precious stones from Havilah, which radiated light, making night bright as day. Besides, they possessed a rare virtue: if a blind Amorite kissed one of the idols, and at the same time touched its eyes, his sight was restored. After the sinners of Asher, those of Manasseh made their confession they had desecrated the Sabbath. The Ephraimites owned to having sacrificed their children to Moloch. Finally, the Benjamites said: "We desired to prove whether the law emanated from God or from Moses."

At the command of God these sinners and all their possessions were burnt with fire at the brook of Pishon. Only the Amorite books and the idols of precious stones remained unscathed. Neither fire nor water could do them harm. Kenaz decided to consecrate the idols to God, but a revelation came to him, saying: "If God were to accept what has been declared anathema, why should not man?" He was assured that God would destroy the things over which human hands had no power. Kenaz, acting under Divine instruction, bore them to the summit of a mountain, where an altar was erected. The books and the idols were placed upon it, and the people offered many sacrifices and celebrated the whole day as a festival. During the night following, Kenaz saw dew rise from the ice in Paradise and descend upon the books. The letters of their writing were obliterated by it, and then an angel came and annihilated what was left. During the same night an angel carried off the seven gems, and threw them to the bottom of the sea. Meanwhile a second angel brought twelve other gems, engraving the names of the twelve sons of Jacob upon them, one name upon each. No two of these gems were alike: the first, to bear the name of Reuben, was like sardius; the second, for Simon, like topaz; the third, Levi, like emerald; the fourth, Judah, like carbuncle; the fifth, Issachar, like sapphire; the sixth, Zebulon, like jasper; the seventh, Dan, like ligure; the eighth, Naphtali, like amethyst; the ninth, Gad, like agate; the tenth, Asher, like chrysolite; the eleventh, Joseph, like beryl; and the twelfth, Benjamin, like onyx.

Now God commanded Kenaz to deposit twelve stones in the holy Ark, and there they were to remain until such time as Solomon should build the Temple, and attach them to the Cherubim. Furthermore, this Divine communication was made to Kenaz: "And it shall come to pass, when the sin of the children of men shall have been completed by defiling My Temple, the Temple they themselves shall build, that I will take these stones, together with the tables of the law, and put them in the place whence they were removed of old, and there they shall remain until the end of all time, when I will visit the inhabitants of the earth. Then I will take them up, and they shall be an everlasting light to those who love me and keep my commandments."

When Kenaz bore the stones to the sanctuary, they illumined the earth like unto the sun at midday.

CAMPAIGNS OF KENAZ

After these preparations Kenaz took the field against the enemy, with three hundred thousand men. The first day he slew eight thousand of the foe, and the second day five thousand. But not all the people were devoted to Kenaz. Some murmured against him, and calumniating him, said: "Kenaz stays at home, while we expose ourselves on the field." The servants of Kenaz reported these words to him. He ordered the thirty-seven men who had railed against him to be incarcerated, and he swore to kill them, if God would but grant him assistance for the sake of His people.

Thereupon he assembled three hundred men of his attendants, supplied them with horses, and bade them be prepared to make a sudden attack during the night, but to tell none of the plans he harbored in his mind. The scouts sent ahead to reconnoitre reported that the Amorites were too powerful for him to risk an engagement. Kenaz, however, refused to be turned away from his intention. At midnight he and his three hundred trusty attendants advanced upon the Amorite camp. Close upon it, he commanded his men to halt, but to resume their march and follow him when they should hear the notes of the trumpet. If the trumpet was not sounded, they were to return home.

Alone Kenaz ventured into the very camp of the enemy. Praying to God fervently, he asked that a sign be given him: "Let this be the sign of the salvation Thou wilt accomplish for me this day: I shall draw my sword from its sheath, and brandish it so that it glitters in the camp of the Amorites. If the enemy recognize it as the sword of Kenaz, then I shall know Thou wilt deliver them into my hand; if not, I shall understand Thou hast not granted my prayer, but dost purpose to deliver me into the hand of the enemy for my sins."

He heard the Amorites say: "Let us proceed to give battle to the Israelites, for our sacred gods, the nymphs, are in their hands, and will cause their defeat." When he heard these words, the spirit of God came over Kenaz. He arose and swung his sword above his head. Scarce had the Amorites seen it gleam in the air when they exclaimed: "Verily, this is the sword of Kenaz, who has come to inflict wounds and pain. But we know that our gods, who are held by the Israelites, will deliver them into our hands. Up, then, to battle!" Knowing that God had heard his petition, Kenaz threw himself upon the Amorites, and mowed down forty-five thousand of them, and as many perished at the hands of their own brethren, for God had sent the angel Gabriel to his aid, and he had struck the Amorites blind, so that they fell upon one another. On account of the vigorous blows dealt by Kenaz on all sides, his sword stuck to his hand. A fleeing Amorite, whom he stopped, to ask him how to loose it, advised him to slay a Hebrew, and let his warm blood flow over his hand. Kenaz accepted his advice, but only in part: instead of a Hebrew, he slew the Amorite himself, and his blood freed his hand from the sword.

When Kenaz came back to his men, he found them sunk in profound sleep, which had overtaken them that they might not see the wonders done for their leader. They were not a little astonished, on awakening, to behold the whole plain strewn with the dead bodies of the Amorites. Then Kenaz said to them: "Are the ways of God like unto the ways of man? Through me the Lord hath sent deliverance to this people. Arise now and go back to your tents." The people recognized that a great miracle had happened, and they said: "Now we know that God hath wrought salvation for His people; He hath no need of numbers, but only of holiness."

On his return from the campaign, Kenaz was received with great rejoicing. The whole people now gave thanks to God for having put him over them as their leader. They desired to know how he had

won the great victory. Kenaz only answered: "Ask those who were with me about my deeds." His men were thus forced to confess that they knew nothing, only, on awakening, they had seen the plain full of dead bodies, without being able to account for their being there. Then Kenaz turned to the thirty-seven men imprisoned, before he left for the war, for having cast aspersions upon him. "Well," he said, "what charge have you to make against me?" Seeing that death was inevitable, they confessed they were of the sort of sinners whom Kenaz and the people had executed, and God had now surrendered them to him on account of their misdeeds. They, too, were burnt with fire.

Kenaz reigned for a period of fifty-seven years. When he felt his end draw nigh, he summoned the two prophets, Phinehas and Jabez, together with the priest Phinehas, the son of Eleazar. To these he spake: "I know the heart of this people, it will turn from following after the Lord. Therefore do I testify against it." Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, replied: "As Moses and Joshua testified, so do I testify against it; for Moses and Joshua prophesied concerning the vineyard, the beautiful planting of the Lord, which knew not who had planted it, and did not recognize Him who cultivated it, so that the vineyard was destroyed, and brought forth no fruit. These are the words my father commanded me to say unto this people."

Kenaz broke out into loud wailing, and with him the elders and the people, and they wept until eventide, saying: "Is it for the iniquity of the sheep that the shepherd must perish? May the Lord have compassion upon His inheritance that it may not work in vain."

The spirit of God descended upon Kenaz, and he beheld a vision. He prophesied that this world would continue to exist only seven thousand years, to be followed then by the Kingdom of Heaven. These words spoken, the prophetic spirit departed from him, and he straightway forgot what he had uttered during his vision. Before he passed away, he spoke once more, saying: "If such be the rest which the righteous obtain after their death, it were better for them to die than live in this corrupt world and see its iniquities."

As Kenaz left no male heirs, Zebul was appointed his successor. Mindful of the great service Kenaz had performed for the nation, Zebul acted a father's part toward the three unmarried daughters of his predecessor. At his instance, the people assigned a rich marriage portion to each of them; they were given great domains as their property. The oldest of the three, Ethema by name, he married to Elizaphan; the second, Pheila, to Odihel; and the youngest, Zilpah, to Doel.

Zebul, the judge, instituted a treasury at Shiloh. He bade the people bring contributions, whether of gold or of silver. They were only to take heed not to carry anything thither that had originally belonged to an idol. His efforts were crowned with success. The free-will offerings to the temple treasure amounted to twenty talents of gold and two hundred and fifty talents of silver.

Zebul's reign lasted twenty-five years. Before his death he admonished the people solemnly to be God-fearing and observant of the law.

OTHNIEL

Othniel was a judge of a very different type. His contemporaries said, that before the sun of Joshua went down, the sun of Othniel, his successor in the leadership of the people, appeared on the horizon. The new leader's real name was Judah; Othniel was one of his epithets, as Jabez was another.

Among the judges, Othniel represents the class of scholars. His acumen was so great that he was able, by dint of dialect reasoning, to restore the seventeen hundred traditions which Moses had taught the people, and which had been forgotten in the time of mourning for Moses. Nor was his zeal for the promotion of the study of the Torah inferior to his learning. The descendants of Jethro left Jericho, the district assigned to them, and journeyed to Arad, only that they might sit at the feet of Othniel. His wife, the daughter of his half-brother Caleb, was not so well pleased with him. She complained to her father that her husband's house was bare of all earthly goods, and his only possession was knowledge of the Torah.

The first event to be noted in Othniel's forty years' reign is his victory over Adoni-bezek. This chief did not occupy a prominent position among the Canaanitish rulers. He was not even accounted a king, nevertheless he had conquered seventy foreign kings. The next event was the capture of Luz by the Israelites. The only way to gain entrance into Luz was by a cave, and the road to the cave lay through a hollow almond tree. If the secret approach to the city had not been betrayed by one of its residents, it would have been impossible for the Israelites to reach it. God rewarded the informer who put the Israelites in the way of capturing Luz. The city he founded was left unmolested both by Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar, and not even the Angel of Death has power over its inhabitants. They never die, unless, weary of life, they leave the city.

The same good fortune did not mark Othniel's reign throughout. For eight years Israel suffered oppression at the hands of Cushan, the evil-doer who in former days had threatened to destroy the patriarch Jacob, as he was now endeavoring to destroy the descendants of Jacob, for Cushan is only another name for Laban.

Othniel, however, was held so little answerable for the causes that had brought on the punishment of the people, that God granted him eternal life; he is one of the few who reached Paradise alive.

BOAZ AND RUTH

The story of Ruth came to pass a hundred years after Othniel's reign. Conditions in Palestine were of such a nature that if a judge said to a man, "Remove the mote from thine eye," his reply was, "Do thou remove the beam from thine own." To chastise the Israelites God sent down upon them one of the ten seasons of famine which He had ordained, as disciplinary measures for mankind, from the creation of the world until the advent of Messiah. Elimelech and his sons, who belonged to the aristocracy of the land, attempted neither to improve the sinful generation whose transgressions had called forth the famine, nor alleviated the distress that prevailed about them. They left Palestine, and thus withdrew themselves from the needy who had counted upon their help. They turned their faces to Moab. There, on account of their wealth and high descent, they were made officers in the army. Mahlon and Chilion, the sons of Elimelech, rose to still higher distinction, they married the daughters of the Moabite king Eglon. But this did not happen until after the death of Elimelech, who was opposed to intermarriage with the heathen. Neither the wealth nor the family connections of the two men helped them before God. First they sank into poverty, and, as they continued in their sinful ways, God took their life.

Naomi, their mother, resolved to return to her home. Her two daughters-in-law were very dear to her on account of the love they had borne her sons, a love strong even in death, for they refused to marry again. Yet she would not take them with her to Palestine, because she foresaw

contemptuous treatment in store for them as Moabitish women. Orpah was easily persuaded to remain behind. She accompanied her mother-in-law a distance of four miles, and then she took leave of her, shedding only four tears as she bade her farewell. Subsequent events showed that she had not been worthy of entering into the Jewish communion, for scarcely had she separated from Naomi when she abandoned herself to an immoral life. But with God nothing goes unrewarded. For the four miles which Orpah travelled with Naomi, she was recompensed by bringing forth four giants, Goliath and his three brothers.

Ruth's bearing and history were far different. She was determined to become a Jewess, and her decision could not be shaken by what Naomi, in compliance with the Jewish injunction, told her of the difficulties of the Jewish law. Naomi warned her that the Israelites had been enjoined to keep Sabbaths and feast days, and that the daughters of Israel were not in the habit of frequenting the theatres and circuses of the heathen. Ruth only affirmed her readiness to follow Jewish customs. And when Naomi said: "We have one Torah, one law, one command; the Eternal our God is one, there is none beside Him," Ruth answered: "Thy people shall be my people, thy God my God." So the two women journeyed together to Bethlehem. They arrived there on the very day on which the wife of Boaz was buried, and the concourse assembled for the funeral saw Naomi as she returned to her home.

Ruth supported herself and her mother-in-law sparsely with the ears of grain which she gathered in the fields. Association with so pious a woman as Naomi had already exercised great influence upon her life and ways. Boaz was astonished to notice that if the reapers let more than two ears fall, in spite of her need she did not pick them up, for the gleaning assigned to the poor by law does not refer to quantities of more than two ears inadvertently dropped at one time. Boaz also admired her grace, her decorous conduct, her modest demeanor. When he learned who she was, he commended her for her attachment to Judaism. To his praise she returned: "Thy ancestors found no delight even in Timna, the daughter of a royal house. As for me, I am a member of a low people, abominated by thy God, and excluded from the assembly of Israel." For the moment Boaz failed to recollect the Halakah bearing on the Moabites and Ammonites. A voice from heaven reminded him that only their males were affected by the command of exclusion. This he told to Ruth, and he also told her of a vision he had had concerning her descendants. For the sake of the good she had done to her mother-in-law, kings and prophets would spring from her womb.

Boaz showed kindness not only to Ruth and Naomi, but also to their dead. He took upon himself the decent burial of the remains of Elimelech and his two sons. All this begot in Naomi the thought that Boaz harbored the intention of marrying Ruth. She sought to coax the secret, if such there was, from Ruth. When she found that nothing could be elicited from her daughter-in-law, she made Ruth her partner in a plan to force Boaz into a decisive step. Ruth adhered to Naomi's directions in every particular, except that she did not wash and anoint herself and put on fine raiment, until after she had reached her destination. She feared to attract the attention of the lustful, if she walked along the road decked out in unusual finery.

The moral conditions in those days were very reprehensible. Though Boaz was high-born and a man of substance, yet he slept on the threshing-floor, so that his presence might act as a check upon profligacy. In the midst of his sleep, Boaz was startled to find some one next to him. At first he thought it was a demon. Ruth calmed his disquietude with these words: "Thou art the head of the

court, thy ancestors were princes, thou art thyself an honorable man, and a kinsman of my dead husband. As for me, who am in the flower of my years, since I left the home of my parents where homage is rendered unto idols, I have been constantly menaced by the dissolute young men around. So I have come hither that thou, who art the redeemer, mayest spread out thy skirt over me." Boaz gave her the assurance that if his older brother Tob failed her, he would assume the duties of a redeemer. The next day he came before the tribunal of the Sanhedrin to have the matter adjusted. Tob soon made his appearance, for an angel led him to the place where he was wanted, that Boaz and Ruth might not have long to wait. Tob, who was not learned in the Torah, did not know that the prohibition against the Moabites had reference only to males. Therefore, he declined to marry Ruth. So she was taken to wife by the octogenarian Boaz. Ruth herself was forty years old at the time of her second marriage, and it was against all expectations that her union with Boaz should be blessed with offspring, a son Obed the pious. Ruth lived to see the glory of Solomon, but Boaz died on the day after the wedding.

DEBORAH

Not long after Ruth, another ideal woman arose in Israel, the prophetess Deborah.

When Ehud died, there was none to take his place as judge, and the people fell off from God and His law. God, therefore, sent an angel to them with the following message: "Out of all the nations on earth, I chose a people for Myself, and I thought, so long as the world stands, My glory will rest upon them. I sent Moses unto them, My servant, to teach them goodness and righteousness. But they strayed from My ways. And now I will arouse their enemies against them, to rule over them, and they will cry out: 'Because we forsook the ways of our fathers, hath this come over us.' Then I will send a woman unto them, and she will shine for them as a light for forty years."

The enemy whom God raised up against Israel was Jabin, the king of Hazor, who oppressed him sorely. But worse than the king himself was his general Sisera, one of the greatest heroes known to history. When he was thirty years old, he had conquered the whole world. At the sound of his voice the strongest of walls fell in a heap, and the wild animals in the woods were chained to the spot by fear. The proportions of his body were vast beyond description. If he took a bath in the river, and dived beneath the surface, enough fish were caught in his beard to feed a multitude, and it required no less than nine hundred horses to draw the chariot in which he rode.

To rid Israel of this tyrant, God appointed Deborah and her husband Barak. Barak was an ignoramus, like most of his contemporaries. It was a time singularly deficient to scholars. In order to do something meritorious in connection with the Divine service, he carried candles, at his wife's instance, to the sanctuary, wherefrom he was called Lipidoth, "Flames." Deborah was in the habit of making the wicks on the candles very thick, so that they might burn a long time. Therefore God distinguished her. He said: "Thou takest pains to shed light in My house, and I will let thy light, thy flame, shine abroad in the whole land." Thus it happened that Deborah became a prophetess and a judge. She dispensed judgement in the open air, for it was not becoming that men should visit a woman in her house.

Prophetess though she was, she was yet subject to the frailties of her sex. Her self-consciousness was inordinate. She sent for Barak to come to her instead of going to him, and in her song she spoke

more of herself than was seemly. The result was that the prophetic spirit departed from her for a time while she was composing her song.

The salvation of Israel was effected only after the people, assembled on the Mount of Judah, had confessed their sins publicly before God and besought His help. A seven days' fast was proclaimed for men and women, for young and old. Then God resolved to help the Israelites, not for their sakes, but for the sake of keeping the oath he had sworn to their forefathers, never to abandon their seed. Therefore He sent Deborah unto them.

The task allotted to Deborah and Barak, to lead the attack upon Sisera, was by no means slight. It is comparable with nothing less than Joshua's undertaking to conquer Canaan. Joshua had triumphed over only thirty-one of the sixty-two kings of Palestine, leaving at large as many as he had subdued. Under the leadership of Sisera these thirty-one unconquered kings opposed Israel. No less than forty thousand armies, each counting a hundred thousand warriors, were arrayed against Deborah and Barak. God aided Israel with water and fire. The river Kishon and all the fiery hosts of heaven except the star Meros fought against Sisera. The Kishon had long before been pledged to play its part in Sisera's overthrow. When the Egyptians were drowned in the Red Sea, God commanded the Angel of the Sea to cast their corpses on the land, that the Israelites might convince themselves of the destruction of their foes, and those of little faith might not say afterward that the Egyptians like the Israelites had reached dry land. The Angel of the Sea complained of the impropriety of withdrawing a gift. God mollified him with the promise of future compensation. The Kishon was offered as security that he would receive half as many bodies again as he was now giving up. When Sisera's troops sought relief from the scorching fire of the heavenly bodies in the coolness of the waters of the Kishon, God commanded the river to redeem its pledge. And so the heathen were swept down into the Sea by the waves of the river Kishon, whereat the fishes in the Sea exclaimed: "And the truth of the Lord endureth forever."

Sisera's lot was no better than the lot of the men. He fled from the battle on horseback after witnessing the annihilation of his vast army. When Jael saw him approach, she went to meet him arrayed in rich garments and jewels. She was unusually beautiful, and her voice was the most seductive ever a woman possessed. These are the words she addressed to him: "Enter and refresh thyself with food, and sleep until evening, and then I will send my attendants with thee to accompany thee, for I know thou wilt not forget me, and thy recompense will not fail." When Sisera, on stepping into her tent, saw the bed strewn with roses which Jael had prepared for him, he resolved to take her home to his mother as his wife, as soon as his safety should be assured.

He asked her for milk to drink, saying: "My soul burns with the flame which I saw in the stars contending for Israel." Jael went forth to milk her goat, meantime supplicating God to grant her His help: "I pray to Thee, O Lord, to strengthen Thy maid-servant against the enemy. By this token shall I know that Thou wilt aid me if, when I enter the house, Sisera will awaken and ask for water to drink." Scarcely had Jael crossed the threshold when Sisera awakened and begged for water to quench his burning thirst. Jael gave him wine mixed with water, which caused him to drop into a sound sleep again. The woman then took a wooden spike in her left hand, approached the sleeping warrior, and said: "This shall be the sign that Thou wilt deliver him into my hand if I draw him from the bed down on the ground without awaking him." She tugged at Sisera, and in very truth he did not awaken even when he dropped from the bed to the floor. Then Jael prayed: "O God, strengthen the arm of Thy

maid-servant this day, for Thy sake, for the sake of Thy people, and for the sake of those that hope in Thee." With a hammer she drove the spike into the temple of Sisera, who cried out as he was expiring: "O that I should lose my life by the hand of a woman!" Jael's mocking retort was: "Descend to hell and join thy fathers, and tell them that thou didst fall by the hand of a woman."

Barak took charge of the body of the dead warrior, and he sent it to Sisera's mother, Themac, with the message: "Here is thy son, whom thou didst expect to see returning laden with booty." He had in mind the vision of Themac and her women-in-waiting. When Sisera went forth to battle, their conjuring tricks had shown him to them as he lay on the bed of a Jewish woman. This they had interpreted to mean that he would return with Jewish captives. "One damsel, two damsels for ever man." they had said. Great, therefore, was the disappointment of Sisera's mother. No less than a hundred cries did she utter over him.

Deborah and Barak thereupon intoned a song of praise, thanking God for the deliverance of Israel out of the power of Sisera, and reviewing the history of the people since the time of Abraham.

After laboring for the weal of her nation for forty years, Deborah departed this life. Her last words to the weeping people were an exhortation not to depend upon the dead. They can do nothing for the living. So long as a man is alive, his prayers are efficacious for himself and for others. They avail naught once he is dead.

The whole nation kept a seventy days' period of mourning in honor of Deborah, and the land was at peace for seven years.

GIDEON

Elated by the victory over Sisera, Israel sang a hymn of praise, the song of Deborah, and God, to reward them for their pious sentiments, pardoned the transgression of the people. But they soon slipped back into the old ways, and the old troubles harassed them. Their backsliding was due to the witchcraft of a Midianite priest named Aud. He made the sun shine at midnight, and so convinced the Israelites that the idols of Midian were mightier than God, and God chastised them by delivering them into the hands of the Midianties. They worshipped their own images reflected in the water, and they were stricken with dire poverty. They could not bring so much as a meal offering, the offering of the poor. On the eve of one Passover, Gideon uttered the complaint: "Where are all the wondrous works which God did for our fathers in this night, when he slew the first-born of the Egyptians, and Israel went forth from slavery with joyous hearts?" God appeared unto him, and said: "Thou who art courageous enough to champion Israel, thou art worthy that Israel should be saved for thy sake."

An angel appeared, and Gideon begged him for a sign, that he would achieve the deliverance of Israel. He excused his petition with the precedent of Moses, the first prophet, who likewise has asked for a sign. The angel bade him pour water on the rock, and then gave him the choice of how he would have the water transformed. Gideon desired to see one-half changed into blood, and one-half into fire. Thus it happened. The blood and the fire mingled with each other, yet the blood did not quench the fire, nor did the fire dry out the blood. Encouraged by this and other signs, Gideon undertook to carry on the war against the Midianites with a band of three hundred God-fearing men,

and he was successful. Of the enemy one hundred and twenty thousand corpses covered the field, and all the rest fled precipitately.

Gideon enjoyed the privilege of bringing salvation to Israel because he was a good son. His old father feared to thresh his grain on account of the Midianites, and Gideon once went out to him in the field and said: "Father, thou art too old to do this work; go thou home, and I shall finish thy task for thee. If the Midianites should surprise me out here, I can run away, which thou canst not do, on account of thy age."

The day on which Gideon gained his great victory was during the Passover, and the cake of barley bread that turned the camp of the enemy upside down, of which the Midianite dreamed, was a sign that God would espouse the cause of His people to reward them for bringing a cake of barley bread as an 'Omer offering.

After God had favored Israel with great help through him, Gideon had an ephod made. In the high priest's breastplate, Joseph was represented among the twelve tribes by Ephraim alone, not by Manasseh, too. To wipe out this slight upon his own tribe, Gideon made an ephod bearing the name of Manasseh. He consecrated it to God, but after his death homage was paid to it as an idol. In those days the Israelites were so addicted to the worship of Beelzebub that they constantly carried small images of this god with them in their pockets, and every now and then they were in the habit of bringing the image forth and kissing it fervently. Of such idolaters were the vain and light fellows who helped Abimelech, the son of Gideon by his concubine from Shechem, to assassinate the other sons of his father. But God is just. As Abimelech murdered his brothers upon a stone, so Abimelech himself met his death through a millstone. It was proper, then, that Jotham, in his parable, should compare Abimelech to a thorn-bush, while he characterized his predecessors, Othniel, Deborah, and Gideon, as an olive-tree, or a fig-tree, or a vine. This Jotham, the youngest of the sons of Gideon, was more than a teller of parables. He knew then that long afterward the Samaritans would claim sanctity for Mount Gerizim, on account of the blessing pronounced from it upon the tribe. For this reason he chose Gerizim from which to hurl his curse upon Shechem and its inhabitants.

The successor to Abimelech equalled, if he did not surpass, him in wickedness. Jair erected an altar unto Baal, and on penalty of death he forced the people to prostrate themselves before it. Only seven men remained firm in the true faith, and refused to the last to commit idolatry. Their names were Deuel, Abit Yisreel, Jekuthiel, Shalom, Ashur, Jehonadab, and Shemiel. They said to Jair: "We are mindful of the lessons given us by our teachers and our mother Deborah. 'Take ye heed,' they said, 'that your heart lead you not astray to the right or to the left. Day and night ye shall devote yourselves to the study of the Torah.' Why, then, dost thou seek to corrupt the people of the Lord, saying, 'Baal is God, let us worship him'? If he really is what thou sayest, then let him speak like a god, and we will pay him worship." For the blasphemy they had uttered against Baal, Jair commanded that the seven men be burnt. When his servants were about to carry out his order, God sent the angel Nathaniel, the lord over the fire, and he extinguished the fire though not before the servants of Jair were consumed by it. Not only did the seven men escape the danger of suffering death by fire, but the angel enabled them to flee unnoticed, by striking all the people present with blindness. Then the angel approached Jair, and said to him: "Hear the words of the Lord ere thou diest. I appointed thee as prince over my people, and thou didst break My covenant, seduce My

people, and seek to burn My servants with fire, but they were animated and freed by the living, the heavenly fire. As for thee, thou wilt die, and die by fire, a fire in which thou wilt abide forever."

Thereupon the angel burnt him with a thousand men, whom he had taken in the act of paying homage to Baal.

JEPHTHAH

The first judge of any importance after Gideon was Jephthah. He, too, fell short of being the ideal Jewish ruler. His father had married a woman of another tribe, an unusual occurrence in a time when a woman who left her tribe was held in contempt. Jephthah, the offspring of this union, had to bear the consequences of his mother's irregular conduct. So many annoyances were put upon him that he was forced to leave his home and settle in a heathen district.

At first Jephthah refused to accept the rulership which the people offered him in an assembly at Mizpah, for he had not forgotten the wrongs to which he had been subjected. In the end, however, he yielded, and placed himself at the head of the people in the war against Getal, the king of the Ammonites. At his departure, he vowed before God to sacrifice to Him whatsoever came forth out of the doors of his house to meet him when he returned a victor from the war.

God was angry and said: "So Jephthah has vowed to offer unto me the first thing that shall meet him! If a dog were the first to meet him, would a dog be sacrificed to me? Now shall the vow of Jephthah be visited on his first-born, on his own offspring, yea, his prayer shall be visited on his only daughter. But I assuredly shall deliver my people, not for Jephthah's sake, but for the sake of the prayers of Israel."

The first to meet him after his successful campaign was his daughter Sheilah. Overwhelmed by anguish, the father cried out: "Rightly was the name Sheilah, the one who is demanded, given to thee, that thou shouldst be offered up as a sacrifice. Who shall set my heart in the balance and my soul as the weight, that I may stand and see whether that which happened to me is joy or sorrow? But because I opened my mouth to the Lord, and uttered a vow, I cannot take it back." Then Sheilah spoke, saying: "Why dost thou grieve for my death, since the people was delivered? Dost thou not remember what happened in the day of our forefathers, when the father offered his son as a burnt offering, and the son did not refuse, but consented gladly, and the offerer and the offered were both full of joy? Therefore, do as thou hast spoken. But before I die I will ask a favor of thee. Grant me that I may go with my companions upon the mountains, sojourn among the hills, and tread upon the rocks to shed my tears and deposit there the grief for my lost youth. The trees of the field shall weep for me, and the beasts of the field mourn for me. I do not grieve for my death, nor because I have to yield up my life, but because when my father vowed his heedless vow, he did not have me in mind. I fear, therefore, that I may not be an acceptable sacrifice, and that my death shall be for nothing." Sheilah and her companions went forth and told her case to the sages of the people, but none of them could give her any help. Then she went up to Mount Telag, where the Lord appeared to her at night, saying unto her: "I have closed the mouth of the sages of my people in this generation, that they cannot answer the daughter of Jephthah a word; that my vow be fulfilled and nothing of what I have thought remain undone. I know her to be wiser than her father, and all the wise men, and now her soul shall be accepted at her request, and her death shall be very precious before My face all the time." Sheilah began to bewail her fate in these words: "Hearken, ye mountains, to my

lamentations, and ye hills, to the tears of my eyes, and ye rocks, testify to the weeping of my soul. My words will go up to heaven, and my tears will be written in the firmament. I have not been granted the joy of wedding, nor was the wreath of my betrothal completed. I have not been decked with ornaments, nor have I been scented with myrrh and with aromatic perfumes. I have not been anointed with the oil that was prepared for me. Alas, O mother, it was in vain thou didst give birth to me, the grave was destined to be my bridal chamber. The oil thou didst prepare for me will be spilled, and the white garments my mother sewed for me, the moth will eat them; the bridal wreath my nurse wound for me will wither, and my garments in blue and purple, the worms will destroy them, and my companions will all their days lament over me. And now, ye trees, incline your branches and weep over my youth; ye beasts of the forest, come and trample upon my virginity, for my years are cut off, and the days of my life grow old in darkness."

Her lamentations were of as little avail as her arguments with her father. In vain she sought to prove to him from the Torah that the law speaks only of animal sacrifices, never of human sacrifices. In vain she cited the example of Jacob, who had vowed to give God a tenth of all the possessions he owned, and yet did not attempt later to sacrifice one of his sons. Jephthah was inexorable. All he would yield was a respite during which his daughter might visit various scholars, who were to decide whether he was bound by his vow. According to the Torah his vow was entirely invalid. He was not even obliged to pay his daughter's value in money. But the scholars of his time had forgotten this Halakah, and they decided that he must keep his vow. The forgetfulness of the scholars was of God, ordained as a punishment upon Jephthah for having slaughtered thousands of Ephraim.

One man there was living at the time who, if he had been questioned about the case, would have been able to give a decision. This was the high priest Phinehas. But he said proudly: "What! I, a high priest, the son of a high priest, should humiliate myself and go to an ignominy!" Jephthah on the other hand said: "What! I, the chief of the tribes of Israel, the first prince of the land, should humiliate myself and go to one of the rank and file!" So only the rivalry between Jephthah and Phinehas caused the loss of a young life. Their punishment did not miss them. Jephthah dies a horrible death. Limb by limb his body was dismembered. As for the high priest, the holy spirit departed from him, and he had to give up his priestly dignity.

As it had been Jephthah's task to ward off the Ammonites, so his successor Abdon was occupied with protecting Israel against the Moabites. The king of Moab sent messengers to Abdon, and they spoke thus: "Thou well knowest that Israel took possession of cities that belonged to me. Return them." Abdon's reply was: "Know ye not how the Ammonites fared? The measure of Moab's sins, it seems, out against the enemy, slew forty-five thousand of their number, and routed the rest.

SAMSON

The last judge but one, Samson, was not the most important of the judges, but he was the greatest hero of the period and, except Goliath, the greatest hero of all times. He was the son of Manoah of the tribe of Dan, and his wife Zelai of the tribe of Judah, and he was born to them at a time when they had given up all hope of having children. Samson's birth is a striking illustration of the shortsightedness of human beings. The judge Ibzan had not invited Manoah and Zelai to any of the one hundred and twenty feasts in honor of the marriage of his sixty children, which were celebrated at his house and at the house of their parents-in-law, because he thought that "the

sterile she-mule" would never be in a position to repay his courtesy. It turned out that Samson's parents were blessed with an extraordinary son, while Ibzan saw his sixty children die during his lifetime.

Samson's strength was superhuman, and the dimensions of his body were gigantic he measured sixty ells between the shoulders. Yet he had one imperfection, he was maimed in both feet. The first evidence of his gigantic strength he gave when he uprooted two great mountains, and rubbed them against each other. Such feats he was able to perform as often as the spirit of God was poured out over him. Whenever this happened, it was indicated by his hair. It began to move and emit a bell-like sound, which could be heard far off. Besides, while the spirit rested upon him, he was able with one stride to cover a distance equal to that between Zorah and Eshtaol. It was Samson's supernatural strength that made Jacob think that he would be the Messiah. When God showed him Samson's latter end, then he realized that the new era would not be ushered in by the hero-judge.

Samson won his first victory over the Philistines by means of the jawbone of the ass on which Abraham had made his way to Mount Moriah. It had been preserved miraculously. After this victory a great wonder befell. Samson was at the point of perishing from thirst, when water began to flow from his own mouth as from a spring.

Besides physical prowess, Samson possessed also spiritual distinctions. He was unselfish to the last degree. He had been of exceeding great help to the Israelites, but he never asked the smallest service for himself. When Samson told Delilah that he was a "Nazarite unto God," she was certain that he had divulged the true secret of his strength. She knew his character too well to entertain the idea that he would couple the name of God with an untruth. There was a weak side to his character, too. He allowed sensual pleasures to dominate him. The consequence was that "he who went astray after his eyes, lost his eyes." Even this severe punishment produced no change of heart. He continued to lead his old life of profligacy in prison, and he was encouraged thereto by the Philistines, who set aside all considerations of family purity in the hope of descendants who should be the equals of Samson in giant strength and stature.

As throughout life Samson had given proofs of superhuman power, so in the moment of death. He entreated God to realize in him the blessing of Jacob, and endow him with Divine strength. He expired with these words upon his lips: "O Master of the world! Vouchsafe unto me in this life a recompense for the loss of one of my eyes. For the loss of the other I will wait to be rewarded in the world to come." Even after his death Samson was a shield unto the Israelites. Fear of him had so cowed the Philistines that for twenty years they did not dare attack the Israelites.

THE CRIME OF THE BENJAMITES

A part of the money which Delilah received from the Philistine lords as the price of Samson's secret, she gave to her son Micah, and he used it to make an idol for himself. This sin was the more unpardonable as Micah owed his life to a miracle performed by Moses. During the times of the Egyptian oppression, if the prescribed number of bricks was not furnished by the Israelites, their children were used as building material. Such would have been Micah's fate, if he had not been saved in a miraculous way. Moses wrote down the Name of God, and put the words on Micah's body. The dead boy came to life, and Moses drew him out of the wall of which he made a part. Micah did not show himself worthy of the wonder done for him. Even before the Israelites left Egypt,

he made his idol, and it was he who fashioned the golden calf. At the time of Othniel the judge, he took up his abode at a distance of not more than three miles from the sanctuary at Shiloh, and won over the grandson of Moses to officiate as priest before his idol.

The sanctuary which Micah erected harbored various idols. He had three images of boys, and three of calves, one lion, an eagle, a dragon, and a dove. When a man came who wanted a wife, he was directed to appeal to the dove. If riches were his desire, he worshipped the eagle. For daughters both, to the calves; to the lion for strength, and to the dragon for long life. Sacrifices and incense alike were offered to these idols, and both had to be purchased with cash money from Micah, even didrachms for a sacrifice, and one for incense.

The rapid degeneration in the family of Moses may be accounted for by the fact that Moses had married the daughter of a priest who ministered to idols. Yet, the grandson of Moses was not an idolater of ordinary calibre. His sinful conduct was not without a semblance of morality. From his grandfather he had heard the rule that a man should do "Abodah Zarah" for hire rather than be dependent upon his fellow-creatures. The meaning of "Abodah Zarah" here naturally is "strange," in the sense of "unusual" work, but he took the term in its ordinary acceptance of "service of strange gods." So far from being a whole-souled idolater, he adopted methods calculated to harm the cause of idol worship. Whenever any one came leading an animal with the intention of sacrificing it, he would say: "What good can the idol do thee? It can neither see nor hear nor speak." But as he was concerned about his won livelihood, and did not want to offend the idolaters too grossly, he would continue: "If thou bringest a dish of flour and a few eggs, it will suffice." This offering he would himself eat.

Under David he filled the position of treasurer. David appointed him because he thought that a man who was willing to become priest to an idol only in order to earn his bread, must be worthy of confidence. However sincere his repentance may have been, he relapsed into his former life when he was removed from his office by Solomon, who filled all position with new incumbents at his accession to the throne. Finally he abandoned his idolatrous ways wholly, and became so pure a man that he was favored by God with the gift of prophecy. This happened on the day on which the man of God out of Judah came to Jeroboam, for the grandson of Moses is none other than the old prophet at Beth-el who invited the man of God out of Judah to come to his house.

The mischief done by Micah spread further and further. Especially the Benjamites distinguished themselves for their zeal in paying homage to his idols. God therefore resolved to visit the sins of Israel and Benjamin upon them. The opportunity did not delay to come. It was not long before the Benjamites committed the outrage of Gibeah. Before the house of Bethac, a venerable old man, they imitated the disgraceful conduct of the Sodomites before the house of Lot. When the other tribes exacted amends from the Benjamites, and were denied satisfaction, bloody combats ensued. At first the Benjamites prevailed, in spite of the fact that the Urim and Thummim questioned by Phinehas had encouraged the Israelites to take up the conflict, with the words: "Up to war, I shall deliver them into your hands." After the tribes had again and again suffered defeat, they recognized the intention of God, to betray them as a punishment for their sins. They therefore ordained a day of fasting and convocation before the holy Ark, and Phinehas the son of Eleazar entreated God in their behalf: "What means this, that Thou leadest us astray? Is the deed of the Benjamites right in Thine eyes? Then why didst Thou not command us to desist from the combat? But if what our brethren

have done is evil in Thy sight, then why dost Thou cause us to fall before them in battle? O God of our fathers, hearken unto my voice. Make it known this day unto Thy servant whether the war waged with Benjamin is pleasing in Thine eyes, or whether thou desirest to punish Thy people for its sins. Then the sinners among us will amend their ways. I am mindful of what happened in the days of my youth, at the time of Moses. In the zeal of my soul I slew two for the sin of Zimri, and when his well-wishers sought to kill me, Thou didst send an angel, who cut off twenty-four thousand of them and delivered me. But now eleven of Thy tribes have gone forth to do Thy bidding, to avenge and slay, and, lo, they have themselves been slain, so that they are made to believe that Thy revelations are lying and deceitful. O Lord, God of our forefathers, naught is hidden before Thee. Make it manifest why this misfortune has overtaken us."

God replied to Phinehas at great length, setting forth why eleven tribes had suffered so heavily. The Lord had wanted to punish them for having permitted Micah and his mother Delilah to pursue their evil ways undisturbed, though they were zealous beyond measure in avenging the wrong done to the woman at Gibeah. As soon as all those had perished who were guilty of having aided and abetted Micah in his idolatrous practices, whether directly or indirectly, God was willing to help them in their conflicts with the Benjamites.

So it came. In the battle fought soon after, seventy-five thousand Benjamites fell slain. Only six hundred of the tribe survived. Fearing to remain in Palestine, the small band emigrated to Italy and Germany.

At the same time the punishment promised them by God overtook the two chief sinners. Micah lost his life by fire, and his mother rotted alive; worms crawled from her body.

In spite of the great mischief caused by Micah, he had one good quality, and God permitted it to plead for him when the angel stood up against him as his accusers. He was extremely hospitable. His house always stood wide open to the wanderer, and to his hospitality he owed it that he was granted a share in the future world. In hell Micah is the first in the sixth division, which is under the guidance of the angel Hadriel, and he is the only one in the division who is spared hell tortures. Micah's son was Jeroboam, whose golden calves were sinful far beyond anything his father had done.

In those days God spake to Phinehas: "Thou art one hundred and twenty years old, thou hast reached the natural term of man's life. Go now, betake thyself to the mountain Danaben, and remain there many years. I will command the eagles to sustain thee with food, so that thou returnest not to men until the time when thou lockest fast the clouds and openest them again. Then I will carry thee to the place where those are who were before thee, and there thou wilt tarry until I visit the world, and bring thee thither to taste of death."

The Book of Gad the Seer

An old Jewish manuscript said to contain writings of Gad the Seer, one of the "lost books" mentioned in the Bible was found among Jews in India and after much drama has recently been

published in English. It's an intriguing story that I think should be given more attention, especially among Latter-day Saints.

Gad was a prophet living at the time of David who seemed to have special status based on 2 Samuel 24:11, which speaks of "Gad, David's seer." But like many prophets, Gad was not afraid to speak unpleasant things to his King (e.g., see 2 Samuel 12:1-13). One of the very few mentions of Gad occurs in 1 Chronicles 29:29 when it mentions that the acts of David the king were written "in the book of Gad the seer." I have occasionally cited that verse in discussing the scriptures with others who accept the Bible to illustrate that the Bible we have might not contain all the scripture that has been written in the past. A common rejoinder is, "There may have been such a book, but if God didn't preserve it for us in the Bible, it's not scripture." I guess there can be no such thing as lost scripture with that definition. And if it can't be lost, I guess it can't be found. In reply, I have asked others what they would do if a book that ancient Jews or Christians regarded and preserved as Biblical scripture became lost, and then was found again?

Surprisingly, my theoretical question became a little less theoretical with the fairly recent discovery, translation, and publication of a long-lost manuscript that may have connections to the ancient lost book of Gad the Seer, just published in 2016. The document has been through many human hands and may have some of the corruption common to non-canonical works such as the Apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, but the scholar who has explored this text in the most detail and provided the translation believes it has ancient roots and is worthy of our attention. The story of this unusual text may be relevant to our own and much more miraculous story of the finding, translation, and publication of the ancient books of scripture from ancient Hebrews and Christians that we have in the Book of Mormon.

The Story Behind the Words of Gad the Seer

The story of coming forth of The Words of Gad the Seer is a story that involves the the scattering of Israel and a Jewish colony in India, and may raise interesting issues about ancient Jews not only in India but also in Yemen with possible relevance to Lehi's Trail. This story also touches upon themes of lost and restored ancient scripture, apocalyptic literature like the Book of Enoch and our own Book of Moses, writing on metal plates, and other Latter-day Saint themes such as free agency, three main categories of outcomes in final judgment, and even Alma's discourse on the word as a seed in Alma 32.

There may be much food for thought as we contemplate the story behind the text and the words themselves now published in a very short book, *The Words of Gad the Seer* translated by Professor Meir Bar-Ilan (Scotts Valley, CA: CreateSpace Publishing, 2016), available in paperback and Kindle editions. His much more extensive scholarly edition is available only in Hebrew at the moment. Professor Bar-Ilan has been a professor for decades at a prestigious university in Israel, Bar-Ilan University, named for another Meir Bar-Ilan (perhaps his grandfather?), a prominent figure in Israeli history. Bar-Ilan University is often abbreviated as BIU, not to be confused with BYU. At BIU, Bar-Ilan teaches in both the Talmud and Jewish History departments and has an interesting list of publications, a number of which are related to the Words of Gad the Seer.

Before you rush to buy Meir Bar-Ilan's English translation of the Words of Gad the Seer, you should know that what is currently available is a bare-bones paperback just 23 pages in length giving the

5000+ words of the pseudepigraphal text without any explanation, background, footnotes, etc. With the Kindle edition, you can't even figure out who published it. The Barnes and Noble page for the book indicates that the publisher is CreateSpace Publishing, something I could not find at Amazon, and a search then revealed Scotts Valley, CA as the likely location for the publisher. Wikipedia's entry for "The Book of Gad the Seer" indicates that there is a scholarly edition in Hebrew that I presume will be more complete. But you can access a variety of articles in English that Professor Meir Bar-Ilan has written about the book that I'll discuss below. Meanwhile, I hope you will still buy the book, perhaps the Kindle edition, and begin exploring this unusual text.

Slightly more information and a slightly different translation is available in Christian Israel's independently published 2020 version, *The Words of Gad the Seer: Bible Cross-Reference Edition*, available in paperback only (no Kindle edition so far).

The largest English volume available as far as I know, with both Kindle and paperback editions, is Ken Johnson's *Ancient Book of Gad the Seer: Referenced in 1 Chronicles 2S:2S and alluded to in 1 Corinthians 12:12 and Galatians 4:2c* (Ken Johnson, 2016). This has extensive and questionable commentary from Ken Johnson, who appears to be an evangelical seeking to strongly guide the reader toward his preferred readings, stressing Messianic themes [some of which may be valid] and other favorite topics. For example, he sees the condemnation of Edom as a condemnation of Rome, even inserting "[Rome]" after Edom and stating in brackets that the fall of a "terrible nation" refers to the destruction of Byzantine. The insertion of altered text in brackets that push his pet themes is annoying. Fortunately, Johnson has provided his translation without all the commentary and with fewer bracketed insertions in a free PDF that one can read online or download.

The translation I trust the most is that of the Jewish scholar, Professor Bar-Ilan in *The Words of Gad the Seer*. Any quotes from the book of Gad the Seer will be from his translation, unless otherwise indicated.

What follows is an overview of the book taken from Barnes and Noble (also provided at Amazon) which I believe is just a translation from the Hebrew describing Bar-Ilan's 2015 scholarly edition, which I hope will soon be available in English. I say that because this overview describes a book with an index, a vast bibliography, a description of its origins, comparisons to others texts, and scholarly analysis of literary genre, scribalism and scribal techniques, none of which is in the English translation, but much of which should be fascinating for Latter-day Saint scholars.

Gad is a prophet most associated with King David in the Holy Bible. This book is the outcome of a prolonged study of a manuscript that was found serendipitously 34 years ago. Actually, this was a re-discovery of a text that for some reason had escaped the eyes of many. It is a story of the survival of Jews remote in place and time, and of their books, visions, angels and divine voices, combined with their belief in God and his covenant with King David and Israel. There is no other book that resembles this one.

A book by the name Words of Gad the Seer is mentioned at the end of I Chronicles, presumably one of the sources of the history of King David. Ever since the book was considered lost and it is mentioned nowhere. In the 18th century Jews from Cochin said that their ancestors have had several apocryphal books, including Words of Gad the Seer, and this statement was published first by Johann Gottfried Eichhorn (1789) and translated by Naphtali H. Wesseley who publicized these

fantastic claims (1790). Since none saw the book, it was probably considered to be an oriental legend. So when Solomon Schechter, in 1894 (just before he became occupied with the Genizah), checked manuscripts at the Cambridge library, bought at Cochin around 1806, [he] not only ... described the specific manuscript improperly but he also failed to make the right connection to earlier knowledge of that book and thus he under-evaluated the text. In 1927 Israel Abrahams published a paper on this manuscript, but his analysis, once again, had several improper descriptions, and hence the text of Words of Gad the Seer went into oblivion.

This book presents the text of Words of Gad the Seer for the first time. First comes an introduction where the history of the manuscript is discussed. Later the characters of the text described and analyzed one feature after the other. The text is found to be having many similarities with the Book of Revelation and several pseudo-apocryphal and apocalyptic books such as 2 Baruch, 4 Ezra and others.

Then comes a diplomatic edition of the manuscript where each and every letter (by special fonts) is presented similarly to the manuscript. Later the book is divided to 14 chapters, each is a literary unit by itself, and each has its own introduction and a commentary. Each and every verse is explained in a "multi-focal" commentary in a manner similar to publishing a Biblical book: literary criticism, lexicography, philology and alike. A special treatment is given to the scribal practices that are reflected in the text: the only non-canonical book with a Massorah, Qeri and Ketib, total number of verses and more.

The book is 5227 words in length written in a pseudo-Biblical Hebrew intended to be a book written by the Seer of King David in the 10th century B.C.E. The text is an anthology and varies in style and character: 3 chapters are apocalyptic in nature, 2 chapters are a "mere" copy of Ps 145 and 144 (with different superscriptions and all sorts of different readings, some of them highly important); one chapter is a harmonization of 1 Sam 24 with 1 Chr 21 (that resembles ancient harmonizations of texts as found in the Samaritan Pentateuch and Qumran alike). One chapter is a kind of addendum to 2 Sam 13 (a "feminine story"), one chapter is a sermon, one chapter is a folk story, and there are more blessings, liturgies and other issues. Literary genre, scribalism and scribes' technique are described and analyzed. The book comes with an index and a vast bibliography. The appearance of the text will add a great deal to our understanding of Jewish History and religion.

Date: The text assumed to be written either in the Land of Israel at the end of the first century or in the Middle Ages

The Apocalypse of Esdras

The ***Apocalypse of Pseudo-Ezra*** is a set of visions of the end times composed in the Syriac language sometime between the 7th and 12th centuries. It is a pseudepigraphon falsely attributed to Ezra. It is a short text of about seven manuscript pages. It recapitulates history in the form of prophecy using obscure animal imagery. Written to console Christians living under Islamic rule, it predicts the end of such rule in the Near East.

The actual author of the text is anonymous. As the text lacks theological specifics, it cannot be determined to which confession the author belonged. The text itself is often seen as the work of an editor stitching together two preexisting apocalypses, but there is no scholarly agreement on the date of the final text. The Syriac text is preserved in at least sixteen manuscripts, all quite late. Additionally, there is an Arabic recension preserved in a single late manuscript. The Syriac version has been published several times and translated into English.

Title and genre

[edit]

The title supplied to the *Apocalypse* by the scribes is some variant of "the question that Ezra asked when he was in the desert with his disciple", with Ezra often qualified as "the scribe" and the disciple named as "Carpus".^[1] The full Syriac title is *Shēltā d-shēl ʿĀzrā sāprā kad hwā b-madbrā w-talmideh ʿameh da-shmeh Qarpus*.^[2] Modern convention is to call the work the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Ezra*,^{[2][3]} the *Syriac Apocalypse of Ezra*^{[4][5]} or the *Syriac Esdras Apocalypse*.^[6] Richard Gottheil calls it the *Revelation of Ezra*.^[7]

The work is classified as an apocalypse because it is a revelation about the future. It is firmly rooted in this world, however, and has nothing to say about heaven or hell.^[8] It may be classified with the Syriac historical apocalypses that were popular in the first century of Islam, the purpose of which was to "console Christians who had become the subjects of a new empire and religion."^[9] Michael Stone classifies it as one of the "political" Ezra apocalypses, along with the *Ethiopic Apocalypse of Ezra*.^[10] The scribal title does not indicate the work as an apocalypse or vision.^[1] The explicit or superscription, however, identifies the work as "the vision of Ezra the scribe".^[11] The fuller form of the explicit in Syriac reads *Hezwā da-ḥzā ʿĀzrā sāprā ʿal malkutā d-Ishma ʿlāyē* ("the vision of Ezra the Scribe which he saw concerning the kingdom of the Ishmaelites").^[2] The title and the explicit are rubricated (i.e., in red ink) in the manuscript Mingana 11.^[12]

Synopsis

[edit]

The *Apocalypse* takes up only about seven pages in the manuscripts.^[2] It begins in the third person, describing how Ezra asked God to reveal what will happen in "the end times of the Ishmaelites",^[1] a Christian term for Arabs or Muslims.^[4] The text then switches to the first person as Ezra describes what he read and saw in a series of visions.^[4] He first describes to his disciple Carpus (Qarpos) how he had a vision in which an angel in the form of a young man in white handed him a scroll containing the answer to his question.^[13] The rest of text can be divided into two sets of visions.^{[14][15]} The visions themselves consist of "very obscure"^[14] and "bewildering" animal imagery.^[15]

First part

[edit]

In the first vision, a serpent with twelve horns on its head and nine smaller horns on its tail comes up from the desert to devour all of creation. An angel dressed in flames tears off its twelve horns, fulfilling the "prophecy of Moses" (*Genesis* 17:20). A great horn then springs up from the tail, having

two small horns of its own. An eagle from the south then devours all the horns, but a whirlwind tears off its two talons.^[16]

A viper then comes from the east, poisoning everything "up to the border of the Promise" (probably the Promised Land). There is an earthquake and a voice from heaven calls for the release of "those four kings who are bound on the great river Euphrates, those who are prepared to destroy one out of three people." They are released. Ravens from the east attack the viper, which flees to Egypt with its two "chicks". At the behest of the younger chick, the lion cub sends for the leopard of the south to protect the vipers.^[17]

Second part

[edit]

A bull with three horns, who is the king of the ravens, is ravaging the land of the west. He will make war on the lion cub "and much blood will be shed between the two mighty men" before the bull contends with "the seven hills and the great city of Constantine." The youngest viper will then lead an army from Tarqono (possibly Trachonitis^[18] or Thrace^[19]) to ravage Damascus while his father leads an army of the Kushites to ravage Egypt.^[20]

The lion cub will ravage the land of the ravens from Antioch to the east. A leopard leading a people like locusts out of the north meets the lion cub at the Euphrates to march on Persia. The bull meets them and the lion cub breaks off its horns. The ravens flee and their land is utterly destroyed "until they fall and die, without diseases or illnesses, from the fear that rules over them." The lion cub then subjects the Promised Land to tribute, builds a wall around Phoenicia, destroys Damascus, enters Jerusalem in triumph and returns to his royal city.^[21]

There follows a lull of three and a half weeks before a "mighty man will come out of the south with a great nation" to reign in peace over the Promised Land for three years and seven months. After this, "the four winds of heaven will be stirred up" and Earth will descend into civil war. God sends "a fearsome angel [to] take hold of the point of the destroying sword" and end the tribulation.^[22]

Then "the children of the north ... will go out from the house of Gog and Magog" to commit new atrocities. Two tribes of Ishmaelites and "those who have become sooty at the base of the mountain of the south" go up to Jerusalem and are destroyed by the archangel Michael. "At that time a year is like a month, a month like a week, a week like a day, and a day like an hour." The false messiah will then appear. He will kill Enoch and Elijah on the altar. Finally, angels will cast the Son of Perdition into Gehenna.^[23]

Interpretation

[edit]

The text is usually treated as mostly *vaticinium ex eventu* (prophecy after the fact), with scholars seeking to identify the specifics of the visions with historical events that came before.^[24] It does, however, contain genuine prophecy (predictions) about the future.^[8]

According to Robert Hoyland, the first part "is too terse to be sure of its meaning."^[25] Michael Stone likens it to the four empires of *Daniel*.^[26] Wilhelm Bousset offers a scheme based on the *Arabic*

Apocalypse of Peter, which he thought represented a version of the source text for the first part.^[27] He identifies the animals with a sequence of Islamic dynasties. The serpent is the Umayyads, the eagle the Abbasids, the viper the Fatimids and the four kings the various Turk dynasties. The lion cub represents the Crusaders.^{[25][24]} The geography of Pseudo-Ezra, however, does not match the supposed source and is historically inaccurate. The historical Fatimids are associated with Egypt (not the east) and the Abbasids with the east (not south).^[27] Likewise, the Crusaders never took Damascus, although this may reflect an actual prediction of the author.^[25]

According to Bousset and Hoyland, the second part recounts the Roman–Sasanian War of 602–628. The bull is the Sasanian king Khosrow II, the lion cub the Roman emperor Heraclius and the leopard the latter's Turkish allies. On this view, the text is not a unity, but a compilation, with the latter part having been composed first and the first part later grafted onto it.^{[25][27]} The bull is not mentioned in the first part. The reference to him as "king of the ravens" suggests an attempt to knit together two independent texts.^[28] In the first part, the native Syriac word for "leopard" is used, but in the second part the word translated "leopard" is a Greek borrowing.^[29]



The end of the *Apocalypse* (indicated by red ink) in the

manuscript Mingana 11

Lisbeth Fried, treating the text as a unitary composition, regards the bull as the Ishmaelites and the lion cub as the Messiah. The "seven hills" probably refers to the Seven Hills of Rome and the "great city of Constantine" is the city of Constantinople. Those lands which submitted to the Arabs in the 7th century, from Egypt to the Euphrates, are set for destruction, with the cities of Damascus and Antioch singled out.^[4]

Sources and influences

[edit]

The basic setting of the *Apocalypse* comes from *4 Ezra*.^[8] The latter was "the oldest and most popular of Ezra pseudepigrapha" and its portrayal of Ezra, rather than that of the biblical *Book of Ezra*, is the basis for the Syriac *Apocalypse*.^[30] The *Apocalypse* draws heavily on the *Book of Revelation* and the *Book of Daniel*,^{[2][8][25]} but also the four canonical Gospels,^{[2][31]} the *Book of Ezekiel*,^[8] and the epistles of *Romans* and *2 Thessalonians*.^[31] The biblical language used is that of the standard Syriac bible, the Peshitta.^[8]

The *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Ezra* was influenced, directly or indirectly, by the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*. Pseudo-Methodian materials include the probable Last Roman Emperor motif and the influence of legends about Alexander the Great on the understanding of Gog and Magog.^[32] Three distinctive features of the *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter* are also present in some form in Pseudo-Ezra: a messianic lion cub, twelve kings followed by nine little kings and the rebuilding of the walls of Phoenicia. There are other less distinctive commonalities.^[33] The textual relationship between the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Ezra* and the *Apocalypse of Peter* is unclear because the latter has not been comprehensively studied. It may be that the latter is based on the former.^[34]

Date

[edit]

There is no agreement among scholars on the date of the *Apocalypse*.^[14] The first modern scholar to take note of it, Giuseppe Simone Assemani (1687–1768), identified it as pseudonymous because it refers to Constantinople, a name that only came into usage after AD 324.^[11] The earliest surviving manuscript is no earlier than the late 17th century.^[35] Between these dates, Assemani placed its composition shortly after the fall of Constantinople (1453).^{[25][24]}

In an 1887 study, Ludwig Iselin [pl] proposed that the *Apocalypse* is a Christian revision of an originally Jewish work that drew on an Aramaic source also used by the author of the biblical *Revelation*. His proposals have not gained acceptance.^[36] In 1894, Jean-Baptiste Chabot argued that the *Apocalypse* is an original Christian composition of the 7th or 8th century, written in response to the rise of Islam.^[37] In 1896, Bousset, settled on a date after the First Crusade (1095–1099).^[38]

Robert Hoyland believes that it is the work of a redactor who combined two apocalypses into a single work using *Revelation* and *Daniel* to plug gaps.^[25] Like Bousset, Hoyland accepts a late date for the final redaction, situating it in the context of the Fatimid–Seljuk wars of the late 11th century or the Fatimid–Ayyubid wars of the late 12th century.^[39] He argues that a focus on Egypt and the use of *Revelation* both point to a late rather than early medieval date.^[25] *Revelation* is not accepted as canonical in the Syriac churches and was not part of the original Peshitta, but it was included in the Harklean version and would have been available by the late 7th century.^[40] Both Hoyland and Bousset, accept an early 7th-century date for the original apocalypse on which the second part is based.^[41]

Muriel Debié, on the other hand, puts forward arguments in favour of Chabot's dating, suggesting that the genre of the text belongs to the first century of Islam and "the allusion to attacks on Constantinople might suggest a date after one of the unsuccessful sieges", either the siege of 669 or the siege of 717.^[42] Lisbeth Fried also prefers a date "in the last quarter of the seventh

century."^[8] Sergey Minov expresses "little doubt" that it dates from "the very beginning of the Muslim era, perhaps in the early eighth century."^[43]

Laura Estes suggests the first siege of Constantinople (669/674) as the earliest possible date.^[24] If the *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter* made use of Pseudo-Ezra as a source, then the latter was written no later than 1176–1177, the date of the earliest known copy of the *Arabic Apocalypse*.^[44]

Authorship and provenance

[edit]

Modern scholarship has always regarded the connection of the *Apocalypse* to Ezra as spurious.^[11] The actual author is anonymous.^[2] He is conventionally known as Pseudo-Ezra.^{[3][15]} He may be regarded as a mere redactor or editor of preexisting texts, as by Iselin and Hoyland.^[25] Although the work is a pseudepigraphon,^{[30][45]} it was explicitly excluded as Old Testament pseudepigrapha by the editors of *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* series for being "far removed from the Old Testament in date and character."^[46]

The original language of the *Apocalypse* is Syriac.^[2] All known manuscripts were copied in East Syriac script and originate in northern Iraq, between Zawita and Mosul.^[35] This suggests that the work itself was composed in an East Syriac context, i.e., by members of the Church of the East.^{[2][35]} The work is devoid of Christian doctrinal statements that would implicate any particular confession.^[47] Internal evidence has been held to suggest a Melkite or Miaphysite provenance, depending on whether the portrayal of the lion cub (i.e., the Roman emperor) is taken as positive or negative.^{[48][49]} The prominence of Egypt and Ethiopia could also suggest a Miaphysite connection.^[48]

Manuscripts

[edit]

There are sixteen manuscripts that contain the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Ezra*.^[50] Listed from oldest to latest, those in western collections are:

- Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica, Sir. 597, copied probably in the late 17th century^[51]
- Birmingham, Cadbury Research Library, Mingana Syriac 11, copied on 16 January 1702 by Hoshabo bar Daniel^[52]
- Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica, Sir. 164, copied in Mosul on 14 February 1702 by the deacon of Hormizd^{[53][54]}
- London, British Library, Add. 25875 (=Wright 922), copied in Alqosh on 22 January 1709 by Homo bar Daniel^{[54][55]}
- Birmingham, Cadbury Research Library, Mingana Syriac 567 (=Mosul 27), copied in Zawita on 13 April 1744 by Thomas bar Abdisho^[56]
- Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, 73 (=Sachau 131), copied in Tel Keppe in 1862 by Simeon, son of a deacon^{[54][57]}

- Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Syr. 326, copied in the 19th century by an unknown scribe^{[54][58]}
- New York, Union Theological Seminary, Syriac 23 (=Clemons 307), copied in Rabban Hormizd in 1884 by David Qeryat^[59]
- Leeds, University Library, Syr. 4, copied in 1889/1890^{[60][43]}

In addition, there are several manuscripts last known to have been in eastern collections. Addai Scher catalogued Seert 113, copied in the 18th century and last known to have been in the library of the Chaldean Catholic Eparchy of Seert.^[61] Jacques-Marie Vosté [fr] catalogued six manuscripts containing the *Apocalypse*. MS 12 in the library of the Chaldean Catholic Archeparchy of Kirkuk is Vosté 9 (=Haddad 15), copied near Alqosh in April 1791 by Abdisho bar Iaunan.^{[61][5]} The other five manuscripts were formerly of the monastery of Notre-Dame-des-Semences and may have been moved to the Chaldean monastery in Baghdad. All of these were copied in Alqosh. They are numbered 38–42:

- MS 38 was copied in 1884 by Étienne Rais^[62]
- MS 39 was copied in 1880 by Damian the monk^[62]
- MS 40 was copied on 23 August 1887 by Kaushabai of Tel Keppe^[62]
- MS 41 was copied on 29 September 1887 by Thomas the monk^[63]
- MS 42 was copied in 1888 by Abraham Abou Behnam of Saqiawa^[63]

Translations and editions

[edit]



Start of the Arabic recension in its only known copy

Arabic version

[edit]

There is an Arabic recension of the *Apocalypse* in which the visions are ascribed to Daniel, who relays them to his disciple, Ezra.^[1] It is preserved in a single manuscript copied in 1606, now in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ar. 150 (olim 107).^[64] It is shorter than the Syriac text, essentially containing only the horned serpent vision, which probably circulated independently.^{[65][66]} This story, however, is much embellished,^[7] making the Arabic text "one of the longest of the apocryphal Daniel apocalypses."^[67]

The date of the Arabic version is uncertain. It has the disjointed structure of a composite work. Gerbern Oegema dates it to the period of the Crusades.^[67] It is untitled in the manuscript, but Lorenzo DiTommaso adopts the title *The Vision of Daniel as Related to Ezra, His Pupil*, since the text describes what Daniel saw as a "vision". Most earlier studies adopt some version of *Arabic Daniel Apocalypse*, an ambiguous title since the publication of another Arabic apocalypse attributed to Daniel in 2002.^[68] Gottheil published a partial edition of the Arabic text with a translation into English in 1887.^[69] In 1904, Frédéric Macler transcribed the entire text and translated it into French.^[70]

Modern editions

[edit]

In 1886, Isaac Hall published the first translation of the *Apocalypse* into a modern European language, an English translation based on the manuscript UTS 23, which had been copied in 1884 from a now lost manuscript dated 1756 in Rabban Hormizd Monastery.^[71] Later that year, Friedrich Baethgen published an edition and German translation of the *Apocalypse* based on the manuscript Sachau 101.^[72] In 1896, Chabot published a French translation based on the manuscript BnF 326.^[37]

Ten of the manuscripts of the *Apocalypse* are connected with Rabban Hormizd Monastery, possibly copied during the construction of the nearby Notre-Dame-des-Semences in preparation for the transfer of the monastery's manuscripts.^[73] In all but two manuscripts, it is copied alongside the *Cave of Treasures*. It may have been perceived as an update that brought the *Cave's* theocentric interpretation of history down to the time of its author.^[74]

For her master's thesis at Abilene Christian University, Laura Estes produced a critical edition of the Syriac text and an English translation based on five manuscripts (Mingana 11, BL 25875, Sachau 131, UTS 23, BnF 326).^[75]

There is no standard versification of the text. Baethgen and Estes number their sections differently, while Chabot numbered his lines.^[76]

The Prayer of King Solomon

Then Solomon said, "The Lord has said that he would dwell in a dark cloud; ²I have built a magnificent temple for you, a place for you to dwell forever."

³While the whole assembly of Israel was standing there, the king turned around and blessed them. ⁴Then he said:

"Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, who with his hands has fulfilled what he promised with his mouth to my father David. For he said, ⁵'Since the day I brought my people out of Egypt, I have not chosen a city in any tribe of Israel to have a temple built so that my Name might be there, nor have I chosen anyone to be ruler over my people Israel. ⁶But now I have chosen Jerusalem for my Name to be there, and I have chosen David to rule my people Israel.'

⁷"My father David had it in his heart to build a temple for the Name of the Lord, the God of Israel. ⁸But the Lord said to my father David, 'You did well to have it in your heart to build a temple for my Name. ⁹Nevertheless, you are not the one to build the temple, but your son, your own flesh and blood—he is the one who will build the temple for my Name.'

¹⁰"The Lord has kept the promise he made. I have succeeded David my father and now I sit on the throne of Israel, just as the Lord promised, and I have built the temple for the Name of the Lord, the God of Israel. ¹¹There I have placed the ark, in which is the covenant of the Lord that he made with the people of Israel."

Solomon's Prayer of Dedication

¹²Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in front of the whole assembly of Israel and spread out his hands. ¹³Now he had made a bronze platform, five cubits long, five cubits wide and three cubits high, and had placed it in the center of the outer court. He stood on the platform and then knelt down before the whole assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven. ¹⁴He said:

"Lord, the God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven or on earth—you who keep your covenant of love with your servants who continue wholeheartedly in your way. ¹⁵You have kept your promise to your servant David my father; with your mouth you have promised and with your hand you have fulfilled it—as it is today.

¹⁶"Now, Lord, the God of Israel, keep for your servant David my father the promises you made to him when you said, 'You shall never fail to have a successor to sit before me on the throne of Israel, if only your descendants are careful in all they do to walk before me according to my law, as you have done.' ¹⁷And now, Lord, the God of Israel, let your word that you promised your servant David come true.

¹⁸"But will God really dwell on earth with humans? The heavens, even the highest heavens, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built! ¹⁹Yet, Lord my God, give attention to your servant's prayer and his plea for mercy. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence. ²⁰May your eyes be open toward this temple day and night, this place of which you said you would put your Name there. May you hear the prayer your servant prays toward this place. ²¹Hear the supplications of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven, your dwelling place; and when you hear, forgive.

²²"When anyone wrongs their neighbor and is required to take an oath and they come and swear the oath before your altar in this temple, ²³then hear from heaven and act. Judge between your servants,

condemning the guilty and bringing down on their heads what they have done, and vindicating the innocent by treating them in accordance with their innocence.

²⁴“When your people Israel have been defeated by an enemy because they have sinned against you and when they turn back and give praise to your name, praying and making supplication before you in this temple, ²⁵then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your people Israel and bring them back to the land you gave to them and their ancestors.

²⁶“When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because your people have sinned against you, and when they pray toward this place and give praise to your name and turn from their sin because you have afflicted them, ²⁷then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your servants, your people Israel. Teach them the right way to live, and send rain on the land you gave your people for an inheritance.

²⁸“When famine or plague comes to the land, or blight or mildew, locusts or grasshoppers, or when enemies besiege them in any of their cities, whatever disaster or disease may come, ²⁹and when a prayer or plea is made by anyone among your people Israel—being aware of their afflictions and pains, and spreading out their hands toward this temple— ³⁰then hear from heaven, your dwelling place. Forgive, and deal with everyone according to all they do, since you know their hearts (for you alone know the human heart), ³¹so that they will fear you and walk in obedience to you all the time they live in the land you gave our ancestors.

³²“As for the foreigner who does not belong to your people Israel but has come from a distant land because of your great name and your mighty hand and your outstretched arm—when they come and pray toward this temple, ³³then hear from heaven, your dwelling place. Do whatever the foreigner asks of you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your own people Israel, and may know that this house I have built bears your Name.

³⁴“When your people go to war against their enemies, wherever you send them, and when they pray to you toward this city you have chosen and the temple I have built for your Name, ³⁵then hear from heaven their prayer and their plea, and uphold their cause.

³⁶“When they sin against you—for there is no one who does not sin—and you become angry with them and give them over to the enemy, who takes them captive to a land far away or near; ³⁷and if they have a change of heart in the land where they are held captive, and repent and plead with you in the land of their captivity and say, ‘We have sinned, we have done wrong and acted wickedly’; ³⁸and if they turn back to you with all their heart and soul in the land of their captivity where they were taken, and pray toward the land you gave their ancestors, toward the city you have chosen and toward the temple I have built for your Name; ³⁹then from heaven, your dwelling place, hear their prayer and their pleas, and uphold their cause. And forgive your people, who have sinned against you.

⁴⁰“Now, my God, may your eyes be open and your ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place.

⁴¹“Now arise, Lord God, and come to your resting place,
you and the ark of your might.

May your priests, Lord God, be clothed with salvation,

may your faithful people rejoice in your goodness.

⁴²Lord God, do not reject your anointed one.

Remember the great love promised to David your servant.”

The Book of Jubilees (Short Chapters)

The Book of Jubilees is in certain limited aspects the most important book in this volume for the student of religion. Without it we could of course have inferred from Ezra and Nehemiah, the Priests' Code, and the later chapters of Zechariah the supreme position that the law had achieved in Judaism, but without Jubilees we could hardly have imagined such an absolute supremacy as finds expression in this book. This absolute supremacy of the law carried with it, as we have seen in the General Introduction, the suppression of prophecy -at all events of the open exercise of the prophetic gifts. And yet these gifts persisted during all the so-called centuries of silence-from Malachi down to N.T. times, but owing to the fatal incubus of the law these gifts could not find expression save in pseudepigraphic literature. Thus Jubilees represents the triumph of the movement, which had been at work for the past three centuries or more.

And yet this most triumphant manifesto of legalism contained within its pages the element that was destined to dispute its supremacy and finally to reduce the law to the wholly secondary position that alone it could rightly claim. This element of course is apocalyptic, which was the source of the higher theology in Judaism, and subsequently was the parent of Christianity, wherein apocalyptic ceased to be pseudonymous and became one with prophecy.

The Book of Jubilees was written in Hebrew by a Pharisee between the year of the accession of Hyrcanus to the high priesthood in 135 and his breach with the Pharisees some years before his death in 105 B.C. It is the most advanced pre-Christian representative of the midrashic tendency, which has already been at work in the Old Testament Chronicles. As the Chronicler had rewritten the history of Israel and Judah from the basis of the Priests' Code, so our author re-edited from the Pharisaic standpoint of his time the history of events from the creation to the publication, or, according to the author's view, the republication of the law on Sinai. In the course of re-editing he incorporated a large body of traditional lore, which the midrashic process had put at his disposal, and also not a few fresh legal enactments that the exigencies of the past had called forth. His work constitutes an enlarged Targum on Genesis and Exodus, in which difficulties in the biblical narrative are solved, gaps supplied, dogmatically offensive elements removed, and the genuine spirit of later Judaism infused into the primitive history of the world. His object was to defend Judaism against the attacks of the hellenistic spirit that had been in the ascendant one generation earlier and was still powerful, and to prove that the law was of everlasting validity. From our author's contentions and his embittered attacks on the paganisers and apostates, we may infer that Hellenism had urged that the levitical ordinances of the law were only of transitory significance, that they had not been observed by the founders of the nation, and that the time had now come for them to be swept away, and for Israel to take its place in the brotherhood of the nations. Our author regarded all such views as fatal to the very existence of Jewish religion and nationality. But it is not as such that he assailed them, but on the ground of their falsehood. The law, he teaches, is of everlasting validity. Though revealed in time it was superior to time. Before it had been made known in gundry portions to the

fathers it had been kept in heaven by the angels, and to its observance henceforward there was no limit in time or in eternity.

Writing in the palmiest days of the Maccabean dominion, in the high-priesthood of John Hyrcanus, looked for the immediate advent of the Messianic kingdom. This kingdom was to be ruled over by a Messiah sprung, not from Levi -that is, from the Maccabean family, as some of his contemporaries expected- but from Judah. This kingdom would be gradually realized on earth, and the transformation of physical nature would go hand in hand with the ethical transformation of man till there was a new heaven and a new earth. Thus, finally, all sin and pain would disappear and men would live to the age of 1,000 years in happiness and peace, and after death enjoy a blessed immortality in the spirit world.

1. VARIOUS TITLES OF THE BOOK.

Our book was known by two distinct titles even in Hebrew. (a) Jubilees (b) The Little Genesis (c) Apocalypse of Moses and other alleged names of the book.

a. Jubilees. This appears from Epiphanius (Haer. xxxix. 6) to have been its usual designation. It is found also in the Syriac Fragment entitled 'Names of the Wives of the Patriarchs according to the Hebrew Book of Jubilees,' first published by Ceriani, *Mon. sacra et profana*, ii. 1.9-10, and reprinted by the present writer in his edition of *The Ethiopic Version of the Hebrew Book of Jubilees*. This name admirably describes the book, as it divides into jubilee periods of forty-nine years each the history of the world from the creation to the legislation on Sinai. The writer pursues a perfectly symmetrical development of the heptadic system. Israel enters Canaan at the close of the fiftieth jubilee, i.e. 2450.

b. The Little Genesis. The epithet 'little' does not refer to the extent of the book, for it is larger than the canonical Genesis, but to its character. It deals more fully with details than the biblical work. The Hebrew title was variously rendered in Greek. 1 [(Gk.) *he lepte Genesis* (or *Lepte Genesis*)] as in Epiphanius, Syncellus, Zonaras, Glycas. 2 [(Gk.) *he Leptogenesis*] in Didymus of Alexandria and in Latin writers, as we may infer from the Decree of Gelasius. 3 [Gk.] *ta lepta geneseos*] in Syncellus. 4 [(Gk.) *Mikrogenesis*] in Jerome, who was acquainted with the Hebrew original.

c.

1. The Apocalypse of Moses.
2. The Testament of Moses.
3. The Book of Adam's Daughters.
4. The Life of Adam.
5. The Apocalypse of Moses. This title had some currency in the time of Synceflus (see i. 5, 49). It forms an appropriate designation since it makes Moses the recipient of all the disclosures in the book.
6. The Testament of Moses. This title is found in the Catena of Nicephorus, i. 175, where it precedes a quotation from x. 21 of our book. It has, however,

nothing to do with the Testament of Moses, which has become universally known under the wrong title -the Assumption of Moses. Ronsch and other scholars formerly sought to identify Jubilees with this second Testament of Moses, but this identification is shown to be impossible by the fact that in the Stichometry of Nicephorus 4,300 stichoi are assigned to Jubilees and only 1100 to this Testament of Moses. On the probability of a Testament of Moses having been in circulation -which was in reality an expansion of Jubilees ii-iii see my edition of Jubilees, p. xviii.

7. The Book of Adam's Daughters. This book is identified with Jubilees in the Decree of Gelasius, but it probably consisted merely of certain excerpts from Jubilees dealing with the names and histories of the women mentioned in it. Such a collection, as we have already seen, exists in Syriac, and its Greek prototype was used by the scribe of the LXX MS. no.135 in Holmes and Parsons' edition.
8. The Life of Adam. This title is found in Syncellus i. 7-9. It seems to have been an enlarged edition of the portion of Jubilees, which dealt with the life of Adam.

d. THE ETHIOPIC MSS.

There are four Ethiopic MSS., a b c d, the first and fourth of which belong to the National Library in Paris, the second to the British Museum, and the third to the University Library at Tubingen. Of these a b (of the fifteenth and sixteenth century respectively) are the most trustworthy, though they cannot be followed exclusively. In a, furthermore, the readings of the Ethiopic version of Genesis have replaced the original against bed in iii. 4, 6, 7, 19, 29; iv. 4, 8, Cc. For a full description of these MSS. the reader can consult Charles's Ethiopic Version of the Hebrew Book of Jubilees, pp. xii seqq.

e. THE ANCIENT VERSIONS-GREEK, ETHIOPIC, LATIN, SYRIAC.

(a) The Greek Version is lost save for some fragments which survive in Epiphanius [(Gk.) *peri Metron kai Stathmon*] (ed. Dindorf, vol. iv. 27-8). This fragment, which consists of ii. 2-21, is published with critical notes in Charles's edition of the Ethiopic text. Other fragments of this version are preserved in Justin Martyr, Origen, Diodorus of Antioch, Isidore of Alexandria, Isidore of Seville, Eutychius, Patriarch of Alexandria, John of Malala, Syncellus, Cedrenus. Syncellus attributes to the Canonical Genesis statements derived from our text. This version is the parent of the Ethiopic and Latin Versions.

(b) The Ethiopic Version. This version is most accurate and trustworthy and indeed as a rule servilely literal. It has, of course, suffered from the corruptions naturally incident to transmission through MSS. Thus dittographies are frequent and lacunae are of occasional occurrence, but the version is singularly free from the glosses and corrections of unscrupulous scribes, though the temptation must have been great to bring it into accord with the Ethiopic version of Genesis. To this source, indeed, we must trace a few perversions of the text: 'my wife' in iii. 6 instead of 'wife'; xv 12; xvii. 12 ('her bottle' instead of 'the bottle'); xxiv. 19 (where the words 'a well' are not found in the Latin version of Jubilees, nor in the Mass., Sam., LXX, Syr., and Vulg. of Gen. xxvi. 19). In the above

passages the whole version is influenced, but in a much greater degree has this influence operated on MS. a. Thus in iii. 4, 6, 7, 19, 29, iv. 4, 8, v.3, vi. 9, Cc., the readings of the Ethiopic version of Genesis have replaced the original text. In the case of b there appears to be only one instance of this nature in xv. 15 (see Charles's Text, pp. xii seqq.).

For instances of corruption native to this version, see Charles on ii. 2, 7, 21, vi. 21, vii. 22, x. 6, 21, xvi. 18, xxiv. 20, 29, xxxi. 2, xxxix. 4, xli. 15, xlv. 4, xlviii. 6.

(c) The Latin Version. This version, of which about one-fourth has been preserved, was first published by Ceriani in his *Monnmenta sacra et profana*, 1861, tom. i. fase. i. 15-62. It contains the following sections: xiii. 10b-21; xv. 20b-31a; xvi. 5b-xvii. 6a; xviii. 10b-xix. 25; xx. 5b-xxi. 10a; xxii. 2-19a; xxiii. 8b-23a; xxiv. 13-xxv. 1a; xxvi. 8b-23a; xxvii. 11b-24a; xxviii. 16b-27a; xxix. 8b-xxx. 1a; xxxi. 9b-18, 29b-32; xxxii. 1-8a, 18b-xxxiii. 9a, 18b-xxxiv. 5a; xxxv. 3b-12a; xxxvi. 20b-xxxvii. 5a; xxxviii. 1b-16a; xxxix. 9-xl. 8a; xli. 6b-18; xlii. 2b-14a; xlv. 8-xlvi. 1, 12-xlviii. 5; xlix. 7b-22. This version was next edited by Ronsch in 1874, *Das Buch der Fubilaen . . . unter Befugung des revidirten Textes der . . . lateinisehen Fragmente*. This work attests enormous industry and great learning, but is deficient in judgement and critical acumen. Ronsch was of opinion that this Latin version was made in Egypt or its neighbourhood by a Palestinian Jew about the middle of the fifth century (pp.459-60). In 1895 Charles edited this text afresh in conjunction with the Ethiopic in the *Oxford Anecdota* (The Ethiopic Version of the Hebrew Book of Jubilees). To this work and that of Ronsch above the reader must be referred for a fuller treatment of this subject. Here we may draw attention to the following points. This version, where it is preserved, is almost of equal value with the Ethiopic. It has, however, suffered more at the hands of correctors. Thus it has been corrected in conformity with the LXX in xlv. 14, where it adds 'et Oon' against all other authorities. The Ethiopic version of Exod. i. 11 might have been expected to bring about this addition in our Ethiopic text, but it did not. Two similar instances will be found in xvii. 5, xxiv. 20. Again the Latin version seems to have been influenced by the Vulgate in xxix. 13. xlii. II (canos meos where our Ethiopic text = [(Gk.) mou to geras] as in LXX of Gen. xlii. 38); and probably also in xlvii. 7, 8, and certainly in xlv. 12, where it reads 'in tota terra' for 'in terra'. Of course there is the possibility that the Latin has reproduced faithfully the Greek and that the Greek was faulty; or in case it was correct, that it was the Greek presupposed by our Ethiopic version that was at fault.

Two other passages are deserving of attention, xix. 14 and xxxix. 13. In the former the Latin version 'et creverunt et iuvenes facti sunt' agrees with the Ethiopic version of Gen. xxv. 27 against the Ethiopic version of Jubilees and all other authorities on Gen. xxv. 27. Here the peculiar reading can be best explained as having originated in the Greek. In the second passage, the clause 'eorum quae fiebant in carcere' agrees with the Ethiopic version of Gen. xxxix. 23 against the Ethiopic version of Jubilees and all other authorities on Gen. xxxix. 23. On the other hand, there is a large array of passages in which the Latin version preserves the true text over against corruptions or omissions in the Ethiopic version: cf. xvi. 16, xix. 5, 10, 11, xx. 6, 10, xxi. 3, xxii. 3, Cc. (see my Text, p. xvi).

(d) The Syriac Version. The evidence as to the existence of a Syriac is not conclusive. It is based on the fact that a British Museum MS. (Add. 12154, fol. 180) contains a Syriac fragment entitled, *Names of the Wives of the Patriarchs according to the Hebrew Book called Jubilees*. It was first published by Ceriani in his *Monumeitta Sacra*, 1861, torn. ii. fasc. i. 9-10, and reprinted by Charles as Appendix III to his Text of Jubilees (p. 183).

f. THE ETHIOPIC AND LATIN VERSIONS-TRANSLATIONS FROM THE GREEK.

Like all the biblical literature in Ethiopic, Jubilees was translated into Ethiopic from the Greek. Greek words such as [drus, balanos, lips, schinos, pharaggs, Cc., are transliterated into Ethiopic. Secondly, many passages must be retranslated into Greek before we can discover the source of their corruptions. And finally, many names are transliterated as they appear in Greek and not in Hebrew.

That the Latin is derived directly from the Greek is no less obvious. Thus in xxxix. 12 [(Lt.) timoris = (Gk.) deilias], a corruption of douleias; in xxxviii. 13 [(Lt.) honorem = (Gk.) timen], which should have been rendered by (Lt.) tributum. Another class of mistranslations may be seen in passages where the Greek article is rendered by the Latin demonstrative as in (Lt.) huius Abrahae xxix. i6, huic Istraël xxxi. 15. Other evidence pointing in the same direction is to be found in the Greek constructions which have been reproduced in the Latin; such as xvii. 3 (Lt.) mem or fuit sermones' = (Gk.) hemnesthe tous logous: in xv. 22 (Lt.) consummavit loquens = (Gk.) Sunetelese lalon: in xxii. 8 (Lt.) 'in omnibus quibus dedisti' = en pasin ois edokas.

g. THE GREEK-A TRANSLATION FROM THE HEBREW.

The early date of our book -the second century B.C.- and the fact that it was written in Palestine speak for a Semitic original, and the evidence for such an original is conclusive. But the question at once arises, was the original written in Hebrew or Aramaic? Certain proper names in the Latin version ending in -in seem to bespeak an Aramaic original, as Cettin xxiv. 28; Adurin xxxviii. 8,9; Filistin xxiv. 14-16. But since in all these cases the Ethiopic transliterations end in -n and not in -nit is not improbable that this Aramaising in the Latin version is due to the translator, who, as Ronsch has concluded on other grounds, was a Palestinian Jew. Again, in the list of the twelve trees suitable for burning on the altar some are transliterations of Aramaic names. But in a late Hebrew work - written at the close of the second century B.C.- the popular names of such objects would naturally be used. Moreover, in certain cases the Hebrew may have already been forgotten, or, when the tree had been lately introduced, been non-existent.

But the arguments for a Hebrew original are many and weighty. (1) A work which claims to be from the hand of Moses would naturally be written in Hebrew; for Hebrew, according to our author, was the sacred and national language, xii. 25-6; xliii. 15. (2) The revival of the national spirit is, so far as we know, accompanied by a revival of the national language. (3) The existing text must be retranslated into Hebrew in order to explain unintelligible expressions and restore the true text. Thus (Ar.) la 'eleja in xliii. 11 = (Gk.) en emoi; which is a mistranslation in this context of (Hb.); for (Hb.) here = (Gk.) deomai, 'pray,' as in Gen. xlv. 18. In xlvii. 9 the text = (Lt.) 'domum (= Hb.) Faraonis', but the context demands (Lt.) 'filiam (= Hb.) Faraonis', though here the argument is not conclusive, since (Hb.) might have been corruptly written for (Hb.) which in Aramaic = 'daughter'. Again in xxxvi. 10 (cp. also xxxix. 6) the text = (Gk.) ouk anabesetai (= ja'arg) (Gk.) eis to biblion tes zoes. But ja'arg must = 'will be recorded'. Now this meaning is unattested elsewhere in Ethiopic, but the difficulty is solved when we find that it is a Hebrew idiom: see I Chron. xxvii. 24, 2 Chron. xx. 34. (4) Many paronomasiae discover themselves on retranslation into Hebrew, as in iv. 9 there is a play on the name Enoch, in iv. 15 on Jared, in viii. 8 on Peleg, Cc. (5) Many passages are preserved in Rabbinic writings, and the book has much matter in common with the Testaments xii Patriarchs, 'which was written about the same date in Hebrew. Both books, in fact, use a chronology peculiar

to themselves. (6) Fragments of the original Hebrew text or of the sources used by its author are to be found in the Book of Noah and the Midrasch Wajjisau in Jellinek's Beth-ha-Midrash, iii. 155-6, 3-5, reprinted in Charles's edition of the Ethiopic text on pp. 179-81.

h. TEXTUAL AFFINITIES.

A minute study of the text shows that it attests an independent form of the Hebrew text of Genesis and the early chapters of Exodus. Thus it agrees with individual authorities such as the Samaritan or the LXX, or the Syriac, or the Vulgate, or the Targum of Onkelos against all the rest. Or again it agrees with two or more of these authorities in opposition to the rest, as for instance with the Massoretic and Samaritan against the LXX, Syriac and Vulgate, or with the Massoretic and Onkelos against the Samaritan, LXX, Syriac, and Vulgate, or with the Massoretic, Samaritan and Syriac against the LXX or Vulgate. But the reader must here be referred to Charles's Book of Jubilees (pp. xxxiii--xxxix) for a full classification of these instances. A study of these phenomena proves that our book represents some form of the Hebrew text midway between the forms presupposed by the LXX and the Syriac; for it agrees more frequently with the LXX, or with combinations into which the LXX enters, than with any other single authority. Next to the LXX it agrees most often with the Syriac or with combinations into which the Syriac enters. On the other hand, its independence of the LXX is shown by a large array of readings, where it has the support of the Samaritan and Massoretic, or of these with various combinations of the Syriac, Vulgate and Onkelos. From these and like considerations we may conclude that the textual evidence points to the composition of our book at some period between 250 B.C. and 100 A.D. and at a time nearer the earlier date than the latter. 4

8. THE VALUE OF THE BOOK OF JUBILEES IN THE CRITICISM OF THE MASSORETIC TEXT OF THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

From a study of the facts which are referred to in the preceding Section it will be clear that before and after the Christian era the Hebrew text did not possess any hard and fast tradition. It will further be obvious that the Massoretic form of this text, which has so long been generally as conservative of the most ancient tradition and as therefore final, is after all only one of many phases through which the text passed in the process of over 1,000 years, ie. 400 B.C. till A.D. 600, or thereabouts.

As we pursue the examination of the materials just mentioned we shall see grounds for regarding the Massoretic text as the result partly of conscious recension and partly of unconscious change extending over many centuries. How this process affected the text in the centuries immediately preceding and subsequent to the Christian era, we have some means of determining in the Hebrew-Samaritan text which, however much it may have been tampered with on religious or polemical grounds, still preserves in many cases the older reading, even as it preserves the older of the alphabet. Next we have the LXX of the Pentateuch, to which we may assign the date 200 B.C.; next the Book of Jubilees just before the Christian era; the Syriac Pentateuch before A.D. 100; the Vulgate of the fourth century; the Targums of Onkelos and Ps.-Jon. in their present form A.D. 300-600.

We have above remarked that the evidence of 6 shows that the Massoretic text is only one of the phases through which the Hebrew text has passed; and if we consider afresh the materials of evidence suggested in that Section in connexion with their dates, and given in some fullness in the Introductions to Charles's Text and Commentary, we shall discover that in some respects it is one of the latest phases of the Hebrew Pentateuch that has been stereotyped by Jewish scholars in the Massoretic text.

This conclusion will tally perfectly with the tradition that all existing Massoretic MSS. are derived in the main from one archetype, i.e. the Hebrew Codex left behind him by Ben Asher, who lived in the tenth century, and whose family had lived at Tiberias in the eighth.

We shall now proceed to give a list of readings in the Massoretic text which should be corrected into accord with the readings attested by such great authorities as the Sam., LXX, Jub., Syr., Vulg.

The following list was published in Charles's Ethiopic Version of the Hebrew Book of Jubilees in 1895. More than two-thirds of the emendations of the Book of Genesis here suggested were subsequently accepted independently, on the evidence of the Sam., LXX, Syr., Vulg., without a knowledge of Jubilees, by C.J. Ball in his edition of the Hebrew Text of Genesis, 1896, by Kittel in his edition of the Hebrew Text of Genesis, 1905, and more than half in the recent Commentary of Gunkel.

[What follows contains many phrases written in Hebrew. At the time of scanning there was not an accessible means to accurately reproduce the Hebrew script. If this information is desired please see Mr. Charles book.]

i. DATE OF (a) THE ORIGINAL TEXT AND (b) OF THE VERSIONS.

(a) Jubilees was written between 153 B.C. and the year of Hyrcanus' breach with the Pharisees. (1) It was written during the pontificate of the Maccabean family, and not earlier than 155 B.C., when this office was assumed by Jonathan the Maccabee. For in xxxii. 1, Levi is called a 'priest of the Most High God.' Now the only Jewish high-priests who bore this title were the Maccabean, who appear to have assumed it as reviving the order of Melchizedek when they displaced the Zadokite order of Aaron. Despite the objections of the Pharisees, it was used by the Maccabean princes down to Hyrcanus II (Jos. Ant. xvi. 6.2). (2) It was written before 96 B.C.; for since our author was of the strictest sect a Pharisee and at the same time an upholder of the Maccabean pontificate, Jubilees cannot have been written later than 96, when the Pharisees and Alexander Jannaeus were openly engaged in mortal strife. (3) It was written before the public breach between Hyrcanus and the Pharisees when Hyrcanus joined the Sadducean party. As Hyrcanus died in 105, our book was written between 153 and 105.

But it is possible to define these limits more closely. The book presupposes as its historical background the most flourishing period of the Maccabean hegemony -such as that under Simon and Hyrcanus. The conquest of Edom, which was achieved by the latter, is referred to in xxxviii. 14. Again our text reflects accurately the intense hatred of Judah towards the Philistines in the second century B.C. It declares that they will fall into the hands of the righteous nation, and we learn from I Macc. and Josephus that Ashdod and Gaza were destroyed by Hyrcanus and Alexander Jannaeus respectively. But it is in the destruction of Samaria, which is adumbrated in the destruction of Shechem, xxx. 4-6, that we are to look for the true terminus a quo. Now all accounts agree in representing the destruction of Samaria as effected by Hyrcanus about four years before his death. Hence we conclude that Jubilees was written between 109 and 105 B.C.

Many other phenomena point to the second-century origin of our book, which are given in Charles's edition, pp. lviii-lxvi. Amongst these we might mention the currency of older and severer forms of the halacha than prevailed in the rabbinical schools, or were registered in the Mishnah. The severe halacha regarding the sabbath in i. 8, 12, were indubitably in force in the second century B.C., if not earlier, but were afterwards mitigated by the Mishnah and later Judaism. Again the strict halacha in xv. 14 regarding circumcision on the eighth day was a current, probably the current, view in the second century B.C. and earlier, since it has the support of the Samaritan text and the LXX. This strict law was subsequently relaxed in the Mishnah. In xxxii. 15 the severe law of tithing found in Lev. xxvii. 15 is enforced, but rabbinic tradition sought to weaken the statement. As regards the halacha laid down in iii. 31 regarding the duty of covering one's shame, it is highly probable that such a halacha did exist in the second century B.C., when Judaism was protesting against the exposure of the person in the Greek games. See also iii. 8-14 notes and xx. 4 note.

Other cases of strict rules afterwards relaxed are the limitation of trees for use with burnt offerings (see xxi. 12-15 notes), the restriction of the eating of the passover to the court of the Lords house (see xlix. 20 note), the close adherence to the exacting demand of Lev. xix. 24 that the fourth year's fruit should be holy (see vii. 36 notes), though here we have a variant reading. Note that the rest of the firstfruits belong to the priests, who are to eat them 'before the altar.' On the other hand, the thank-offerings in xxi. 8-10 do not belong to the priest. The computation of the Feast of Weeks is different from the later prevalent Pharisaic reckoning (see xv. 1 note; xvi. 13, xliv. 4-5), while the account of the Feast of Tabernacles in xvi. 21-31 is peculiar to Jubilees.

Finally, we might draw attention to the fact that the Pharisaic regulation about pouring water on the altar (Jer. Sukk. iv. 6; Sukk. 44a) at the feast of tabernacles appears to have been unknown to him. We know that the attempt of the Pharisees to enforce its adoption on Alexander Jannaeus resulted in a massacre of the former. Attention might also be drawn to the fact that the Priests and Levites still numbered in their ranks, as in the days of the author of Chronicles, the masters of the schools and the men of learning, and that these positions were not filled as in the days of Shammai and Hillel by men drawn from the laity. This inference is to be deduced from the fact that the Levites are represented as the guardians of the sacred books and of the secret lore transmitted from the worthies of old time (x. 4, xlv. 16).

(b) Date of the Ethiopic and Latin Versions. There is no evidence for determining the exact date of the Ethiopic version, but since it was practically regarded as a canonical book it was probably made in the sixth century. Ronsch, as we have already pointed out in 4, gives some evidence for regarding the Latin version as made in the fifth century.

j. JUBILEES FROM ONE AUTHOR BUT BASED ON EASTERN BOOKS AND TRADITIONS.

Our book is the work of one author, but is largely based on earlier books and traditions. The narrative of Genesis forms of course the bulk of the book, but much that is characteristic in it is due to his use of many pseudepigraphic and ancient traditions. Amongst the former might be mentioned the Book of Noah, from which in a modified form he borrows vii. 20-39, x. 1-15. In vii. 26-39 he reproduces his source so faithfully that he leaves the persons unchanged, and forgets to adapt this fragment to its new context. Similarly our author lays the Book of Enoch under contribution, and is of great value in this respect in determining the dates of the various sections of this book. See Introd. to I Book of Enoch, in loc. For other authorities and traditions used by our author see Charles's edition, 13.

k. JUBILEES IS A PRODUCT OF THE MIDRASHIC TENDENCY WHICH HAD BEEN ALREADY AT WORK IN THE O.T. BOOKS OF CHRONICLES.

The Chronicler rewrote with an object the earlier history of Israel and Judah already recounted in Samuel and Kings. His object was to represent David and his pious successors as observing all the precepts of the law according to the Priests' Code. In the course of this process all facts that did not square with the Chronicler's presuppositions were either omitted or transformed. Now the author of Jubilees sought to do for Genesis what the Chronicler had done for Samuel and Kings, and so he rewrote it in such a way as to show that the law was rigorously observed even by the Patriarchs. The author represents his book to be as a whole a revelation of God to Moses, forming a supplement to and an interpretation of the Pentateuch, which he designates 'the first law' (vi. 22). This revelation was in part a secret republication of the traditions handed down from father to son in antediluvian and subsequent times. From the time of Moses onwards it was preserved in the hands of the priesthood, till the time came for its being made known.

Our author's procedure is of course in direct antagonism with the presuppositions of the Priests' Code in Genesis, for according to this code 'Noah may build no altar, Abraham offer no sacrifice, Jacob erect no sacred pillar. No offering is recorded till Aaron and his sons are ready' (Carpenter, The Hexateuch, i. 124). This fact seems to emphasize in the strongest manner how freely our author reinterpreted his authorities for the past. But he was only using to the full a right that had been

exercised for nearly four centuries already in regard to Prophecy and for four or thereabouts in regard to the law.

l. OBJECT OF JUBILEES -THE DEFENCE AND EXPOSITION OF JUDAISM FROM THE PHARISAIC STANDPOINT OF THE SECOND CENTURY B.C.

The object of our author was to defend Judaism against the disintegrating effects of Hellenism, and this he did (a) by glorifying the law as an eternal ordinance and representing the patriarchs as models of piety; (b) by glorifying Israel and insisting on its separation from the Gentiles; and (e) by denouncing the Gentiles and particularly Israel's national enemies. In this last respect Judaism regarded its own attitude to the Gentiles as not only justifiable but also just, because it was a reflection of the divine.

But on (a) it is to be observed further that to our author the law, as a whole, was the realization in time of what was in a sense timeless and eternal. It was observed not only on earth by Israel but in heaven. Parts of the law might have only a time reference, to Israel on earth, but in the privileges of circumcision and the Sabbath, as its highest and everlasting expression, the highest orders of archangels in heaven shared with Israel (ii. i8, 19, 21; xv. 26-28). The law, therefore, was supreme, and could admit of no assessor in the form of Prophecy. There was no longer any prophet because the law had made the free exercise of his gift an offence against itself and God. So far, therefore, as Prophecy existed, it could exist only under the guise of pseudonymity. The seer, who had like Daniel and others a message for his time, could only gain a hearing by issuing it under the name of some ancient worthy.

m. THE AUTHOR -A PHARISEE WHO RECOGNIZED THE MACCABEAN PONTIFICATE AND WAS PROBABLY A PRIEST.

Since our author was an upholder of the everlasting validity of the law, and held the strictest views on circumcision, the Sabbath, and the duty of complete separation from the Gentiles, since he believed in angels and demons and a blessed immortality, he was unquestionably a Pharisee of the strictest sect. In the next place, he was a supporter of the Maccabean pontificate. He glorifies Levi's successors as high-priests and civil rulers, and applies to them the title priests of the Most High God -the title assumed by the Maccabean princes (xxxii. 1). He was not, however, so thoroughgoing an admirer of this dynasty as the authors of Test. Lev. xviii. or Ps. cx, who expected the Messiah to come forth from the Maccabean family. Finally, that our author was a priest might reasonably be inferred from the exaltation of Levi over Judah (xxxi-xxxii), and from the statement in xlv. i6 that the secret traditions, which our author claims to publish, were kept in the hands of Levi's descendants.

n. INFLUENCE ON LATER LITERATURE.

On the influence of Jubilees on I Enoch i-v, xci-civ, Wisdom (?), 4 Ezra, Chronicles of Jerachmeel, Midrash Tadshe, Book of Jasher, the Samaritan Chronicle, on Patristic and other writings, and on the New Testament writers, see Charles's edition, pp. lxxiii-lxxxvi.

o. THEOLOGY. SOME OF OUR AUTHOR'S VIEWS.

Freedom and determinism. The author of Jubilees is a true Pharisee in that he combines belief in Divine omnipotence and providence with the belief in human freedom and responsibility. He would

have adopted heartily the statement of the Pss. Sol. ix. 7 (written some sixty years or more later) (Gk.) *ta erga emon en ekloge kai exousia tes psuches emon, tou poiesai dikaiousunen kai adikian en ergois cheiron emon*: v. 6 *anthropos kai e meris autou para soi en stathmo ou prosthesai tou pleonasai para to krima sou, o theos*. Thus the path in which a man should walk is ordained for him and the judgement of all men predetermined on the heavenly tablets: 'And the judgment of all is ordained and written on the heavenly tablets in righteousness -even the judgment of all who depart from the path which is ordained for them to walk in' (v.13). This idea of an absolute determinism underlies many conceptions of the heavenly tablets (see Charles's edition, iii. 10 note). On the other hand, man's freedom and responsibility are fully recognized: 'If they walk not therein, judgment is written down for every creature' (v. 13): 'Beware lest thou walk in their ways, And tread in their paths, And sin a sin unto death before the Most High God. Else He will give thee back into the hand of thy transgression.' Even when a man has sinned deeply he can repent and be forgiven (xli. 24 seq.), but the human will needs the strengthening of a moral dynamic: 'May the Most High God . . . strengthen thee to do His will' (xxi. 25, xxii. 10).

The Fall. The effects of the Fall were limited to Adam and the animal creation. Adam was driven from the garden (iii. 17 seqq.) and the animal creation was robbed of the power of speech (iii. 28). But the subsequent depravity of the human race is not traced to the Fall but to the seduction of the daughters of men by the angels, who had been sent down to instruct men (v.1-4), and to the solicitations of demonic spirits (vii. 27). The evil engendered by the former was brought to an end by the destruction of all the descendants of the angels and of their victims by the Deluge, but the incitement to sin on the part of the demons was to last to the final judgement (vii. 27, x. 1-15, xi. 4 seq., xii. 20). This last view appears in I Enoch and the N.T.

The Law. The law was of eternal validity. It was not the expression of the religious consciousness of one or of several ages, but the revelation in time of what was valid from the beginning and unto all eternity. The various enactments of the law moral and ritual, were written on the heavenly tablets (iii. 31, vi. 17, Cc.) and revealed to man through the mediation of angels (i. 27). This conception of the law, as I have already pointed out, made prophecy impossible unless under the guise of pseudonymity. Since the law was the ultimate and complete expression of absolute truth, there was no room for any further revelation: much less could any such revelation, were it conceivable, supersede a single jot or tittle of the law as already revealed. The ideal of the faithful Jew was to be realized in the fulfilment of the moral and ritual precepts of this law: the latter were of no less importance than the former. Though this view of morality tends to be mainly external, our author strikes a deeper note when he declares that, when Israel turned to God with their whole heart, He would circumcise the foreskin of their heart and create a right spirit within them and cleanse them, so that they would not turn away from Him for ever (i. 23). Our author specially emphasizes certain elements of the law such as circumcision (xvi. 14, xv. 26, 29), the Sabbath (ii. 18 seq., 31 seq.), eating of blood (vi. 14), tithing of the tithe (xxxii. 10), Feast of Tabernacles (xvi. 29), Feast of Weeks (vi. 17), the absolute prohibition of mixed marriages (xx. 4, xxii. 20, xxv. 1-10). In connexion with many of these he enunciates halacha which belong to an earlier date than those in the Mishnah, but which were either modified or abrogated by later authorities.

The Messiah. Although our author is an upholder of the Maccabean dynasty he still clings like the writer of I Enoch lxxxiii-xc to the hope of a Messiah sprung from Judah. He makes, however, only one reference to this Messiah, and no role of any importance is assigned to him (see Charles's edition,

xxxi. 18 n.). The Messianic expectation showed no vigorous life throughout this century till it was identified with the Maccabean family. If we are right in regarding the Messianic kingdom as of temporary duration, this is the first instance in which the Messiah is associated with a temporary Messianic kingdom.

The Messianic kingdom. According to our author (i. 29, xxiii. 30) this kingdom was to be brought about gradually by the progressive spiritual development of man and a corresponding transformation of nature. Its members were to attain to the full limit of 1,000 years in happiness and peace. During its continuance the powers of evil were to be restrained (xxiii. 29). The last judgement was apparently to take place at its close (xxiii. 30). This view was possibly derived from Mazdeism.

The writer of Jubilees, we can hardly doubt, thought that the era of the Messianic kingdom had already set in. Such an expectation was often cherished in the prosperous days of the Maccabees. Thus it was entertained by the writer of I Enoch lxxxiii-xc in the days of Judas before 161 B.C. Whether Jonathan was looked upon as the divine agent for introducing the kingdom we cannot say, but as to Simon being regarded in this light there is no doubt. Indeed, his contemporaries came to regard him as the Messiah himself, as we see from Psalm cx, or Hyrcanus in the noble Messianic hymn in Test. Levi 18. The tame effusion in 1 Macc. xiv. 8-15 is a relic of such literature, which was emasculated by its Sadducean editor. Simon was succeeded by John Hyrcanus in 135 B.C. and this great prince seemed to his countrymen to realize the expectations of the past; for according to a contemporary writer (Test. Levi 8) he embraced in his own person the triple office of prophet, priest, and civil ruler (xxxix. i5), while according to the Test. Reuben 6 he was to 'die on behalf of Israel in wars seen and unseen'. In both these passages he seems to be accorded the Messianic office, but not so in our author, as we have seen above. Hyrcanus is only to introduce the Messianic kingdom, over which the Messiah sprung from Judah is to rule.

Priesthood of Melchizedek. That there was originally an account of Melchizedek in our text we have shown in the note on xiii. 2,5, and, that the Maccabean high-priests deliberately adopted the title applied to him in Gen. xiv, we have pointed out in the note on xxxii. I. It would be interesting to inquire how far the writer of Hebrews was indebted to the history of the great Maccabean king-priests for the idea of the Melchizedekian priesthood of which he has made so fruitful a use in chap. vii as applied to our Lord.

The Future Life. In our text all hope of a resurrection of the body is abandoned. The souls of the righteous will enjoy a blessed immortality after death (xxiii. 31). This is the earliest attested instance of this expectation in the last two centuries B.C. It is next found in Enoch xci-civ.

The Jewish Calendar. For our author's peculiar views see Charles's edition 18 and the notes on vi. 29-30, 32, xv. I.

Angelology. We shall confine our attention here to notable parallels between our author and the New Testament. Besides the angels of the presence and the angels of sanctification there are the angels who are set over natural phenomena (ii. 2). These angels are inferior to the former. They do not observe the Sabbath as the higher orders; for they are necessarily always engaged in their duties (ii. 18). It is the higher orders that are generally referred to in the New Testament but the angels over natural phenomena are referred to in Revelation: angels of the winds in vii. 1, 2, the angel of fire in xiv. 18, the angel of the waters in xvi. 5 (cf. Jub. ii. 2). Again, the guardian angels of

individuals, which the New Testament refers to in Matt. xviii. 10 (Acts xii. 15), are mentioned, for the first time in Jubilees xxxv. 17. On the angelology of our author see Charles's edition.

Demonology. The demonology of our author reappears for the most part in the New Testament:

(a) The angels which kept not their first estate, Jude 6 ; 2 Peter ii. 4, are the angelic watchers who, though sent down to instruct mankind (Jub. iv. 15), fell from lusting after the daughters of men. Their fall and punishment are recorded in Jub. iv. 22, v.1-9.

(b) The demons are the spirits which went forth from the souls of the giants who were the children of the fallen angels, Jub. v. 7, 9. These demons attacked men and ruled over them (x. 3, 6). Their purpose is to corrupt and lead astray and destroy the wicked (x. 8). They are subject to the prince Mastema (x. 9), or Satan. Men sacrifice to them as gods (xxii. 17). They are to pursue their work of moral ruin till the judgement of Mastema (x. 8) or the setting up of the Messianic kingdom, when Satan will be no longer able to injure mankind (xxiii. 29).

So in the New Testament, the demons are disembodied spirits (Matt. xii. 43-5; Luke xi. 24-6). Their chief is Satan (Mark iii. 22). They are treated as divinities of the heathen (I Cor. x. 20). They are not to be punished till the final judgement (Matt. viii. 29). On the advent of the Millennium Satan will be bound (Rev. xx. 2-3).

Judgement. The doctrine of retribution is strongly enforced by our author. It is to be individual and national in this world and in the next. As regards the individual the law of exact retribution is according to our author not merely an enactment of human justice -the ancient *loq talionis*, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; it is observed by God in His government of the world. The penalty follows in the line of the sin. This view is enforced in 2 Macc. v. 10, where it is said of Jason, that, as he robbed multitudes of the rites of sepulture, so he himself was deprived of them in turn, and in xv. 32 seq. it is recounted of Nicanor that he was punished in those members with which he had sinned. So also in our text in reference to Cain iv. 31 seq. and the Egyptians xlviii. 14. Taken crassly and mechanically the above law is without foundation, but spiritually conceived it represented the profound truth of the kinship of the penalty to the sin enunciated repeatedly in the New Testament: 'Whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap' (Gal. vi.); 'he that doeth wrong shall receive again the wrong that he hath done' (Col. iii. 25, Cc.). Again in certain cases the punishment was to follow instantaneously on the transgression (xxxvii. 17).

The final judgement was to take place at the close of the Messianic kingdom (xxiii. 30). This judgement embraces the human and superhuman worlds (v. 10 seq., 14). At this judgement there will be no respect of persons, but all will be judged according to their opportunities and abilities (v. 15 seq.). From the standpoint of our author there could be no hope for the Gentiles.

The Book of the Saints of Ethiopia (see the Miracles of Takla Haymanot)

The Miracles of Takla Haymanot

According to Edward Ullendorff's *Catalogue of Ethiopian Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library: Volume II*: "Arthur Wellesley Ray no doubt acquired this MS. at Magdala and brought it back to Europe when Lord Napier's Expedition returned. On the same page (f. 1a) we find the original signatures of the prisoners who had been detained at Theodore's Court and were the object of the British Military Expedition:

H. Rassam
Laurence Kerans
W. F. Prideaux
J. M. Flad

H. Blanc
Mrs H. Rosenthal
H. Rosenthal
H. A. Stern

"The MS. is a particularly fine specimen of Ethiopian MS. art and is in a good condition. Purchased in 1893," Ullendorff adds.

His catalogue describes 66 manuscripts in the Bodleian collection. He writes: "On the whole, it is safe to assume that the majority of the MSS here described, were acquired in Ethiopia by individual members of Napier's expedition in 1867-8. After the death of their owners many found their way to auction sales and were then purchased by the Bodleian Library."

Rita Pankhurst's paper *The Library of Emperor Tewodros II at Mäqdäla* is more conservative and lists MS 77 as one of five manuscripts in the Bodleian Library that certainly or very likely came from Magdala, on top of six manuscripts that probably did.

She adds: "Thirty-two other manuscripts in the Bodleian could conceivably have also come from Magdala although there is no evidence to this effect."

Many of the Western academics who got a first look at the manuscripts were scornful.

Here is Jacob Leveen on some of the manuscripts listed in Ullendorff's catalogue:

"Of the 66 items catalogued here, a large proportion consists of copies of those magical scrolls, which are perhaps too well represented in the libraries of Europe. They offer a melancholy spectacle of the depths of credulity and superstition to which Abyssinians sank. The hagiographical literature is no less depressing, with its exhibition of 'Mariolatry run mad' (as William Wright so aptly called it)." [Jacob Leveen's review of Ullendorff, E. (1851). *Catalogue of Ethiopian manuscripts in the Bodleian Library*: 27. Oxford: Clarendon Press]

The Book of the Angels of Ethiopia

he Holy Angels in Sacred Scripture <#>

First and foremost, the word "Angel" means "Messenger" and this word expresses the nature of Angelic service to the human race. From the days of man's life in paradise, mankind has known of their existence, and its almost universal recognition is reflected not only in Judaism but in most other ancient belief systems as well. When Adam, the first human, was expelled from Paradise after his fall, one of the Angelic hosts, a Cherubim, with a flaming sword was set to guard the gates of Eden (Genesis 3:24). When Abraham sent his servant to Nahor, his brother, he encouraged him by telling him that the Lord would send His Angel before him and prosper his way (Genesis 24: 7, 40). Jacob saw Angels both in a dream (the vision of the ladder) and when awake, when returning home to Esau he saw a host of the Angels of God. In the Psalter - Book of Psalms, there are constant references to Angels, and we also read of them in the Book of Job and the Prophets. The Prophet Isaiah saw the Seraphim surrounding the Throne of God, and the Prophet Ezekiel saw Cherubim in his vision of the Temple of God (Isaiah 6:1-7, Ezekiel. 10:1-22.)

In the New Testament, the Book of Revelation contains many details about Angels and many references to them. An Angel announced the birth of St. John the Baptist to his father, the Priest Zacharias; so also did an Angel announce the birth of the Savior to the most Blessed Virgin St. Mary and appear in a dream to the righteous St. Joseph. A immense host of Angels sang the Glory of Christ Jesus Nativity - Birth; an Angel announced the birth of the Savior to the Shepherds and stopped the Wise Men - Magi from returning to King Herod; Angels ministered to the Lord Jesus Christ during His temptation in the wilderness; an Angel appeared to Him in the Garden of Gethsemane; Angels announced His Resurrection to the myrrh-bearing women; and at His Ascension into Heaven, Angels proclaimed, His Second Coming. Angels loosed the bonds of St. Peter and the other Apostles (Acts 5:19) and of St. Peter alone (Acts 12:7-15); an Angel appeared to Cornelius the Roman Centurion, telling him to send for St. Peter who would instruct him in the Word of God (Acts 10:3-7). An Angel announced to St. Paul that he was to appear before Caesar (Acts 27:23-24) and the vision of Angels is the foundation of the Revelation of St. John the Apostle - Evangelist.

The Creation of the Angels

In the Symbol of Faith, the Nicene Creed, which we recite at every Eucharist - Qiddasie, we find the following words: "I believe in One God . . . the Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible." The invisible, Angelic world was created by Almighty God before the visible world. "When the stars were made, all My Angels praised Me with a loud voice" (Job 38:7). The Apostle St. Paul writes: "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers; all things were created by Him and for Him" (Colossians 1:16).

Studying the first words of the Book of Genesis, "In the beginning God created heaven and earth", some of the Fathers of the Church understand the word "heaven" as meaning not the firmament, which was created later, but the invisible heaven, the world of Angelic beings. Many teachers of the Orthodox Church have expressed the thought that Almighty God created the Angels long before the visible world (Sts. Ambrose, Jerome, Gregory the Dialogist, Anastasius of Sinai) and that at the time when the material universe was created, they already stood before the face of the Creator and served Him. St. Gregory writes about this as follows: "As the goodness (or "love") of God could not find satisfaction in contemplating Himself, He wished to spread this goodness ever further, so that

the number of those who would enjoy it should be as great as possible (for such is the nature of the highest form of goodness) and so God first thought of the Angelic heavenly powers, and thought became act, carried out by the Word and fulfilled by the Spirit. As His first creation was pleasing to Him, He then devised another world, material and visible, and a well-balanced unity between heaven and earth and that which is between them." This view of Abune Gregory is echoed in the work of Abba Yohannes the Syrian along with many other Fathers of the Church.

The Nature of the Angelic Hosts <#>

By their nature - make up, the Angels are active spirits endowed with reason, will and knowledge; they serve Almighty God, fulfilling the will of His Providence and praise Him. They are incorporeal spirits, and because they belong to the invisible world, cannot be seen by our bodily eyes. Abba Yohannes the Syrian writes: "When it is the will of Almighty God that Angels should appear to those who are worthy, they do not appear as they are in their essence, but, transformed, take on such an appearance as to be visible to physical eyes." In the Old Testament Book of Tobit, the Angel accompanying Tobit and his son says of himself: "All these days I was visible to you, but I neither ate nor drank, this only appeared to your eyes" (Tobit 12:19).

But Abba Yohannes also writes: "An Angel can only be called incorporeal and non-material in comparison with us. For in comparison with Almighty God, Who alone is beyond compare, everything seems coarse and material, only the Divinity is totally non-material -and incorporeal."

The Degree of Perfection of the Angels <#>

Angels are the most perfect spirits, superior to mankind in their spiritual powers; but even they, like all creation; are bound by their limitations. As they are incorporeal spirits, they are less confined, by space and place than men, and can travel distances of, to us, inconceivable vastness with lightning speed, to appear where it is necessary for them to act, as God directs. However, it is impossible to say that they are totally independent of limitations of space and place, or that they could be omnipresent - being presence in every place at the same time. Holy Scripture depicts Angels as descending from heaven to earth, or ascending from earth to heaven, which gives us reason to believe that they cannot be on earth and in heaven at the same time.

Immortality is one of the qualities of Angels, as we are given clear evidence in Holy Scripture, which teaches that they cannot die (St. Luke 20:36). However, their immortality is not Divine (that is, independent and unconditional), but depends, like the immortality of human souls, completely on the will and mercy of Almighty God.

Angels, being incorporeal spirits, are capable to the highest degree spiritual development. Their mind has a much more exalted superiority than that of the human mind and in power and strength they transcend all earthly authorities, as St. Peter teaches (II Peter 2:11). The nature of an Angel is higher than the nature of a man, as the Prophet King David teaches us when, to stress the dignity of a man, he remarks, "Thou hast made him a little lower than the Angels" (Psalm 8:5).

However, even their exalted qualities have their limits. Sacred Scripture tells us that they do not know the depths of the essence of God, which is known only to the Spirit of God: "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (I Corinthians 2:11). They do not know the future, which is also known only to God: "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, ... not the Angels which are

in heaven" (St. Mark 13:32). The Angels are also incapable of fully understanding the mystery of redemption, which they "desire to look into" (I Peter 1:12) but cannot. They are even incapable of knowing all human thoughts (Kings 8:39), and cannot perform miracles on their own but only by the will of Almighty God. "Blessed is the Lord, the God of Israel, Who alone doeth wonders" (Psalm 71:19).

The Numbers and the Ranks of Angels <#>

The world of Angelic beings is depicted in Sacred Scripture as immeasurably vast. When the Prophet Daniel saw the "Ancient of Days" in a vision, he saw that "thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousands of myriads attended upon Him" (Daniel 7:10). A multitude of the heavenly host are also described as hymning the Nativity of the Son of God.

St. Cyril, Archbishop of Jerusalem writes: "Imagine how great in number is the Roman people; imagine how great in number are the other barbarian peoples that now exist, and how many must have died even! In a century, imagine how many have been buried in a thousand years; imagine all mankind, from Adam to the present day. Great is their multitude, but it is small in comparison with the Angels, whose numbers are greater. They are the ninety-nine sheep, whereas the human race is the one lost sheep. By the greatness of a place one can judge the numbers of those who dwell in it. The earth we inhabit is a mere dot in the heavens, thus the heaven that surrounds it must have a much greater number of inhabitants. As is has greater space, the heavens of heavens hold their innumerable number. If it is written that 'a thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousands of myriads attended upon Him' this is only because the Prophet could express no greater number." When the numbers of the Angels are so great, it is natural to assume that in their world, as in the material: world, there are various degrees of perfections and therefore various ranks or a hierarchy of the heavenly powers. Thus Holy Scripture calls some Angels and others Archangels (I Thessalonians 4:16; Jude v. 9).

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, guided by the views of the writers of the early Church and the Fathers of the Church divides the world of the Angels into 9 ranks, and of these 9 into 3 hierarchies, each consisting of 3 ranks.

The First Hierarchy: Stand those that are closest to the Throne of God, the Cherubim, Seraphim and Thrones.

The Second or Middle Hierarchy: The Authorities, Dominions, and Powers.

The Third Hierarchy: Which is closest to us, contains Angels, Archangels and Principalities.

We find the enumeration of 9 ranks of Angels in the "Decrees of the Apostles", and in the works of St. Ignatius of Antioch, St. Gregory the Theologian, and St. John Chrysostom; later in the works of St. Gregory the Dialogist, St. Yohannes the Syrian and others. This is what St. Gregory the Dialogist writes: "We accept the existence of 9 ranks of Angels, because from the evidence of the Word of God we know about Angels, Archangels, Powers, Authorities, Principalities, Dominions, Thrones, Cherubim and Seraphim. The existence of Angels and Archangels is witnessed throughout Holy Scripture; it is principally the Books of the Prophets which mention Cherubim and Seraphim. The names of yet another 4 ranks are listed by the Apostle St. Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians, where he writes: 'Far above all Principality; and Power, and Might, and Dominion and every name that is

named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come' (Ephesians 1:21); and also in his Epistle to the Colossians: 'For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers: all things were created by Him and for Him' (Col. 1:16).

Thus, when to those 4, of whom he speaks to the Ephesians, that is to the Principalities, Authorities, Powers and Dominions, we add the Thrones, mentioned in the Epistle to the Colossians, that adds up to 5 ranks of Angels; and when to them we add the Angels, Archangels, Cherubim and Seraphim, we can see that there are 9 Ranks of Angelic beings"

And in fact, when we examine the books of Holy Scripture, we find the names of the 9 ranks which have been listed; more than nine are not mentioned. We read the name of the Cherubim in the 3rd Chapter of Genesis, in Psalms 80 and 99, in Chapter 10 of Ezekiel; of the Seraphim in Isaiah Chapter 6; of Powers in the Epistle to the Ephesians Chapter 1, and to the Romans Chapter 8; of Thrones, Authorities, Principalities, and Dominions in the Epistle to the Colossians Chapter 1, to the Ephesians Chapter 1 and 3; of Archangels in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians Chapter 4 and the Epistle of Jude v. 9; of Angels in the First Epistle of Peter Chapter 3, and the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans Chapter 8, and in; various other places. On this evidence of Holy Scripture the number of Angelic Ranks recognized in the teaching of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church is normally limited to nine.

However, some Fathers of the Church express their personal opinion that the division of Angelic beings into 9 Ranks covers only those names and ranks which have been revealed to us in this present life; others will be revealed in the world to come. This idea has been developed by St. John Chrysostom, among other Fathers of the Church. St. John Chrysostom writes: "There are in truth other powers, whose names even are unknown to us. Not only Angels, Archangels, Thrones, Dominions, Authorities and Powers inhabit the heavens, but there are innumerable other kinds and an unimaginable multitude of classes, which no words can be adequate to express. But what evidence is there that there are more powers than those whose names are known to us? The Apostle St. Paul, when he mentions one of the series of ranks we know, also reminds of the other which we do not, when he writes of Christ: 'He ... set Him at His own right hand, in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come' (Ephesians 1:20-21). From this we see that there are certain names which will be known then, but are now unknown. Hence the reference to a "name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."

These ideas, however, are regarded by the Church not as dogma, but as personal opinions which may or may not be true.

On the whole the writers and teachers of the early Church regarded the doctrine of the heavenly hierarchy as something mysterious. St Dionysius writes in his book, *On the Celestial Hierarchies*: "How many ranks there are of heavenly beings, what their nature is and in what manner the mystery of holy authority is ordered among them, only God can know in detail. It is He Who created their hierarchy, and they themselves know their own powers, the nature of their light, their holy and most peaceful system of ranks. All that we can say about this is what God has revealed to us through them themselves, because they know themselves". Augustine, Bishop of Hippo in the 4th Century has similar ideas. "That there exist thrones, principalities; dominions and powers in the heavenly

mansions, I believe most firmly, and I hold it as an undoubted fact that there are distinctions between them, but what exactly they are like and what exactly are the distinctions between them, I do not know."

In Holy Scripture we find the names of some of the highest Angels. There are two such names in the canonical books, "[Michael](#)", [the supreme Archangel](#) ("Who is like unto God?" Daniel 10:13; 12:1; Jude v. 9; Revelation 12:7-8) and "Gabriel" ("Man of God" Daniel 8:16; 9:21; St. Luke 1:19-26). In the deuterio-canonical books of the "Apocrypha" we have "Raphael" ("The help of God" Tobit 3:17; 12:15); "Uriel" ("Fire of God" A.V.) or "Jeremiel" ("The highness or mercy of God" R.V.), in II Esdras 4:36; "Uriel" also in II Esdras 4:1; "Salathiel" ("Prayer to God" A.V.) or "Phaltiel" R.V. or "Psaltiel" (in Syriac, II Esdras 5:16). Apart from these names, pious tradition gives yet another two names of Angels, "Jehudiel" ("The praise of God") and "Barachiel" ("The blessing of God"), although these names do not appear in Holy Scripture. Various listings exist of the great Archangels and in these many alternative names occur, yet it is significant that in all cases only seven names are given and this is in agreement with the words of St. John in the Revelation: "Grace be unto you and peace, from Him Which is, and Which is to come: and from the seven spirits which are before His throne " (Revelations 1:4).

The Service of the Angels <#>

But what is the purpose of the beings who people the spiritual world? Obviously Almighty God intended and intends that they should be the most perfect reflections of His Majesty and Glory and share in His bliss. If we are told of the visible heavens, "The heavens declare the glory of God", how much more is this the purpose of the spiritual heavens. For this reason St. Gregory the Theologian calls them "reflections of the Perfect Light" or secondary lights.

The Angels of those ranks which are closest to the human race appear in Holy Scripture as "Messengers" or "Heralds" of the will of God, guides for people and the servants of their salvation. The Apostle St. Paul writes: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Hebrews 1:14).

Angels not only hymn the glory of God, but also serve Him in the plan of His Providence for the material world. The Fathers of the Church often speak of this service of theirs. "Some of them stand before the Great God, while others by their action support the whole world" (St. Gregory the Theologian, "Songs of the Mysteries"). Angels are "set in command of the elements, the heavens, the world, and all within it" (St. Athenagoras). "Each of them has received under his control some particular part of the universe, or is attached to some particular thing or person in the world, as is known to Him Who arranges and orders all things, and all work towards one goal, by command of the Builder of all things" (St. Gregory the Theologian).

Some ecclesiastical writers express the idea that particular Angels are set in charge of particular aspects of the kingdom of nature, inorganic, organic and animal or animate, as we read, for example, in the works of Origen and Augustine of Hippo. This idea comes from the Revelation, where we read of Angels set in charge of certain physical elements by the will of God (Revelation 16:15: "And I heard the Angel of the waters say . . ."; Rev. 7:1 : "I saw four Angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth,

not on the sea, nor on any tree;" Rev. 14:18: "And another Angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire . . .").

According to the vision of the Prophet Daniel, there are Angels to whom God entrusts the fate of the kingdoms and peoples of the earth (Daniel Chapters 10-12).

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church believes that every person has his own "Guardian Angel," unless he has driven him away by an evil life. The Lord Jesus Christ said: "Take heed that you despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, that in heaven their Angels do always behold the Face of My Father Which is in heaven" (St. Matthew 18:10). The Conflict of the Good and Bad Angels Those parts of Almighty God's creation which are inanimate and not endowed with reason have no freedom and automatically do God's Holy will; they obey the rules He has laid down for them, which we call "the Laws of Nature."

But those beings which the One and only true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit has endowed with reason, He has honored with great gifts-language and free will-and it is free will which invests each action of a free being with moral value.

To be free, to choose to do good and perform the will of Almighty God, not merely be forced to do so by irresistible natural laws, is essential for there to be any moral value in one's doing of good, and for obedience to the will of Almighty God to truly express love for God.

However, to have the freedom to choose to do what is right - good, one must also be free to do what is wrong - evil, for without alternatives there can be no choice, and if there is no choice there is no moral value in doing good, it is simply an automatic reaction to irresistible force.

Having the freedom to choose evil, one of the Angels actually did so, and by so doing, this Angel of light became the enemy of God, the devil. This took place before the creation of the visible world.

The devil, who is also known as "Satan" or "the enemy," was created as a mighty and beautiful Archangel, one of the most perfect and radiant, and for this reason he was given the name Lucifer, "the light-bearer". But when he chose not to do the will of God, he fell, lost his exalted qualities, and left his dwelling in heaven. St. Jude says: "And the Angels that did not keep their own position but left their proper dwelling have been kept by him in eternal chains in the nether gloom until the judgment of the great day;" (The Epistle of Jude, Verse 6).

Lucifer had been richly endowed by the Creator and should have ever held his eyes on the Lord, "as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress." But instead he concentrated his attention on his own perfection, fell in love with it and was seized with pride. By doing this he left the path of truth, which united him with the Source of Life and Light, and entered the path of destruction. He forgot that he owed all to Almighty God, that all his perfections were the gift of God. He ascribed them to himself, and so seemed exceedingly great to himself. He was so blinded by the idea of his own greatness and considered, "is there any who is equal to me? Any Angel ... or God, even God Himself. I myself am Divine, I myself am a Divinity!"

Satan rose against his Lord and took with him a large number of spirits who accepted his authority. The Archangel Michael took command of the Angels who remained faithful to God, forming an army

of Angels, and entered into conflict with the fallen spirits. "Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his Angels fighting against the dragon; and the dragon and his Angels fought, 8 but they were defeated and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. 9* And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his Angels were thrown down with him." (Revelations 12:7-9). Long before the creation of the material world took place this war which was waged between the Angels of light and the spirits of darkness. But light conquered darkness, and the rebels were hurled into the abyss. The fall of the mighty spirit was horrifying and inevitable. "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven," says Our Lord (St. Luke 10:18).

And this fall, associated with increasing stubbornness and hardening of heart continues, further and further downwards, to this day. One sin leads to another, pride leads to envy and spite, whose weapons are lies, false witness and cunning. Darkness falls when we leave the Source of light, and this is what happened to the devil. From a light-bearing Angel Satan was transformed into the prince of darkness. But can he not repent? Would not the merciful Lord receive his penitence? One hermit, who pondered over this problem, was granted a revelation. An Angel brought him from heaven the answer that forgiveness is always possible for those who repent. The holy man repeated this comforting reply to the devil, when he appeared before him. The enemy of mankind burst into laughter and disappeared: every thought of repentance is comic to him, every suggestion of humility unbearable. Stubbornness, hardness of heart and pride which develops into a habit can reach such a level that a sinner no longer wishes to make use of the means of salvation. This is the curse of pride—that extreme pride no longer desires salvation and hence perishes.

Thus the Angelic world of light divided; some Angels, faithful to the Lord, remain in light, joy, love and gratitude, piously serve Almighty God and all the time continue to develop, to make progress towards perfection, to closer union with the Lord. And they have gone so far in their work and in the path of grace, and have developed such a habit of goodness, that none of them can or will rebel against God now. The leader of this holy army of heaven is the radiant Archangel Michael, whereas that other world of darkness and spite consists of Satan and the demons.

MS 7 The Ethiopian Book of Hours

MS 7 is a Book of Hours consisting of 251 leaves (and twelve flyleaves) still bound in its original binding of calf leather over wooden boards. The ornamentation of this binding includes animal motifs, a scene of a bagpiper and three dancers, and words which identify the binder as Ludovicus Bloc, a binder in Bruges, Flanders, from 1484-1529. The manuscript was made in Bruges in 1484-1529 but may have been intended for use in Lierre-en-Brabant. The text was written in Batarde script, with light brown to black ink for the text and red for rubrics. The layout for the main text consists of 16 rows in 1 column. Not only does the binding match another found in the Goldschmidt collection, but the panel with the bagpiper and dancers matches a narrative border for the Annunciation to the Shepherds on f.82r of Syracuse MS 7 and also a page in Vienna, Nat. Bibl. MS. 1984, f. 95v.

The text which follows the use of Rome, is in Latin with the final prayer in French, and consists of a calendar, Hours of the Cross, Hours of the Holy Spirit, Gospel readings, Mass of the Blessed Virgin

Mary, Hours of the Virgin, Salve Regina, Prayer of St. Bernard, Penitential Psalms, Litany, Office of the Dead, various prayers and suffrages.

This manuscript is profusely illuminated and contains approximately 63 small and large miniatures with borders and 5 historiated initials, in addition to the usual array of decorative initials and end-of-row space-fillers. The borders surrounding the major illuminations may be designed with bold-colored patterns ornamented with realistically-detailed flowers and foliage, or attempt to recreated special effects such as jewels pinned on to the border, or illustrate a narrative scene. In general, the artwork is characteristic of work done in Ghent C Bruges the beginning of the 16th century.

The Ethiopian Martyrs' Stories

Tulu Mosisa was just a simple farm laborer who loved the Lord. He worked in the remote village of Nensebo Chebi in southern Ethiopia in order to support his wife and five children, who remained at home in another village. He also worshiped at a Protestant church there: Kale Hiwot Baptist Church.

During the regular Sunday morning worship service, as Mosisa and his Christian brothers and sisters were in the middle of prayer, men armed with knives and machetes stormed into the church building. At the same time, about a half hour's walk away at Birhane Wongel Baptist Church, more armed men interrupted the service. They were militant Muslims, charged by their religious beliefs to cleanse the Muslim-dominated area of Christians.

Mosisa had come to church that morning alone—his family was not with him—but the congregation was composed of people of all ages, including women and children. The believers looked on helplessly as their attackers barred all the church doors and windows, and then came at them with their weapons.

"Allahu Akbar!" ("Allah is great!") the attackers shouted as they swung their knives and machetes. The people were defenseless; they screamed and ran in all directions to avoid their assailants, but at least twenty-three were injured, two even losing their hands. Mosisa was killed when an attacker swung at him with a machete, nearly beheading him. The violence finally ceased when members of the local militia arrived and drove the men off. Several suspects were arrested, but none of the attackers were officially identified.

At the time of the attack, 45 percent of Ethiopia's population was Muslim, reportedly practicing a tolerant version of Islam. However, according to the Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Supreme Council, Ethiopia's Muslims have been increasingly influenced by Wahhabi Islam. Based on the teachings of Muhammad al-Wahhab, who lived in the eighteenth century, Wahhabism is an extremist sect of Islam that seeks to reinstate

a pure, historical Islam that adheres strictly and solely to the original teachings of the prophet Muhammad. Thus, it rejects all things modern and secular, including reinterpretation of the Koran. It opposes the nineteenth- and twentieth-century Muslim reform movements that have sought to reinterpret parts of Islamic law to bring it closer to Western standards. According to Wahhabi Muslims, theirs is the only true Islam. Any other form of Islam is a false path, and Muslims who practice other forms of Islam are not true Muslims.

It takes daily courage and strength—unwavering trust and hope in the Lord—to live knowing that each day might be your last. Tulu Mosisa's dedication to his faith was evident in his life, and his example through his death spread to his family. When his wife, Chaltu Waga, was visited by a Christian support organization after the incident, she greeted them with smiles and enthusiasm. "God is great," she proclaimed in the local language. Though devastated by her husband's death, she explained how she had been greatly encouraged by visits from Christian friends. She said of her husband, "Although it is painful, I understand that he was killed for his faith."

Jesus said, "And you will be hated by all for my name's sake" (Mark 13:13). Sometimes that hate manifests itself in bodily death to the believer. Tulu Mosisa was not afraid of death. He lived bravely and continued to meet regularly with other believers though it eventually cost him his life, for he knew the promise of his Lord that "the one who endures to the end will be saved" (Mark 13:13).

The Book of the Ark of the Covenant

In Exodus 25:10, Moses receives the command to build an ark of acacia wood. Within this ark were to be placed the tables of the law which God was about to give to Moses. Upon the top of the ark, probably not as a lid but above the lid, was a golden plate upon which two cherubim, with raised wings and facing each other, covered the ark. From the place between the two cherubim, God promises to speak to Moses, as often as He shall give him commands in reference to the Israelites.

The Ark of the Covenant was built by the Israelites shortly after they fled Egypt during the Exodus, which is traditionally dated to around the 13th century BCE, typically around 1446 BCE according to biblical chronology. This dating is based on biblical texts and is used by many scholars who interpret the Bible literally. However, exact dates vary among scholars due to different interpretations of ancient texts and archaeological evidence.

The construction of the Ark occurred after the Israelites reached Mount Sinai, where Moses received the commandments and other laws from God. The detailed instructions for building the Ark are found in the Book of Exodus in the Old Testament, indicating that it was constructed as part of a broader effort to establish a worship system and a covenant relationship between God and the Israelites.

The ark was designed to be a symbol of the presence of God in the midst of His people is the common teaching of the Old Testament. This place on the lid was also referred to as the "Mercy Seat". Once a year a priest would enter the holy tent and sprinkle blood from a sacrificed animal to atone for the sins of Israel. This old covenant on the Day of Atonement is no longer needed as Jesus Christ became a new covenant in which His sacrifice on the cross was a complete atonement for sins.

According to the statements in the Priestly Code, the ark of the covenant was a chest made out of acacia wood, 2 1/2 cubits (about equal to 4 ft.) long, 1 1/2 cubits wide and 1 1/2 high. It was covered with gold within and without and was ornamented with a molding of gold running all around it. At its four feet, rings were added, through which the gold-covered carrying-staves were put.

Other contents to be believed to have been in the ark of the covenant were: a pot of Manna from when Israel was in the wilderness to remind them of God's love, provision and care; and the rod of Aaron to symbolize God's given leadership and priesthood.

According to the tradition contained in the Pentateuch the sacred ark was built at Mount Sinai and was taken by the Israelites along with them to Canaan. When Israel had been conquered by the Philistines, the ark was taken from Shiloh in order that Yahweh should aid His people. When Philistines yet conquered and captured the ark, the many misfortunes that overtook them made them think that the possession of the ark was destructive to them and they sent it back. The ark then settled in a holy tent for priests until King Solomon placed the ark of the covenant in the Holy of Holies of this temple, where it was placed under the wings of two mighty cherubim images. The ark is believed to have been destroyed with the destruction of Jerusalem by King Nebuchadnezzar.

Photo Credit: painting by Benjamin West, Joshua passing the Jordan River with the Ark of the Covenant, 1800

What Was the Significance of the Ark of the Covenant?

When the word ark is mentioned in correlation to the Bible, many picture Noah's ark, the gigantic boat housing two of every animal before the big flood. The picture of the Ark of the Covenant can be less common in Christian culture. What was this ark and what was its significance? Let's dive into a little more detail to see what the Bible has to say about this important artifact in history.

What Was the Ark of the Covenant?

In Exodus 25:10, the Lord told Moses to instruct the Israelites to build an ark. The Message translation identifies this creation as a chest. The chest was to be made of acacia wood measuring "two and a half cubits long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high." Today, a cubit is equal to about 18 inches. The Ark was highly adorned, gold plated in and out, with a golden band around the outside. It held four gold rings on the bottom, each with a gold-plated rod inside used to carry the Ark. It also had a golden lid with two wide-winged angels facing one another. The Lord said he would come to speak to the people between the placements of the two cherubim.

What Was Inside the Ark of the Covenant?

The Ark of the Covenant held three important items. The first contents were the tablets with the 10 Commandments the Lord gave to Moses. Secondly, the chest held a jar of manna as a sign of

remembrance when the Lord provided bread in the wilderness after the Israelites escaped Egypt. Lastly, in Numbers 17, we find the miracle of Aaron's budding rod, confirming his divine priesthood. His rod was placed in the front of the Ark. Matthew Henry states these three items were preserved "to show to after-ages how the ancient church was taught, and fed, and ruled."

Who Built the Ark?

The Ark of the Covenant was built by the Israelites under the supervision of Moses, as instructed by God. According to the Book of Exodus in the Bible, specifically in chapters 25 to 31, the construction was carried out by Bezalel, son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. Bezalel was appointed by God and filled with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to design artistic works. He was assisted by Oholiab, son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, who was also endowed with skills and wisdom for the task.

What Was the Meaning of the Ark?

Before Jesus died on the cross, the Holy Spirit didn't come into the hearts of believers. Today Christians are continuously in the presence of God and can call on him anytime. The Israelites didn't have that luxury. The Ark of the Covenant represented God's presence. There are several examples of this in Scripture.

In Joshua 3, the Israelites needed to cross the Jordan River to get to the Promised Land. Orders were given to follow the priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant. In verse 5, the Bible says *"Joshua told the people, 'Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you.'"* The next day, the Lord proclaims *"Today I will begin to exalt you in the eyes of all Israel, so they may know that I am with you as I was with Moses"* (Joshua 3:7). The priests brought the Ark into the river and the waters were stopped to allow the Israelites to cross. After everyone made it to the other side, the chest was removed and the waters again filled the river. The Ark, representing God's presence, allowed the people to safely cross the Jordan.

As the Israelites continued on their journey, the Ark became instrumental again in Joshua 6. The people were up against Jericho's wall where no one came in and no one came out. The Lord told Joshua to have armed men march around the wall for six days. Priests in the procession blew trumpets followed by the Ark of the Covenant. On the seventh day, the marching army was instructed to give a loud shout and the walls of Jericho came tumbling down. The people did what the Lord instructed and took over the city. The chapter ends with verse 27: "So the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout the land." God's presence and power, seen in the Ark-marching army, caused the walls of Jericho to collapse.

The meaning of the Ark is confirmed in 1 Samuel 4. The Israelites were fighting against the Philistines and losing terribly. They decided to get the Ark, hopeful its presence would help them defeat their enemies. When it arrived, the Philistines became weary that a god had entered the camp. They fought and overcame the Israelites stealing the holy artifact. They put the prize in the Dagon's temple, but the statue of their false god kept falling before the Ark. The Lord brought more devastation on the Philistines, and they decided to get rid of the stolen possession, moving it to the city of Gath. However, Gath experienced the same horrible hardship and relocated the chest to a

third city, where again devastation afflicted the people. Finally, after seven months, the Philistines decided they'd had enough. They needed to return the Ark to the Israelites.

Why Did God House Himself in the Ark?

The Ark was housed in the tabernacle where Israelites brought offerings to God. Before God gave instructions to build the tabernacle, he told Moses "Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them" (Exodus 25:8). Part of the sanctuary included the Ark of the Covenant which had an atonement cover. Two angels sat on top of the chest's cover, with a Mercy Seat in between them. The Lord said he would come to the Mercy Seat to give the Israelites the commandments.

God came to the Ark when priests were present. They carried the sacred object with poles. Because of his holy nature, the priests would die if they touched the place God resides. Crosswalk.com explains "The reason for this is because God's glory and presence cannot be touched by man. Our sinful natures cause us to keel over if we come into the presence of the Lord, without the Holy Spirit residing within us." As mentioned above, because these traditions took place in the Old Testament before the birth and death of Jesus, the Israelites did not have direct access to the Holy Spirit.

What Happened to the Ark throughout History?

In 1 Samuel 6, the Philistines decided to return the stolen Ark by placing it on a cart with golden guilt offerings. The cows hitched to the cart headed toward Beth Shemesh, and the people rejoiced at its return. The cart stopped in the field of Joshua near a large rock. The Levites took the Ark and put it on the rock, presenting sacrifices and burnt offerings to the Lord. However, because they looked directly at God's presence, 70 people were put to death. Not knowing what to do, they sent a message to Kiriath Jearim asking its people to come to take the Ark. 1 Samuel 7 goes on to explain the people of Kiriath Jearim came for the chest, bringing it to the house of Abinadab. His son guarded the Ark and it remained in the city for 20 years.

In 2 Samuel 6, King David summoned troops to retrieve the Ark from Kiriath Jearim, also known as Baalah. Two of Abinadab's sons, Uzzah and Ahio, started to drive the Ark to Jerusalem. During the journey, the cart and its contents faltered when the oxen stumbled. Uzzah reached out to catch the Ark and died when he touched the sacred possession. This location was named Perez-uzzah which means "outbreak against Uzzah." Nervous to have the powerful object continue toward Jerusalem, David placed it in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. During the three months the Ark stayed there, the household of Obed-edom was blessed, and David's fear diminished. He fetched the Ark to continue the journey to Jerusalem, the city of David. The sacred object entered the City of David amidst rejoicing and dancing and was placed in a designated tent.

Skip ahead to 2 Chronicles 35 where we find the last mention of the Ark of the Covenant's location. In this chapter, Josiah was celebrating Passover. The priests were prompted to take part in the observance in the Lord's temple. In verse 3, Josiah instructed the Levites to "Put the sacred ark in the temple that Solomon son of David king of Israel built." It's thought the artifact was demolished afterward when King Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem. The chest went missing after the destruction of the temple, however, John states in Revelation 11:19 that the Ark will be seen again after the second coming of Christ.

The journey of the Ark of the Covenant among the Israelites and Philistines is clearly laid out in Scripture, while its disappearance is more ambiguous. We can see this artifact played an important role in biblical history, representing God's presence and helping the Israelites overcome trials. While there's a large gap in Scripture when the Ark disappears, we can be confident that along with many other things, this precious artifact will be restored when we see Christ again.

Theories on Where the Ark of the Covenant is Today

The location of the Ark of the Covenant remains one of the great mysteries and has inspired numerous theories and explorations. Here are some of the most prominent theories about where the Ark might be located today:

1. **Jerusalem:** Some traditions suggest that the Ark was hidden somewhere beneath the Temple Mount in Jerusalem to protect it from being captured during the numerous invasions and destructions of the city. This theory is popular among those who believe the Ark remains in the Holy Land.
2. **Ethiopia:** Perhaps the most well-known theory is that the Ark resides in the Church of Our Lady Mary of Zion in Axum, Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church claims that the Ark was brought to Ethiopia by Menelik I, the son of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. It is said to be guarded by a monk who is the only person allowed to see the Ark, making this claim difficult to verify.
3. **Egypt:** Another theory suggests that the Ark was hidden in Egypt, specifically in tunnels beneath the ancient temple complex at Tanis. The theory was popularized by the fictional film "Raiders of the Lost Ark," although there is no historical evidence to support this claim.
4. **Europe:** Some speculative theories suggest that the Knights Templar or the Crusaders might have found the Ark and taken it to Europe. According to these theories, it could be hidden in France or possibly transported to the UK. Again, there is no concrete evidence to back up these claims.
5. **Mount Nebo:** According to the apocryphal book of 2 Maccabees, the prophet Jeremiah hid the Ark in a cave on Mount Nebo, which is located in modern-day Jordan, as the Babylonians approached Jerusalem. This account is not considered canonical in Judaism or most Christian traditions.
6. **Lost or Destroyed:** Some scholars and theologians believe that the Ark was destroyed during the numerous conquests of Jerusalem, particularly the Babylonian conquest in 586 BCE. They argue that such an important artifact would have been mentioned if it had survived or been relocated.
7. **Hidden and Waiting:** A more spiritual or mystical view held by some religious groups is that the Ark is hidden and will not be revealed until a prophesied time in the future, possibly linked to messianic expectations.

Each of these theories has its proponents, but to date, no conclusive evidence has emerged to confirm the current location of the Ark of the Covenant. The mystery continues to be a subject of fascination for historians, archaeologists, and faithful Christians.

The Manual of Discipline (Qumran)

Manual of Discipline, one of the most important documents produced by the Essene community of Jews, who settled at Qumrān in the Judean desert in the early 2nd century bc. They did so to remove themselves from what they considered a corrupt religion symbolized by the religiopolitical high priests of the Hasmonean dynasty centred in Jerusalem. The major portion of the scroll was discovered in Cave I at Qumrān in 1947, and fragments of 11 other versions of the *Manual* were found in Caves IV and V the same year. Modern scholars have suggested that, when the Qumrān sect was forced to abandon its community life because of the great Jewish revolt against Rome in ad 66–70, its members hid their library in nearby caves. The large number of preserved manuscripts indicate the importance of the *Manual* to the Essene community.

This scroll was probably intended for the Essene sect's leaders, including priests who supervised the sacrificial, liturgical, and possibly exegetical religious functions, and also guardians who controlled the admission and instruction of new members into the community. The document contains an explanation of the sect's religious and moral ideals, a description of its admission ceremony, a long catechetical discourse on its mystical doctrine of the primordial spirits of truth and perversity, organizational and disciplinary statutes, and a final hymn or psalm praising obedience and setting forth the sacred seasons. The first of two appendices, the *Rule of the Congregation*, or "Messianic Rule," contains additional statutes and instructions about a messianic feast. The second is a liturgical collection of benedictions: *Blessings*.

Although this work cannot be dated with precision, it was probably compiled after the community had settled in Qumrān. Some scholars have connected part of it to an enigmatic figure, the unknown Teacher of Righteousness, whose ministry within the community probably fell in the latter half of the 2nd century bc.

The War Scroll (Qumran)

The War Scroll (1QM), popularly known as "The War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness," is one of the seven original Dead Sea Scrolls discovered in Qumran in 1947. It contains 19 columns (originally there were at least twenty), of which the first 14–19 lines (out of at least 21–22) are preserved. The work is written in Hebrew in a square Herodian script and is dated to the late first century BCE or early first century CE. Seven additional fragments (4Q491–497) with similar contents have also been found, but the relationship between these texts to 1QM is not entirely clear; they may represent an earlier version of the War Scroll, or source materials on which the War Scroll was based.

Against the backdrop of a long biblical tradition concerning a final war at the End of Days (Ezekiel 38–39; Daniel 7–12), this scroll describes a seven stage, dualistic confrontation between the "Sons of Light" (the term used by Community members to refer to themselves), under the leadership of the "Prince of Light" (also called Michael, the Archangel) – and the "Sons of Darkness" (a nickname for the enemies of the Community, Jews and non-Jews alike), aided by a nation called the Kittim (Romans?), headed by Belial. The confrontation would last 49 years, terminating in the victory of the

"Sons of Light" and the restoration of the Temple service and sacrifices. The War Scroll describes battle arrays, weaponry, the ages of the participants, and military maneuvers, recalling Hellenistic and Roman military manuals.

This work is not, strictly speaking, an apocalypse (namely, a heavenly revelation), and it lacks a "messianic" figure. Certain details, such as the advanced age of the combatants and the leadership of the priests, point to the idealistic nature of the war described in the work and impart a fictional quality to the treatise. Nonetheless, the War Scroll may indeed reflect genuine political tension in Judea between Romans and Jews, which would culminate in the outbreak of revolt in 66 CE. The scroll also sheds light on the New Testament Book of Revelation, in which a final war is also described between earthly and heavenly forces.

The Thanksgiving Hymns (Qumran)

Meaning and Context in the Thanksgiving Hymns is the revised version of Trine Bjørnung Hasselbalch's 2011 doctoral dissertation, supervised by Bodil Ejrnæs, which applies elements of the sociolinguistic approach called Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyze the texts in the poetic collection, 1QHodayot^a. 1QH^a is the largest extant manuscript of the "Thanksgiving Hymns" from Qumran, discovered among the Dead Sea scrolls of Cave 1 in 1947. The psalms are written from a first-person "I" perspective, and they address God by giving thanks or praising God for special knowledge, spiritual strength, and deliverance from distress. The objective of Hasselbalch's investigation is to use SFL and CDA to recover information about the social context of 1QH^a that has been encoded into the lexicon and grammar of the text and into the selection of certain psalms for this collection.

Hasselbalch is at the forefront of the application of sociolinguistics in the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Although SFL is not entirely new to biblical studies, she is the first to develop a research agenda around the application of SFL to the Dead Sea Scrolls. Hasselbalch's starting point is a critique of the dominate hypothesis that has divided the psalms of the Hodayot tradition into two groups: the Teacher Hymns and the Community Hymns. As many scholars have noted, the psalms do not neatly fall into these two categories, so there is a fundamental problem with the categorization schema. Additionally, there is an interpretive problem, which is embedded into the categories. The speaking "I" of the Teacher Hymns has been regarded as representing a leader of the community, whereas the "I" of the Community Hymns is thought to express the perspective of the general members of the community. Hasselbalch argues that this interpretive framework is an unjustified projection of our assumptions about the organization of the community behind the Dead Sea Scrolls onto the structural and generic differences of the psalms in 1QH^a. In other words, just because there are two types of psalms does not mean that we must posit two levels of the sect's hierarchy behind them. Hasselbalch seeks to jettison the categories and their accompanying framework and to use SFL and CDA to reconstruct a more accurate context for 1QH^a.

Hasselbalch's study proceeds in three phases. In the first phase (Chapter 2), she treats "Special Methodological Issues" by providing an overview of SFL, drawing primarily on Suzanne Eggins's *An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics*.¹ She argues that SFL enables her to retrieve inscribed and uninscribed—that is, explicit and non-explicit—information about the context of

1QH^a, which allows her to set aside the Teacher Hymn-Community Hymn interpretive framework and reconstruct a new social context for the psalms. CDA is not discussed in the method chapter.

In the second phase (Chapters 3–6), she analyzes five psalms (1QH^a 6:19–33; 20:7–22:39; 1QS 9:12–11:22; 1QH^a 12:6–13:6; 1QH^a cols. 25–26 containing two psalms) in order to demonstrate that the Teacher Hymn-Community Hymn interpretive framework is invalid. (1QH^a 10:22–32 is analyzed as a test case at the end of Chapter 2) She calls these psalms “hybrids” because they complicate the two major categories (36–37). The SFL techniques of transitivity analysis and lexical strings are used to explore how the speaker’s agency functions in relationship to God and others. She identifies an elite, intermediary “I” with priestly resonances across all of the psalms—an “I” with which all the members of the Dead Sea community would have identified. She contends that this observation contradicts the notion that some psalms are dedicated to leaders while others are for general members. She also argues that these psalms have been removed from their original contexts, where the “I” of the psalms was not identical, and “entextualized”—that is, integrated and recontextualized—into a new manuscript, 1QH^a. The creation of this manuscript resulted in the heterogeneous “I”s being harmonized into one corporate “I.” This new “I” is strongly influenced by what she calls a “*maskil* ethos,” an elite identity associated with wisdom that she proposes the Dead Sea community has inherited from the *maskil* communities behind the Daniel and 1Q/4QInstruction traditions.

In the third phase of the study, Hasselbalch constructs a new social background for 1QH^a on the basis of her analysis of the psalms. She draws on insights from CDA by Teun A. van Dijk to establish how her reconstructed context is possible in light of the heterogeneous character of the collection. She uses van Dijk’s “mental models” and K-Device 4 to argue that the redactor of 1QH^a and his audience shared knowledge and a common perspective as an “epistemic community” that enabled them to make sense of 1QH^a, despite its heterogeneous nature. Essentially, they had insider knowledge about the context that modern readers lack. Hasselbalch proposes that these models can “open up a space where we can hypothesize about the meaning of juxtaposing the so-called Community and Leader Hymns” (257).

Her hypothesis is that the Community Hymns originate from outside of the Dead Sea community from elite wisdom and *maskil* circles in early Judaism. These circles constitute a single epistemic community that has a special role in God’s agency as both “Goal” and “Actor” in God’s activities. The Teacher Hymns were inspired by the Community Hymns, especially their elite ethos, but were composed by the Dead Sea community with a more exclusive sectarian perspective. They were not intended for leaders, but for all members within the sect. At this stage, hybrids were written that combine features of Community Hymns and Teacher Hymns. The elevated position of the speaker in 1QH^a is never meant to highlight one historical person or office; rather, it underscores the elevated status of the entire sect over and against that of its opponents.

Most scholars in the fields of biblical studies and the Dead Sea Scrolls will find this study to be a challenging read. Hasselbalch’s work is a new interdisciplinary endeavor, so there will be obstacles for those who are not familiar with SFL and CDA nomenclature and theory. However, it is worthwhile to explore these disciplines because, as Hasselbalch claims, they offer a wealth of resources for analyzing texts, which may be heuristically valuable, especially at the clausal and compositional levels (60).

However, even after reading Eggins's *An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics*, from which Hasselbalch derives most of her SFL approach, it is still difficult to understand what it adds to this study that could not be discovered using standard exegetical methods, or how transitivity analysis and lexical strings are really useful in dismantling the Teacher Hymn-Community Hymn interpretive framework and reconstructing a social context for 1QH^a. Is it remarkable that a speaker occupies an intermediary role between God and others in prayers? That this pattern of agency is found in various degrees in all prayers in the study may have more to do with the genre of prayer than the intention of the redactor or the elite constitution of the hypothetical community behind this scroll, the so-called "Dead Sea community." Observations about transitivity and lexical cohesion do not form a very substantial basis for building a redactional history of 1QH^a and a reconstructing its social context within the landscape of Second Temple Judaism and its various religious groups

Another problem is created by bringing together SFL methodology and van Dijk's approach to CDA in order to establish the context of 1QH^a. In "Knowledge in Parliamentary Debates," van Dijk launched a very strong and extensive critique of SFL, arguing that its notion of context is deeply problematic and incompatible with his own. Van Dijk contends that the concept of context in SFL is "theoretically ad hoc" and "explicitly anti-mentalist," which is antithetical to his own approach.² In other words, the mental aspects of van Dijk's concept of context, such as the "mental models" and K-Devices that Hasselbalch has utilized, are theoretically at odds with SFL. Perhaps it is possible to reconcile the two approaches that Hasselbalch has combined, but an extended discussion would be required. Unfortunately, van Dijk is only briefly referenced once in Chapter 2, "Special Methodological Issues," without any discussion of the compatibility of his approach with SFL (60). Reflections on integrating CDA and SFL are also absent from Hasselbalch's discussion of van Dijk's models in Chapter 7.

Despite these challenges, the attempt to interpret some of the psalms of 1QH^a in light of their presence in the same collection is a valuable methodological contribution. The entextualization of psalms into a new collection certainly plays a role in accenting how they were read by ancient audiences, and scholars need to consider this effect when investigating collections and composite works. However, in this regard there also needs to be caution. Modern readers cannot easily discern what those accents were for the ancient audience. Moreover, it would be especially problematic to overstate the effects of entextualization so that all the parts of composite collections are read in a flattened or conflated way. It cannot be assumed that collections were made only because of commonalities between their component parts. Collections and composite works may have been created to highlight their differences too. To harmonize aspects of the psalms because they are in a single manuscript may pave over the particularities that redactors and compilers intended to preserve and emphasize.

In sum, Hasselbalch's study is a bold effort to employ a new pairing of linguistic approaches to re-envision the social context of 1QH^a. She expands the range of vocabulary that has been used to analyze Dead Sea Scrolls and challenges Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship to explore the fields of sociolinguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis. We can look forward to Hasselbalch's continuing effort to bring these potentially fruitful approaches into the discussion in the future.

The Apocalypse of Sophia

Beauty lifts our souls above, mundane concerns to realms of love. Sophia is the soul that falls asleep, identifies with the conditioned ego story associated with matter, and is awakened by Jesus, the spirit. The spirit arouses the soul with dreams, beauty, art, poetry, love, and life events, to remind her of his presence and their union. When the soul remembers she and spirit are One, the Christ-Self is revealed. This research utilizes heuristics, grounded in Jungian theory, to explore a vision of Sophia and Jesus marrying and an encounter with a living ouroboros that consisted of two slugs curled around an egg. The wholeness of Eden, in the Christ-Self archetype, is, and always was, available. There is no separation, brokenness, or anything to fix. That which is called evil is revealed to be the impetus for the creation of consciousness. The Apocalypse, meaning revelation, is the destruction of the material world, which the soul has identified with, to reveal the soul's truth of ouroboric wholeness. The beginning and end are the same. The soul realizes Christ, as she was in the beginning, like a child without judgment, all good, love, peace, and at rest. The soul unites Heaven and Earth, by surrendering to life, trusting that what appears reflects her state of consciousness, witnessing what arises while remaining rooted in stillness, accepting everything without judgment, and loving all unconditionally. The soul is free, home, and Eden is restored.

The Gospel of Judas Thomas

These are the secret sayings that the living Jesus spoke and Didymos Judas Thomas recorded.

1. And he said, "Whoever discovers the interpretation of these sayings will not taste death."
2. Jesus said, "Those who seek should not stop seeking until they find. When they find, they will be disturbed. When they are disturbed, they will marvel, and will reign over all. [And after they have reigned they will rest.]"
3. Jesus said, "If your leaders say to you, 'Look, the (Father's) kingdom is in the sky,' then the birds of the sky will precede you. If they say to you, 'It is in the sea,' then the fish will precede you. Rather, the (Father's) kingdom is within you and it is outside you.

When you know yourselves, then you will be known, and you will understand that you are children of the living Father. But if you do not know yourselves, then you live in poverty, and you are the poverty."

4. Jesus said, "The person old in days won't hesitate to ask a little child seven days old about the place of life, and that person will live.

For many of the first will be last, and will become a single one."

5. Jesus said, "Know what is in front of your face, and what is hidden from you will be disclosed to you.

For there is nothing hidden that will not be revealed. [And there is nothing buried that will not be raised.]"

6. His disciples asked him and said to him, "Do you want us to fast? How should we pray? Should we give to charity? What diet should we observe?"

Jesus said, "Don't lie, and don't do what you hate, because all things are disclosed before heaven. After all, there is nothing hidden that will not be revealed, and there is nothing covered up that will remain undisclosed."

7. Jesus said, "Lucky is the lion that the human will eat, so that the lion becomes human. And foul is the human that the lion will eat, and the lion still will become human."

8. And he said, "The person is like a wise fisherman who cast his net into the sea and drew it up from the sea full of little fish. Among them the wise fisherman discovered a fine large fish. He threw all the little fish back into the sea, and easily chose the large fish. Anyone here with two good ears had better listen!"

G. Jesus said, "Look, the sower went out, took a handful (of seeds), and scattered (them). Some fell on the road, and the birds came and gathered them. Others fell on rock, and they didn't take root in the soil and didn't produce heads of grain. Others fell on thorns, and they choked the seeds and worms ate them. And others fell on good soil, and it produced a good crop: it yielded sixty per measure and one hundred twenty per measure."

10. Jesus said, "I have cast fire upon the world, and look, I'm guarding it until it blazes."

11. Jesus said, "This heaven will pass away, and the one above it will pass away.

The dead are not alive, and the living will not die. During the days when you ate what is dead, you made it come alive. When you are in the light, what will you do? On the day when you were one, you became two. But when you become two, what will you do?"

12. The disciples said to Jesus, "We know that you are going to leave us. Who will be our leader?"

Jesus said to them, "No matter where you are you are to go to James the Just, for whose sake heaven and earth came into being."

13. Jesus said to his disciples, "Compare me to something and tell me what I am like."

Simon Peter said to him, "You are like a just messenger."

Matthew said to him, "You are like a wise philosopher."

Thomas said to him, "Teacher, my mouth is utterly unable to say what you are like."

Jesus said, "I am not your teacher. Because you have drunk, you have become intoxicated from the bubbling spring that I have tended."

And he took him, and withdrew, and spoke three sayings to him. When Thomas came back to his friends they asked him, "What did Jesus say to you?"

Thomas said to them, "If I tell you one of the sayings he spoke to me, you will pick up rocks and stone me, and fire will come from the rocks and devour you."

14. Jesus said to them, "If you fast, you will bring sin upon yourselves, and if you pray, you will be condemned, and if you give to charity, you will harm your spirits.

When you go into any region and walk about in the countryside, when people take you in, eat what they serve you and heal the sick among them.

After all, what goes into your mouth will not defile you; rather, it's what comes out of your mouth that will defile you."

15. Jesus said, "When you see one who was not born of woman, fall on your faces and worship. That one is your Father."

16. Jesus said, "Perhaps people think that I have come to cast peace upon the world. They do not know that I have come to cast conflicts upon the earth: fire, sword, war.

For there will be five in a house: there'll be three against two and two against three, father against son and son against father, and they will stand alone."

17. Jesus said, "I will give you what no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, what no hand has touched, what has not arisen in the human heart."

18. The disciples said to Jesus, "Tell us, how will our end come?"

Jesus said, "Have you found the beginning, then, that you are looking for the end? You see, the end will be where the beginning is.

Congratulations to the one who stands at the beginning: that one will know the end and will not taste death."

19. Jesus said, "Congratulations to the one who came into being before coming into being.

If you become my disciples and pay attention to my sayings, these stones will serve you.

For there are five trees in Paradise for you; they do not change, summer or winter, and their leaves do not fall. Whoever knows them will not taste death."

20. The disciples said to Jesus, "Tell us what Heaven's kingdom is like."

He said to them, "It's like a mustard seed, the smallest of all seeds, but when it falls on prepared soil, it produces a large plant and becomes a shelter for birds of the sky."

21. Mary said to Jesus, "What are your disciples like?"

He said, "They are like little children living in a field that is not theirs. When the owners of the field come, they will say, 'Give us back our field.' They take off their clothes in front of them in order to give it back to them, and they return their field to them.

For this reason I say, if the owners of a house know that a thief is coming, they will be on guard before the thief arrives and will not let the thief break into their house (their domain) and steal their possessions.

As for you, then, be on guard against the world. Prepare yourselves with great strength, so the robbers can't find a way to get to you, for the trouble you expect will come.

Let there be among you a person who understands.

When the crop ripened, he came quickly carrying a sickle and harvested it. Anyone here with two good ears had better listen!"

22. Jesus saw some babies nursing. He said to his disciples, "These nursing babies are like those who enter the (Father's) kingdom."

They said to him, "Then shall we enter the (Father's) kingdom as babies?"

Jesus said to them, "When you make the two into one, and when you make the inner like the outer and the outer like the inner, and the upper like the lower, and when you make male and female into a single one, so that the male will not be male nor the female be female, when you make eyes in place of an eye, a hand in place of a hand, a foot in place of a foot, an image in place of an image, then you will enter [the kingdom]."

23. Jesus said, "I shall choose you, one from a thousand and two from ten thousand, and they will stand as a single one."

24. His disciples said, "Show us the place where you are, for we must seek it."

He said to them, "Anyone here with two ears had better listen! There is light within a person of light, and it shines on the whole world. If it does not shine, it is dark."

25. Jesus said, "Love your friends like your own soul, protect them like the pupil of your eye."

26. Jesus said, "You see the sliver in your friend's eye, but you don't see the timber in your own eye. When you take the timber out of your own eye, then you will see well enough to remove the sliver from your friend's eye."

27. "If you do not fast from the world, you will not find the (Father's) kingdom. If you do not observe the sabbath as a sabbath you will not see the Father."

28. Jesus said, "I took my stand in the midst of the world, and in flesh I appeared to them. I found them all drunk, and I did not find any of them thirsty. My soul ached for the children of humanity, because they are blind in their hearts and do not see, for they came into the world empty, and they also seek to depart from the world empty.

But meanwhile they are drunk. When they shake off their wine, then they will change their ways."

29. Jesus said, "If the flesh came into being because of spirit, that is a marvel, but if spirit came into being because of the body, that is a marvel of marvels.

Yet I marvel at how this great wealth has come to dwell in this poverty."

30. Jesus said, "Where there are three deities, they are divine. Where there are two or one, I am with that one."

31. Jesus said, "No prophet is welcome on his home turf; doctors don't cure those who know them."

32. Jesus said, "A city built on a high hill and fortified cannot fall, nor can it be hidden."

33. Jesus said, "What you will hear in your ear, in the other ear proclaim from your rooftops.

After all, no one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket, nor does one put it in a hidden place. Rather, one puts it on a lampstand so that all who come and go will see its light."

34. Jesus said, "If a blind person leads a blind person, both of them will fall into a hole."

35. Jesus said, "One can't enter a strong person's house and take it by force without tying his hands. Then one can loot his house."

36. Jesus said, "Do not fret, from morning to evening and from evening to morning, [about your food--what you're going to eat, or about your clothing--] what you are going to wear. [You're much better than the lilies, which neither card nor spin.

As for you, when you have no garment, what will you put on? Who might add to your stature? That very one will give you your garment.]"

37. His disciples said, "When will you appear to us, and when will we see you?"

Jesus said, "When you strip without being ashamed, and you take your clothes and put them under your feet like little children and trample them, then [you] will see the son of the living one and you will not be afraid."

38. Jesus said, "Often you have desired to hear these sayings that I am speaking to you, and you have no one else from whom to hear them. There will be days when you will seek me and you will not find me."

39. Jesus said, "The Pharisees and the scholars have taken the keys of knowledge and have hidden them. They have not entered nor have they allowed those who want to enter to do so.

As for you, be as sly as snakes and as simple as doves."

40. Jesus said, "A grapevine has been planted apart from the Father. Since it is not strong, it will be pulled up by its root and will perish."

41. Jesus said, "Whoever has something in hand will be given more, and whoever has nothing will be deprived of even the little they have."

42. Jesus said, "Be passersby."

43. His disciples said to him, "Who are you to say these things to us?"

"You don't understand who I am from what I say to you.

Rather, you have become like the Judeans, for they love the tree but hate its fruit, or they love the fruit but hate the tree."

44. Jesus said, "Whoever blasphemes against the Father will be forgiven, and whoever blasphemes against the son will be forgiven, but whoever blasphemes against the holy spirit will not be forgiven, either on earth or in heaven."

45. Jesus said, "Grapes are not harvested from thorn trees, nor are figs gathered from thistles, for they yield no fruit.

Good persons produce good from what they've stored up; bad persons produce evil from the wickedness they've stored up in their hearts, and say evil things. For from the overflow of the heart they produce evil."

46. Jesus said, "From Adam to John the Baptist, among those born of women, no one is so much greater than John the Baptist that his eyes should not be averted.

But I have said that whoever among you becomes a child will recognize the (Father's) kingdom and will become greater than John."

47. Jesus said, "A person cannot mount two horses or bend two bows.

And a slave cannot serve two masters, otherwise that slave will honor the one and offend the other.

Nobody drinks aged wine and immediately wants to drink young wine. Young wine is not poured into old wineskins, or they might break, and aged wine is not poured into a new wineskin, or it might spoil.

An old patch is not sewn onto a new garment, since it would create a tear."

48. Jesus said, "If two make peace with each other in a single house, they will say to the mountain, 'Move from here!' and it will move."

4G. Jesus said, "Congratulations to those who are alone and chosen, for you will find the kingdom. For you have come from it, and you will return there again."

50. Jesus said, "If they say to you, 'Where have you come from?' say to them, 'We have come from the light, from the place where the light came into being by itself, established [itself], and appeared in their image.'

If they say to you, 'Is it you?' say, 'We are its children, and we are the chosen of the living Father.'

If they ask you, 'What is the evidence of your Father in you?' say to them, 'It is motion and rest.'"

51. His disciples said to him, "When will the rest for the dead take place, and when will the new world come?"

He said to them, "What you are looking forward to has come, but you don't know it."

52. His disciples said to him, "Twenty-four prophets have spoken in Israel, and they all spoke of you."

He said to them, "You have disregarded the living one who is in your presence, and have spoken of the dead."

53. His disciples said to him, "Is circumcision useful or not?"

He said to them, "If it were useful, their father would produce children already circumcised from their mother. Rather, the true circumcision in spirit has become profitable in every respect."

54. Jesus said, "Congratulations to the poor, for to you belongs Heaven's kingdom."

55. Jesus said, "Whoever does not hate father and mother cannot be my disciple, and whoever does not hate brothers and sisters, and carry the cross as I do, will not be worthy of me."

56. Jesus said, "Whoever has come to know the world has discovered a carcass, and whoever has discovered a carcass, of that person the world is not worthy."

57. Jesus said, "The Father's kingdom is like a person who has [good] seed. His enemy came during the night and sowed weeds among the good seed. The person did not let the workers pull up the weeds, but said to them, 'No, otherwise you might go to pull up the weeds and pull up the wheat along with them.' For on the day of the harvest the weeds will be conspicuous, and will be pulled up and burned."

58. Jesus said, "Congratulations to the person who has toiled and has found life."

59. Jesus said, "Look to the living one as long as you live, otherwise you might die and then try to see the living one, and you will be unable to see."

60. He saw a Samaritan carrying a lamb and going to Judea. He said to his disciples, "that person ... around the lamb." They said to him, "So that he may kill it and eat it." He said to them, "He will not eat it while it is alive, but only after he has killed it and it has become a carcass."

They said, "Otherwise he can't do it."

He said to them, "So also with you, seek for yourselves a place for rest, or you might become a carcass and be eaten."

61. Jesus said, "Two will recline on a couch; one will die, one will live."

Salome said, "Who are you mister? You have climbed onto my couch and eaten from my table as if you are from someone."

Jesus said to her, "I am the one who comes from what is whole. I was granted from the things of my Father."

"I am your disciple."

"For this reason I say, if one is whole, one will be filled with light, but if one is divided, one will be filled with darkness."

62. Jesus said, "I disclose my mysteries to those [who are worthy] of [my] mysteries."

63. Jesus said, "There was a rich person who had a great deal of money. He said, 'I shall invest my money so that I may sow, reap, plant, and fill my storehouses with produce, that I may lack nothing.' These were the things he was thinking in his heart, but that very night he died. Anyone here with two ears had better listen!"

64. Jesus said, "A person was receiving guests. When he had prepared the dinner, he sent his slave to invite the guests."

The slave went to the first and said to that one, 'My master invites you.' That one said, 'Some merchants owe me money; they are coming to me tonight. I have to go and give them instructions. Please excuse me from dinner.'

The slave went to another and said to that one, 'My master has invited you.' That one said to the slave, 'I have bought a house, and I have been called away for a day. I shall have no time.'

The slave went to another and said to that one, 'My master invites you.' That one said to the slave, 'My friend is to be married, and I am to arrange the banquet. I shall not be able to come. Please excuse me from dinner.'

The slave went to another and said to that one, 'My master invites you.' That one said to the slave, 'I have bought an estate, and I am going to collect the rent. I shall not be able to come. Please excuse me.'

The slave returned and said to his master, 'Those whom you invited to dinner have asked to be excused.' The master said to his slave, 'Go out on the streets and bring back whomever you find to have dinner.'

Buyers and merchants [will] not enter the places of my Father."

65. He said, "A [...] person owned a vineyard and rented it to some farmers, so they could work it and he could collect its crop from them. He sent his slave so the farmers would give him the vineyard's crop. They grabbed him, beat him, and almost killed him, and the slave returned and told his master. His master said, 'Perhaps he didn't know them.' He sent another slave, and the farmers beat that one as well. Then the master sent his son and said, 'Perhaps they'll show my son some respect.' Because the farmers knew that he was the heir to the vineyard, they grabbed him and killed him. Anyone here with two ears had better listen!"

66. Jesus said, "Show me the stone that the builders rejected: that is the keystone."

67. Jesus said, "Those who know all, but are lacking in themselves, are utterly lacking."

68. Jesus said, "Congratulations to you when you are hated and persecuted; and no place will be found, wherever you have been persecuted."

6G. Jesus said, "Congratulations to those who have been persecuted in their hearts: they are the ones who have truly come to know the Father."

Congratulations to those who go hungry, so the stomach of the one in want may be filled."

70. Jesus said, "If you bring forth what is within you, what you have will save you. If you do not have that within you, what you do not have within you [will] kill you."

71. Jesus said, "I will destroy [this] house, and no one will be able to build it [...]."

72. A [person said] to him, "Tell my brothers to divide my father's possessions with me."

He said to the person, "Mister, who made me a divider?"

He turned to his disciples and said to them, "I'm not a divider, am I?"

73. Jesus said, "The crop is huge but the workers are few, so beg the harvest boss to dispatch workers to the fields."

74. He said, "Lord, there are many around the drinking trough, but there is nothing in the well."

75. Jesus said, "There are many standing at the door, but those who are alone will enter the bridal suite."

76. Jesus said, "The Father's kingdom is like a merchant who had a supply of merchandise and found a pearl. That merchant was prudent; he sold the merchandise and bought the single pearl for himself.

So also with you, seek his treasure that is unfailing, that is enduring, where no moth comes to eat and no worm destroys."

77. Jesus said, "I am the light that is over all things. I am all: from me all came forth, and to me all attained.

Split a piece of wood; I am there.

Lift up the stone, and you will find me there."

78. Jesus said, "Why have you come out to the countryside? To see a reed shaken by the wind? And to see a person dressed in soft clothes, [like your] rulers and your powerful ones? They are dressed in soft clothes, and they cannot understand truth."

79. A woman in the crowd said to him, "Lucky are the womb that bore you and the breasts that fed you."

He said to [her], "Lucky are those who have heard the word of the Father and have truly kept it. For there will be days when you will say, 'Lucky are the womb that has not conceived and the breasts that have not given milk.'"

80. Jesus said, "Whoever has come to know the world has discovered the body, and whoever has discovered the body, of that one the world is not worthy."

81. Jesus said, "Let one who has become wealthy reign, and let one who has power renounce <it>."

82. Jesus said, "Whoever is near me is near the fire, and whoever is far from me is far from the (Father's) kingdom."

83. Jesus said, "Images are visible to people, but the light within them is hidden in the image of the Father's light. He will be disclosed, but his image is hidden by his light."

84. Jesus said, "When you see your likeness, you are happy. But when you see your images that came into being before you and that neither die nor become visible, how much you will have to bear!"

85. Jesus said, "Adam came from great power and great wealth, but he was not worthy of you. For had he been worthy, [he would] not [have tasted] death."

86. Jesus said, "[Foxes have] their dens and birds have their nests, but human beings have no place to lay down and rest."

87. Jesus said, "How miserable is the body that depends on a body, and how miserable is the soul that depends on these two."

88. Jesus said, "The messengers and the prophets will come to you and give you what belongs to you. You, in turn, give them what you have, and say to yourselves, 'When will they come and take what belongs to them?'"

8G. Jesus said, "Why do you wash the outside of the cup? Don't you understand that the one who made the inside is also the one who made the outside?"

G0. Jesus said, "Come to me, for my yoke is comfortable and my lordship is gentle, and you will find rest for yourselves."

G1. They said to him, "Tell us who you are so that we may believe in you."

He said to them, "You examine the face of heaven and earth, but you have not come to know the one who is in your presence, and you do not know how to examine the present moment."

G2. Jesus said, "Seek and you will find.

In the past, however, I did not tell you the things about which you asked me then. Now I am willing to tell them, but you are not seeking them."

G3. "Don't give what is holy to dogs, for they might throw them upon the manure pile. Don't throw pearls [to] pigs, or they might ... it [...]."

G4. Jesus [said], "One who seeks will find, and for [one who knocks] it will be opened."

G5. [Jesus said], "If you have money, don't lend it at interest. Rather, give [it] to someone from whom you won't get it back."

G6. Jesus [said], "The Father's kingdom is like [a] woman. She took a little leaven, [hid] it in dough, and made it into large loaves of bread. Anyone here with two ears had better listen!"

G7. Jesus said, "The [Father's] kingdom is like a woman who was carrying a [jar] full of meal. While she was walking along [a] distant road, the handle of the jar broke and the meal spilled behind her [along] the road. She didn't know it; she hadn't noticed a problem. When she reached her house, she put the jar down and discovered that it was empty."

G8. Jesus said, "The Father's kingdom is like a person who wanted to kill someone powerful. While still at home he drew his sword and thrust it into the wall to find out whether his hand would go in. Then he killed the powerful one."

GG. The disciples said to him, "Your brothers and your mother are standing outside."

He said to them, "Those here who do what my Father wants are my brothers and my mother. They are the ones who will enter my Father's kingdom."

100. They showed Jesus a gold coin and said to him, "The Roman emperor's people demand taxes from us."

He said to them, "Give the emperor what belongs to the emperor, give God what belongs to God, and give me what is mine."

101. "Whoever does not hate [father] and mother as I do cannot be my [disciple], and whoever does [not] love [father and] mother as I do cannot be my [disciple]. For my mother [...], but my true [mother] gave me life."

102. Jesus said, "Damn the Pharisees! They are like a dog sleeping in the cattle manger: the dog neither eats nor [lets] the cattle eat."

103. Jesus said, "Congratulations to those who know where the rebels are going to attack. [They] can get going, collect their imperial resources, and be prepared before the rebels arrive."

104. They said to Jesus, "Come, let us pray today, and let us fast."

Jesus said, "What sin have I committed, or how have I been undone? Rather, when the groom leaves the bridal suite, then let people fast and pray."

105. Jesus said, "Whoever knows the father and the mother will be called the child of a whore."

106. Jesus said, "When you make the two into one, you will become children of Adam, and when you say, 'Mountain, move from here!' it will move."

107. Jesus said, "The (Father's) kingdom is like a shepherd who had a hundred sheep. One of them, the largest, went astray. He left the ninety-nine and looked for the one until he found it. After he had toiled, he said to the sheep, 'I love you more than the ninety-nine.'"

108. Jesus said, "Whoever drinks from my mouth will become like me; I myself shall become that person, and the hidden things will be revealed to him."

10G. Jesus said, "The (Father's) kingdom is like a person who had a treasure hidden in his field but did not know it. And [when] he died he left it to his [son]. The son [did] not know about it either. He took over the field and sold it. The buyer went plowing, [discovered] the treasure, and began to lend money at interest to whomever he wished."

110. Jesus said, "Let one who has found the world, and has become wealthy, renounce the world."

111. Jesus said, "The heavens and the earth will roll up in your presence, and whoever is living from the living one will not see death."

Does not Jesus say, "Those who have found themselves, of them the world is not worthy"?

112. Jesus said, "Damn the flesh that depends on the soul. Damn the soul that depends on the flesh."

113. His disciples said to him, "When will the kingdom come?"

"It will not come by watching for it. It will not be said, 'Look, here!' or 'Look, there!' Rather, the Father's kingdom is spread out upon the earth, and people don't see it."

[Saying probably added to the original collection at a later date:]

114. Simon Peter said to them, "Make Mary leave us, for females don't deserve life."

Jesus said, "Look, I will guide her to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every female who makes herself male will enter the kingdom of Heaven."

The Letter to Diognetus

Chapter 1. Occasion of the epistle

Most excellent Diognetus: I can see that you deeply desire to learn how Christians worship their God. You have so carefully and earnestly asked your questions about them: What is it about the God they believe in, and the form of religion they observe, that lets them look down upon the world and despise death? Why do they reject the Greek gods and the Jewish superstitions alike? What about the affection they all have for each other? And why has this new group and their practices come to life only now, and not long ago?

I cordially welcome this desire of yours, and I implore God, who enables us both to speak and to hear, to grant to me so to speak, that, above all, I may hear you have been edified, and to you so to hear, that I who speak may have no cause of regret for having done so.

Chapter 2. The vanity of idols

Come, then, after you have freed yourself from all prejudices possessing your mind, and laid aside what you have been accustomed to, as something apt to deceive you, and being made, as if from the beginning, a new man, inasmuch as, according to your own confession, you are to be the hearer of a new [system of] doctrine; come and contemplate, not with your eyes only, but with your understanding, the substance and the form of those whom you declare and deem to be gods.

Is not one of them a stone similar to that on which we tread? Is not a second brass, in no way superior to those vessels which are constructed for our ordinary use? Is not a third wood, and that already rotten? Is not a fourth silver, which needs a man to watch it, lest it be stolen? Is not a fifth iron, consumed by rust? Is not a sixth earthenware, in no degree more valuable than that which is formed for the humblest purposes?

Are not all these of corruptible matter? Are they not fabricated by means of iron and fire? Did not the sculptor fashion one of them, the brazier a second, the silversmith a third, and the potter a fourth? Was not every one of them, before they were formed by the arts of these [workmen] into the shape of these [gods], each in its own way subject to change? Would not those things which are now vessels, formed of the same materials, become like to such, if they met with the same artificers? Might not these, which are now worshipped by you, again be made by men vessels similar to others? Are they not all deaf? Are they not blind? Are they not without life? Are they not destitute of feeling? Are they not incapable of motion? Are they not all prone to decay? Are they not all corruptible?

These things you call gods; these you serve; these you worship; and you become altogether like them. For this reason you hate the Christians, because they do not deem *these* to be gods. But do not you yourselves, who now think and suppose [such to be gods], much more cast contempt upon them than they [the Christians do]? Do you not much more mock and insult them, when you worship those that are made of stone and earthenware, without appointing any persons to guard them; but those made of silver and gold you shut up by night, and appoint watchers to look after them by day, lest they be stolen? And by those gifts which you mean to present to them, do you not, if they are possessed of sense, rather punish [than honour] them? But if, on the other hand, they are destitute of sense, you convict them of this fact, while you worship them with blood and the smoke of sacrifices. Let any one of you suffer such indignities! Let any one of you endure to have such things done to himself! But not a single human being will, unless compelled to it, endure such treatment, since he is endowed with sense and reason. A stone, however, readily bears it, seeing it is insensible. Certainly you do not show [by your conduct] that he [your God] is possessed of sense. And as to the fact that Christians are not accustomed to serve such gods, I might easily find many other things to say; but if even what has been said does not seem to any one sufficient, I deem it idle to say anything further.

Chapter 3. Superstitions of the Jews

And next, I imagine that you are most desirous of hearing something on this point, that the Christians do not observe the same forms of divine worship as do the Jews. The Jews, then, if they abstain from the kind of service above described, and deem it proper to worship one God as being Lord of all, [are right]; but if they offer Him worship in the way which we have described, they greatly err. For while the Gentiles, by offering such things to those that are destitute of sense and hearing, furnish an example of madness; they, on the other hand by thinking to offer these things to God as if He needed them, might justly reckon it rather an act of folly than of divine worship. For He that made heaven and earth, and all that is therein, and gives to us all the things of which we stand in need, certainly requires none of those things which He Himself bestows on such as think of furnishing them to Him. But those who imagine that, by means of blood, and the smoke of sacrifices and burnt-offerings, they offer sacrifices [acceptable] to Him, and that by such honours they show Him respect, — these, by supposing that they can give anything to Him who needs nothing, appear to me in no respect to differ from those who studiously confer the same honour on things destitute of sense, and which therefore are unable to enjoy such honours.

Chapter 4. The other observances of the Jews

But as to their scrupulosity concerning food, and their superstition as respects the Sabbaths, and their boasting about circumcision, and their fancies about fasting and the new moons, which are utterly ridiculous and unworthy of notice — I do not think that you require to learn anything from me. For, to accept some of those things which have been formed by God for the use of men as properly formed, and to reject others as useless and redundant — how can this be lawful? And to speak falsely of God, as if He forbade us to do what is good on the Sabbath-days — how is not this impious? And to glory in the circumcision of the flesh as a proof of election, and as if, on account of it, they were specially beloved by God — how is it not a subject of ridicule? And as to their observing months and days, Galatians 4:10 as if waiting upon the stars and the moon, and their distributing, according to their own tendencies, the appointments of God, and the vicissitudes of the seasons,

some for festivities, and others for mourning — who would deem this a part of divine worship, and not much rather a manifestation of folly? I suppose, then, you are sufficiently convinced that the Christians properly abstain from the vanity and error common [to both Jews and Gentiles], and from the busybody spirit and vain boasting of the Jews; but you must not hope to learn the mystery of their peculiar mode of worshipping God from any mortal.

Chapter 5. The manners of the Christians

For the Christians are distinguished from other men neither by country, nor language, nor the customs which they observe. For they neither inhabit cities of their own, nor employ a peculiar form of speech, nor lead a life which is marked out by any singularity. The course of conduct which they follow has not been devised by any speculation or deliberation of inquisitive men; nor do they, like some, proclaim themselves the advocates of any merely human doctrines. But, inhabiting Greek as well as barbarian cities, according as the lot of each of them has determined, and following the customs of the natives in respect to clothing, food, and the rest of their ordinary conduct, they display to us their wonderful and confessedly striking method of life. They dwell in their own countries, but simply as sojourners. As citizens, they share in all things with others, and yet endure all things as if foreigners. Every foreign land is to them as their native country, and every land of their birth as a land of strangers. They marry, as do all [others]; they beget children; but they do not destroy their offspring. They have a common table, but not a common bed. They are in the flesh, but they do not live after the flesh. 2 Corinthians 10:3 They pass their days on earth, but they are citizens of heaven. Philippians 3:20 They obey the prescribed laws, and at the same time surpass the laws by their lives. They love all men, and are persecuted by all. They are unknown and condemned; they are put to death, and restored to life. 2 Corinthians 6:9 They are poor, yet make many rich; 2 Corinthians 6:10 they are in lack of all things, and yet abound in all; they are dishonoured, and yet in their very dishonour are glorified. They are evil spoken of, and yet are justified; they are reviled, and bless; 2 Corinthians 4:12 they are insulted, and repay the insult with honour; they do good, yet are punished as evil-doers. When punished, they rejoice as if quickened into life; they are assailed by the Jews as foreigners, and are persecuted by the Greeks; yet those who hate them are unable to assign any reason for their hatred.

Chapter 6. The relation of Christians to the world

To sum up all in one word — what the soul is in the body, Christians are in the world. The soul is dispersed through all the members of the body, and Christians are scattered through all the cities of the world. The soul dwells in the body, yet is not of the body; and Christians dwell in the world, yet are not of the world. The invisible soul is guarded by the visible body, and Christians are known indeed to be in the world, but their godliness remains invisible. The flesh hates the soul, and wars against it, 1 Peter 2:11 though itself suffering no injury, because it is prevented from enjoying pleasures; the world also hates the Christians, though in nowise injured, because they abjure pleasures. The soul loves the flesh that hates it, and [loves also] the members; Christians likewise love those that hate them. The soul is imprisoned in the body, yet keeps together that very body; and Christians are confined in the world as in a prison, and yet they keep together the world. The immortal soul dwells in a mortal tabernacle; and Christians dwell as sojourners in corruptible [bodies], looking for an incorruptible dwelling in the heavens. The soul, when but ill-provided with food and drink, becomes better; in like manner, the Christians, though

subjected day by day to punishment, increase the more in number. God has assigned them this illustrious position, which it were unlawful for them to forsake.

Chapter 7. The manifestation of Christ

For, as I said, this was no mere earthly invention which was delivered to them, nor is it a mere human system of opinion, which they judge it right to preserve so carefully, nor has a dispensation of mere human mysteries been committed to them, but truly God Himself, who is almighty, the Creator of all things, and invisible, has sent from heaven, and placed among men, [Him who is] the truth, and the holy and incomprehensible Word, and has firmly established Him in their hearts. He did not, as one might have imagined, send to men any servant, or angel, or ruler, or any one of those who bear sway over earthly things, or one of those to whom the government of things in the heavens has been entrusted, but the very Creator and Fashioner of all things — by whom He made the heavens — by whom he enclosed the sea within its proper bounds — whose ordinances all the stars faithfully observe — from whom the sun has received the measure of his daily course to be observed — whom the moon obeys, being commanded to shine in the night, and whom the stars also obey, following the moon in her course; by whom all things have been arranged, and placed within their proper limits, and to whom all are subject — the heavens and the things that are therein, the earth and the things that are therein, the sea and the things that are therein — fire, air, and the abyss — the things which are in the heights, the things which are in the depths, and the things which lie between. This [messenger] He sent to them. Was it then, as one might conceive, for the purpose of exercising tyranny, or of inspiring fear and terror? By no means, but under the influence of clemency and meekness. As a king sends his son, who is also a king, so sent He Him; as God He sent Him; as to men He sent Him; as a Saviour He sent Him, and as seeking to persuade, not to compel us; for violence has no place in the character of God. As calling us He sent Him, not as vengefully pursuing us; as loving us He sent Him, not as judging us. For He will yet send Him to judge us, and who shall endure His appearing? Malachi 3:2

A considerable gap here occurs in the manuscripts.

Do you not see them exposed to wild beasts, that they may be persuaded to deny the Lord, and yet not overcome? Do you not see that the more of them are punished, the greater becomes the number of the rest? This does not seem to be the work of man: this is the power of God; these are the evidences of His manifestation.

Chapter 8. The miserable state of men before the coming of the Word

For, who of men at all understood before His coming what God is? Do you accept of the vain and silly doctrines of those who are deemed trustworthy philosophers? Of whom some said that fire was God, calling that God to which they themselves were by and by to come; and some water; and others some other of the elements formed by God. But if any one of these theories be worthy of approbation, every one of the rest of created things might also be declared to be God. But such declarations are simply the startling and erroneous utterances of deceivers; and no man has either seen Him, or made Him known, but He has revealed Himself. And He has manifested Himself through faith, to which alone it is given to behold God. For God, the Lord and Fashioner of all things, who made all things, and assigned them their several positions, proved Himself not merely a friend of mankind, but also long-suffering [in His dealings with them]. Yea, He was always of such a

character, and still is, and will ever be, kind and good, and free from wrath, and true, and the only one who is [absolutely] good; Matthew 19:17 and He formed in His mind a great and unspeakable conception, which He communicated to His Son alone. As long, then, as He held and preserved His own wise counsel in concealment, He appeared to neglect us, and to have no care over us. But after He revealed and laid open, through His beloved Son, the things which had been prepared from the beginning, He conferred every blessing all at once upon us, so that we should both share in His benefits, and see and be active [in His service]. Who of us would ever have expected these things? He was aware, then, of all things in His own mind, along with His Son, according to the relation subsisting between them.

Chapter 9. Why the Son was sent so late

As long then as the former time endured, He permitted us to be borne along by unruly impulses, being drawn away by the desire of pleasure and various lusts. This was not that He at all delighted in our sins, but that He simply endured them; nor that He approved the time of working iniquity which then was, but that He sought to form a mind conscious of righteousness, so that being convinced in that time of our unworthiness of attaining life through our own works, it should now, through the kindness of God, be vouchsafed to us; and having made it manifest that in ourselves we were unable to enter into the kingdom of God, we might through the power of God be made able. But when our wickedness had reached its height, and it had been clearly shown that its reward, punishment and death, was impending over us; and when the time had come which God had before appointed for manifesting His own kindness and power, how the one love of God, through exceeding regard for men, did not regard us with hatred, nor thrust us away, nor remember our iniquity against us, but showed great long-suffering, and bore with us, He Himself took on Him the burden of our iniquities, He gave His own Son as a ransom for us, the holy One for transgressors, the blameless One for the wicked, the righteous One for the unrighteous, the incorruptible One for the corruptible, the immortal One for those who are mortal. For what other thing was capable of covering our sins than His righteousness? By what other one was it possible that we, the wicked and ungodly, could be justified, than by the only Son of God? O sweet exchange! O unsearchable operation! O benefits surpassing all expectation! That the wickedness of many should be hid in a single righteous One, and that the righteousness of One should justify many transgressors! Having therefore convinced us in the former time that our nature was unable to attain to life, and having now revealed the Saviour who is able to save even those things which it was [formerly] impossible to save, by both these facts He desired to lead us to trust in His kindness, to esteem Him our Nourisher, Father, Teacher, Counsellor, Healer, our Wisdom, Light, Honour, Glory, Power, and Life, so that we should not be anxious concerning clothing and food.

Chapter 10. The blessings that will flow from faith

If you also desire [to possess] this faith, you likewise shall receive first of all the knowledge of the Father. For God has loved mankind, on whose account He made the world, to whom He rendered subject all the things that are in it, to whom He gave reason and understanding, to whom alone He imparted the privilege of looking upwards to Himself, whom He formed after His own image, to whom He sent His only-begotten Son, to whom He has promised a kingdom in heaven, and will give it to those who have loved Him. And when you have attained this knowledge, with what joy do you think you will be filled? Or, how will you love Him who has first so loved you? And if you love Him,

you will be an imitator of His kindness. And do not wonder that a man may become an imitator of God. He can, if he is willing. For it is not by ruling over his neighbours, or by seeking to hold the supremacy over those that are weaker, or by being rich, and showing violence towards those that are inferior, that happiness is found; nor can any one by these things become an imitator of God. But these things do not at all constitute His majesty. On the contrary he who takes upon himself the burden of his neighbour; he who, in whatsoever respect he may be superior, is ready to benefit another who is deficient; he who, whatsoever things he has received from God, by distributing these to the needy, becomes a god to those who receive [his benefits]: he is an imitator of God. Then you shall see, while still on earth, that God in the heavens rules over [the universe]; then you shall begin to speak the mysteries of God; then shall you both love and admire those that suffer punishment because they will not deny God; then shall you condemn the deceit and error of the world when you shall know what it is to live truly in heaven, when you shall despise that which is here esteemed to be death, when you shall fear what is truly death, which is reserved for those who shall be condemned to the eternal fire, which shall afflict those even to the end that are committed to it. Then shall you admire those who for righteousness' sake endure the fire that is but for a moment, and shall count them happy when you shall know [the nature of] that fire.

Chapter 11. These things are worthy to be known and believed

I do not speak of things strange to me, nor do I aim at anything inconsistent with right reason; but having been a disciple of the Apostles, I have become a teacher of the Gentiles. I minister the things delivered to me to those that are disciples worthy of the truth. For who that is rightly taught and begotten by the loving Word, would not seek to learn accurately the things which have been clearly shown by the Word to His disciples, to whom the Word being manifested has revealed them, speaking plainly [to them], not understood indeed by the unbelieving, but conversing with the disciples, who, being esteemed faithful by Him, acquired a knowledge of the mysteries of the Father? For which reason He sent the Word, that He might be manifested to the world; and He, being despised by the people [of the Jews], was, when preached by the Apostles, believed on by the Gentiles. This is He who was from the beginning, who appeared as if new, and was found old, and yet who is ever born afresh in the hearts of the saints. This is He who, being from everlasting, is today called the Son; through whom the Church is enriched, and grace, widely spread, increases in the saints, furnishing understanding, revealing mysteries, announcing times, rejoicing over the faithful, giving to those that seek, by whom the limits of faith are not broken through, nor the boundaries set by the fathers passed over. Then the fear of the law is chanted, and the grace of the prophets is known, and the faith of the gospels is established, and the tradition of the Apostles is preserved, and the grace of the Church exults; which grace if you grieve not, you shall know those things which the Word teaches, by whom He wills, and when He pleases. For whatever things we are moved to utter by the will of the Word commanding us, we communicate to you with pains, and from a love of the things that have been revealed to us.

Chapter 12. The importance of knowledge to true spiritual life

When you have read and carefully listened to these things, you shall know what God bestows on such as rightly love Him, being made [as you are] a paradise of delight, presenting in yourselves a tree bearing all kinds of produce and flourishing well, being adorned with various fruits. For in this place the tree of knowledge and the tree of life have been planted; but it is not the tree

of knowledge that destroys — it is disobedience that proves destructive. Nor truly are those words without significance which are written, how God from the beginning planted the tree of life in the midst of paradise, revealing through knowledge the way to life, and when those who were first formed did not use this [knowledge] properly, they were, through the fraud of the Serpent, stripped naked. For neither can life exist without knowledge, nor is knowledge secure without life. Wherefore both were planted close together. The Apostle, perceiving the force [of this conjunction], and blaming that knowledge which, without true doctrine, is admitted to influence life, declares, Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies. For he who thinks he knows anything without true knowledge, and such as is witnessed to by life, knows nothing, but is deceived by the Serpent, as not loving life. But he who combines knowledge with fear, and seeks after life, plants in hope, looking for fruit. Let your heart be your wisdom; and let your life be true knowledge inwardly received. Bearing this tree and displaying its fruit, you shall always gather in those things which are desired by God, which the Serpent cannot reach, and to which deception does not approach; nor is Eve then corrupted, but is trusted as a virgin; and salvation is manifested, and the Apostles are filled with understanding, and the Passover of the Lord advances, and the choirs are gathered together, and are arranged in proper order, and the Word rejoices in teaching the saints — by whom the Father is glorified: to whom be glory forever. Amen.

The Treatise on the Resurrection (Valentinian)

Some there are, my son Rheginos, who want to learn many things. They have this goal when they are occupied with questions whose answer is lacking. If they succeed with these, they usually think very highly of themselves. But I do not think that they have stood within the Word of Truth. They seek rather their own rest, which we have received through our Savior, our Lord Christ. We received it when we came to know the truth and rested ourselves upon it. But since you ask us pleasantly what is proper concerning the resurrection, I am writing you that it is necessary. To be sure, many are lacking faith in it, but there are a few who find it. So then, let us discuss the matter.

How did the Lord proclaim things while he existed in flesh and after he had revealed himself as Son of God? He lived in this place where you remain, speaking about the Law of Nature - but I call it 'Death'. Now the Son of God, Rheginos, was Son of Man. He embraced them both, possessing the humanity and the divinity, so that on the one hand he might vanquish death through his being Son of God, and that on the other through the Son of Man the restoration to the Pleroma might occur; because he was originally from above, a seed of Truth, before this structure had come into being. In this many dominions and divinities came into existence.

I know that I am presenting the solution in difficult terms, but there is nothing difficult in the Word of Truth. But since the Solution appeared so as not to leave anything hidden, but to reveal all things openly concerning existence - the destruction of evil on the one hand, the revelation of the elect on the other. This is the emanation of Truth and Spirit, Grace is of the Truth.

The Savior swallowed up death - (of this) you are not reckoned as being ignorant - for he put aside the world which is perishing. He transformed himself into an imperishable Aeon and raised himself up, having swallowed the visible by the invisible, and he gave us the way of our immortality. Then, indeed, as the Apostle said, "We suffered with him, and we arose with him, and we went to heaven

with him". Now if we are manifest in this world wearing him, we are that one's beams, and we are embraced by him until our setting, that is to say, our death in this life. We are drawn to heaven by him, like beams by the sun, not being restrained by anything. This is the spiritual resurrection which swallows up the psychic in the same way as the fleshly.

But if there is one who does not believe, he does not have the (capacity to be) persuaded. For it is the domain of faith, my son, and not that which belongs to persuasion: the dead shall arise! There is one who believes among the philosophers who are in this world. At least he will arise. And let not the philosopher who is in this world have cause to believe that he is one who returns himself by himself - and (that) because of our faith! For we have known the Son of Man, and we have believed that he rose from among the dead. This is he of whom we say, "He became the destruction of death, as he is a great one in whom they believe." Great are those who believe.

The thought of those who are saved shall not perish. The mind of those who have known him shall not perish. Therefore, we are elected to salvation and redemption since we are predestined from the beginning not to fall into the foolishness of those who are without knowledge, but we shall enter into the wisdom of those who have known the Truth. Indeed, the Truth which is kept cannot be abandoned, nor has it been. "Strong is the system of the Pleroma; small is that which broke loose (and) became (the) world. But the All is what is encompassed. It has not come into being; it was existing." So, never doubt concerning the resurrection, my son Rheginos! For if you were not existing in flesh, you received flesh when you entered this world. Why will you not receive flesh when you ascend into the Aeon? That which is better than the flesh is that which is for (the) cause of life. That which came into being on your account, is it not yours? Does not that which is yours exist with you? Yet, while you are in this world, what is it that you lack? This is what you have been making every effort to learn.

The afterbirth of the body is old age, and you exist in corruption. You have absence as a gain. For you will not give up what is better if you depart. That which is worse has diminution, but there is grace for it.

Nothing, then, redeems us from this world. But the All which we are, we are saved. We have received salvation from end to end. Let us think in this way! Let us comprehend in this way!

But there are some (who) wish to understand, in the enquiry about those things they are looking into, whether he who is saved, if he leaves his body behind, will be saved immediately. Let no one doubt concerning this. [...]. indeed, the visible members which are dead shall not be saved, for (only) the living members which exist within them would arise.

What, then, is the resurrection? It is always the disclosure of those who have risen. For if you remember reading in the Gospel that Elijah appeared and Moses with him, do not think the resurrection is an illusion. It is no illusion, but it is truth! Indeed, it is more fitting to say the world is an illusion, rather than the resurrection which has come into being through our Lord the Savior, Jesus Christ.

But what am I telling you now? Those who are living shall die. How do they live in an illusion? The rich have become poor, and the kings have been overthrown. Everything is prone to change. The world is an illusion! - lest, indeed, I rail at things to excess!

But the resurrection does not have this aforesaid character, for it is the truth which stands firm. It is the revelation of what is, and the transformation of things, and a transition into newness. For imperishability descends upon the perishable; the light flows down upon the darkness, swallowing it up; and the Pleroma fills up the deficiency. These are the symbols and the images of the resurrection. He it is who makes the good.

Therefore, do not think in part, O Rheginos, nor live in conformity with this flesh for the sake of unanimity, but flee from the divisions and the fetters, and already you have the resurrection. For if he who will die knows about himself that he will die - even if he spends many years in this life, he is brought to this - why not consider yourself as risen and (already) brought to this? If you have the resurrection but continue as if you are to die - and yet that one knows that he has died - why, then, do I ignore your lack of exercise? It is fitting for each one to practice in a number of ways, and he shall be released from this Element that he may not fall into error but shall himself receive again what at first was.

These things I have received from the generosity of my Lord, Jesus Christ. I have taught you and your brethren, my sons, considering them, while I have not omitted any of the things suitable for strengthening you. But if there is one thing written which is obscure in my exposition of the Word, I shall interpret it for you (pl.) when you (pl.) ask. But now, do not be jealous of anyone who is in your number when he is able to help.

Many are looking into this which I have written to you. To these I say: Peace (be) among them and grace. I greet you and those who love you (pl.) in brotherly Love.

Ignatius' Letter to the Smyrnaeans

Greeting

Ignatius, who is also called Theophorus, to the Church of God the Father, and of the beloved Jesus Christ, which has through mercy obtained every kind of gift, which is filled with faith and love, and is deficient in no gift, most worthy of God, and adorned with holiness: the Church which is at Smyrna, in Asia, wishes abundance of happiness, through the immaculate Spirit and word of God.

Chapter 1. Thanks to God for your faith

I Glorify God, even Jesus Christ, who has given you such wisdom. For I have observed that you are perfected in an immoveable faith, as if you were nailed to the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, both in the flesh and in the spirit, and are established in love through the blood of Christ, being fully persuaded with respect to our Lord, that He was truly of the seed of David according to the flesh, Romans 1:3 and the Son of God according to the will and power of God; that He was truly born of a virgin, was baptized by John, in order that all righteousness might be fulfilled Matthew 3:15 by Him; and was truly, under Pontius Pilate and Herod the tetrarch, nailed [to the cross] for us in His flesh. Of this fruit we are by His divinely-blessed passion, that He might set up a standard Isaiah 5:26, Isaiah 49:22 for all ages, through His resurrection, to all His holy and faithful [followers], whether among Jews or Gentiles, in the one body of His Church.

Chapter 2. Christ's true passion

Now, He suffered all these things for our sakes, that we might be saved. And He suffered truly, even as also He truly raised up Himself, not, as certain unbelievers maintain, that He only seemed to suffer, as they themselves only seem to be [Christians]. And as they believe, so shall it happen unto them, when they shall be divested of their bodies, and be mere evil spirits.

Chapter 3. Christ was possessed of a body after His resurrection

For I know that after His resurrection also He was still possessed of flesh, and I believe that He is so now. When, for instance, He came to those who were with Peter, He said to them, Lay hold, handle Me, and see that I am not an incorporeal spirit. And immediately they touched Him, and believed, being convinced both by His flesh and spirit. For this cause also they despised death, and were found its conquerors. And after his resurrection He ate and drank with them, as being possessed of flesh, although spiritually He was united to the Father.

Chapter 4. Beware of these heretics

I give you these instructions, beloved, assured that you also hold the same opinions [as I do]. But I guard you beforehand from those beasts in the shape of men, whom you must not only not receive, but, if it be possible, not even meet with; only you must pray to God for them, if by any means they may be brought to repentance, which, however, will be very difficult. Yet Jesus Christ, who is our true life, has the power of [effecting] this. But if these things were done by our Lord only in appearance, then am I also only in appearance bound. And why have I also surrendered myself to death, to fire, to the sword, to the wild beasts? But, [in fact,] he who is near to the sword is near to God; he that is among the wild beasts is in company with God; provided only he be so in the name of Jesus Christ. I undergo all these things that I may suffer together with Him, Romans 8:17 He who became a perfect man inwardly strengthening me. Philippians 4:13

Chapter 5. Their dangerous errors

Some ignorantly deny Him, or rather have been denied by Him, being the advocates of death rather than of the truth. These persons neither have the prophets persuaded, nor the law of Moses, nor the Gospel even to this day, nor the sufferings we have individually endured. For they think also the same thing regarding us. For what does any one profit me, if he commends me, but blasphemes my Lord, not confessing that He was [truly] possessed of a body? But he who does not acknowledge this, has in fact altogether denied Him, being enveloped in death. I have not, however, thought good to write the names of such persons, inasmuch as they are unbelievers. Yea, far be it from me to make any mention of them, until they repent and return to [a true belief in] Christ's passion, which is our resurrection.

Chapter 6. Unbelievers in the blood of Christ shall be condemned

Let no man deceive himself. Both the things which are in heaven, and the glorious angels, and rulers, both visible and invisible, if they believe not in the blood of Christ, shall, in consequence, incur condemnation. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it. Matthew 19:12 Let not [high] place puff any one up: for that which is worth all is faith and love, to which nothing is to be preferred. But consider those who are of a different opinion with respect to the grace of Christ which has come unto us, how opposed they are to the will of God. They have no regard for love; no

care for the widow, or the orphan, or the oppressed; of the bond, or of the free; of the hungry, or of the thirsty.

Chapter 7. Let us stand aloof from such heretics

They abstain from the Eucharist and from prayer, because they confess not the Eucharist to be the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins, and which the Father, of His goodness, raised up again. Those, therefore, who speak against this gift of God, incur death in the midst of their disputes. But it were better for them to treat it with respect, that they also might rise again. It is fitting, therefore, that you should keep aloof from such persons, and not to speak of them either in private or in public, but to give heed to the prophets, and above all, to the Gospel, in which the passion [of Christ] has been revealed to us, and the resurrection has been fully proved. But avoid all divisions, as the beginning of evils.

Chapter 8. Let nothing be done without the bishop

See that you all follow the bishop, even as Jesus Christ does the Father, and the presbytery as you would the apostles; and reverence the deacons, as being the institution of God. Let no man do anything connected with the Church without the bishop. Let that be deemed a proper Eucharist, which is [administered] either by the bishop, or by one to whom he has entrusted it. Wherever the bishop shall appear, there let the multitude [of the people] also be; even as, wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church. It is not lawful without the bishop either to baptize or to celebrate a love-feast; but whatsoever he shall approve of, that is also pleasing to God, so that everything that is done may be secure and valid.

Chapter 9. Honour the bishop

Moreover, it is in accordance with reason that we should return to soberness [of conduct], and, while yet we have opportunity, exercise repentance towards God. It is well to reverence both God and the bishop. He who honours the bishop has been honoured by God; he who does anything without the knowledge of the bishop, does [in reality] serve the devil. Let all things, then, abound to you through grace, for you are worthy. You have refreshed me in all things, and Jesus Christ [shall refresh] you. You have loved me when absent as well as when present. May God recompense you, for whose sake, while you endure all things, you shall attain unto Him.

Chapter 10. Acknowledgment of their kindness

You have done well in receiving Philo and Rheus Agathopus as servants of Christ our God, who have followed me for the sake of God, and who give thanks to the Lord in your behalf, because you have in every way refreshed them. None of these things shall be lost to you. May my spirit be for you, and my bonds, which you have not despised or been ashamed of; nor shall Jesus Christ, our perfect hope, be ashamed of you.

Chapter 11. Request to them to send a messenger to Antioch

Your prayer has reached to the Church which is at Antioch in Syria. Coming from that place bound with chains, most acceptable to God, I salute all; I who am not worthy to be styled from thence, inasmuch as I am the least of them. Nevertheless, according to the will of God, I have been thought worthy [of this honour], not that I have any sense [of having deserved it], but by the grace of God,

which I wish may be perfectly given to me, that through your prayers I may attain to God. In order, therefore, that your work may be complete both on earth and in heaven, it is fitting that, for the honour of God, your Church should elect some worthy delegate; so that he, journeying into Syria, may congratulate them that they are [now] at peace, and are restored to their proper greatness, and that their proper constitution has been re-established among them. It seems then to me a becoming thing, that you should send some one of your number with an epistle, so that, in company with them, he may rejoice over the tranquility which, according to the will of God, they have obtained, and because that, through your prayers, they have now reached the harbour. As persons who are perfect, you should also aim at those things which are perfect. For when you are desirous to do well, God is also ready to assist you.

Chapter 12. Salutations

The love of the brethren at Troas salutes you; whence also I write to you by Burrhus, whom you sent with me, together with the Ephesians, your brethren, and who has in all things refreshed me. And I would that all may imitate him, as being a pattern of a minister of God. Grace will reward him in all things. I salute your most worthy bishop, and your very venerable presbytery, and your deacons, my fellow-servants, and all of you individually, as well as generally, in the name of Jesus Christ, and in His flesh and blood, in His passion and resurrection, both corporeal and spiritual, in union with God and you. Grace, mercy, peace, and patience, be with you for evermore!

Chapter 13. Conclusion

I salute the families of my brethren, with their wives and children, and the virgins who are called widows. Be strong, I pray, in the power of the Holy Ghost. Philo, who is with me, greets you. I salute the house of Tavius, and pray that it may be confirmed in faith and love, both corporeal and spiritual. I salute Alce, my well-beloved, and the incomparable Daphnus, and Eutecnus, and all by name. Fare well in the grace of God.

The Homily on Love by Clement of Alexandria

Chapter I. Boyish Questionings

I Clement, being a Roman citizen, even from my earliest youth was able to live chastely, my mind from my boyhood drawing away the lust that was in me to dejection and distress. For I had a habit of reasoning—how originating I know not—making frequent cogitations concerning death: When I die, shall I neither exist, nor shall any one ever have any remembrance of me, while boundless time bears all things of all men into forgetfulness? And shall I then be without being, or acquaintance with those who are; neither knowing nor being known, neither having been nor being? And has the world ever been made? And was there anything before it was made? For if it has been always, it shall also continue to be; but if it has been made, it shall also be dissolved. And after its dissolution, shall there ever be anything again, unless, perhaps, silence and forgetfulness? Or perhaps something shall be which is not possible now to conceive.

Chapter II. Good Out of Evil

As I pondered without ceasing these and such like questions—I know not whence arising—I had such bitter grief, that, becoming pale, I wasted away; and, what was most terrible, if at any time I wished to drive away this meditation as unprofitable, my suffering became all the more severe; and I grieved over this, not knowing that I had a fair inmate, even my thought, which was to be to me the cause of a blessed immortality, as I afterwards knew by experience, and gave thanks to God, the Lord of all. For it was by this thought, which at first afflicted me, that I was compelled to come to the search and the finding of things; and then I pitied those whom at first, through ignorance, I ventured to call blessed.

Chapter III. Perplexity

From my boyhood, then, being involved in such reasonings, in order to learn something definite, I used to resort to the schools of the philosophers. But nought else did I see than the setting up and the knocking down of doctrines, and strifes, and seeking for victory, and the arts of syllogisms, and the skill of assumptions; and sometimes one *opinion* prevailed,—as, for example, that the soul is immortal, and sometimes that it is mortal. If, therefore, at any time the doctrine prevailed that it is immortal, I was glad; and when the doctrine prevailed that it is mortal, I was grieved. And again, I was the more disheartened because I could not establish either doctrine to my satisfaction. However, I perceived that the opinions on subjects under discussion are taken as true or false, according to their defenders, and do not appear as they really are. Perceiving, therefore, now that the acceptance does not depend on the real nature of the subjects discussed, but that opinions are proved to be true or false, according to ability of those who defend them, I was still more than ever at a loss in regard of things. Wherefore I groaned from the depth of my soul. For neither was I able to establish anything, nor could I shake off the consideration of such things, though, as I said before, I wished it. For although I frequently charged myself to be at peace, in some way or other thoughts on these subjects, accompanied with a feeling of pleasure, would come into my mind.

Chapter IV. More Perplexity

And again, living in doubt, I said to myself, Why do I labour in vain, when the matter is clear, that if I lose existence when I die, it is not fitting that I should distress myself now while I do exist? Wherefore I shall reserve my grief till that *day*, when, ceasing to exist, I shall not be affected with grief. But if I am to exist, what does it profit me now to distress myself gratuitously? And immediately after this another reasoning assailed me; for I said, Shall I not have something worse to suffer than that which distresses me now, if I have not lived piously; and shall I not be delivered over, according to the doctrines of some philosophers, to Pyriphlegethon and Tartarus, like Sisyphus, or Tityus, or Ixion, or Tantalus, and be punished for ever in Hades? But again I replied, saying: But there are no such things as these. Yet again I said: But if there be? Therefore, said I, since the matter is uncertain, the safer plan is for me rather to live piously. But how shall I be able, for the sake of righteousness, to subdue bodily pleasures, looking, as I do, to an uncertain hope? But I am neither fully persuaded what is that righteous thing that is pleasing to God, nor do I know whether the soul is immortal or mortal. Neither can I find any well-established doctrine, nor can I abstain from such debating.

Chapter V. A Resolution

What, then, am I to do, unless this? I shall go into Egypt, and I shall become friendly with the hierophants of the shrines, and with the prophets; and I shall seek and find a magician, and persuade him with large bribes to effect the calling up of a soul, which is called necromancy, as if I were going to inquire of it concerning some business. And the inquiry shall be for the purpose of learning whether the soul is immortal. But the answer of the soul that it is immortal shall not give me the knowledge from its speaking or my hearing, but only from its being seen; so that, seeing it with my very eyes, I may have a self-sufficient and fit assurance, from the very fact of its appearing, that it exists; and never again shall the uncertain words of hearing be able to overturn the things which the eyes have made their own. However, I submitted this very plan to a certain companion who was a philosopher; and he counselled me not to venture upon it, and that on many accounts. For if, said he, the soul shall not listen to the magician, you will live with an evil conscience, as having acted against the laws which forbid the doing of these things. But if it shall listen to him, then, besides your living with an evil conscience, I think that matters of piety will not be promoted to you on account of your making this attempt. For they say that the Deity is angry with those who disturb souls after their release from the body. And I, when I heard this, became indeed more backward to undertake such a thing, but I did not abandon my original plan; but I was distressed, as being hindered in the execution of it.

Chapter VI. Tidings from Judæa

And, not to discuss such matters to you in a long speech, while I was occupied with such reasonings and doings, a certain report, taking its rise in the spring-time, in the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, gradually grew everywhere, and ran through the world as truly the good tidings of God, being unable to stifle the counsel of God in silence. Therefore it everywhere became greater and louder, saying that a certain One in Judæa, beginning in the spring season, was preaching to the Jews the kingdom of the invisible God, and saying that whoever of them would reform his manner of living should enjoy it. And in order that He might be believed that He uttered these things full of the Godhead, He wrought many wonderful miracles and signs by His mere command, as having received power from God. For He made the deaf to hear, the blind to see, the lame to walk, raised up the bowed down, drove away every disease, put to flight every demon; and even scabbed lepers, by only looking on Him from a distance, were sent away cured by Him; and the dead being brought to Him, were raised; and there was nothing which He could not do. And as time advanced, so much the greater, through the arrival of more persons, and the stronger grew—I say not now the report, but—the truth of the thing; for now at length there were meetings in various places for consultation and inquiry as to who He might be that had appeared, and what was His purpose.

Chapter VII. The Gospel in Rome

And then in the same year, in the autumn season, a certain one, standing in a public place, cried and said, Men of Rome, hearken. The Son of God has come in Judæa, proclaiming eternal life to all who will, if they shall live according to the counsel of the Father, who has sent Him. Wherefore change your manner of life from the worse to the better, from things temporal to things eternal; for know ye that there is one God, who is in heaven, whose world ye unrighteously dwell in before His righteous eyes. But if ye be changed, and live according to His counsel, then, being born into the other world, and becoming eternal, ye shall enjoy His unspeakable good things. But if ye be unbelieving, your souls, after the dissolution of the body, shall be thrown into the place of fire,

where, being punished eternally, they shall repent of their unprofitable deeds. For every one, the term of repentance is the present life. I therefore, when I heard these things, was grieved, because no one among so great multitudes, hearing such an announcement, said: I shall go into Judæa, that I may know if this man who tells us these things speaks the truth, that the Son of God has come into Judæa, for the sake of a good and eternal hope, revealing the will of the Father who sent Him. For it is no small matter which they say that He preaches: for He asserts that the souls of some, being *themselves* immortal, shall enjoy eternal good things; and that those of others, being thrown into unquenchable fire, shall be punished forever.

Chapter VIII. Departure from Rome

While I spoke thus concerning others, I also lectured myself, saying, Why do I blame others, being myself guilty of the very same crime of heedlessness? But I shall hasten into Judæa, having first arranged my affairs. And when I had thus made up my mind, there occurred a long time of delay, my worldly affairs being difficult to arrange. Therefore, meditating further on the nature of life, that by involving men in hope it lays snares for those who are making haste, yea, and how much time I had been robbed of while tossed by hopes, and that we men die while thus occupied, I left all my affairs as they were, and sped to Portus; and coming to the harbour, and being taken on board a ship, I was borne by adverse winds to Alexandria instead of Judæa; and being detained there by stress of weather, I consorted with the philosophers, and told them about the rumour and the sayings of him who had appeared in Rome. And they answered that indeed they knew nothing of him who had appeared in Rome; but concerning Him who was born in Judæa, and who was said by the report to be the Son of God, they had heard from many who had come from thence, and had learned respecting all the wonderful things that He did with a word.

Chapter IX. Preaching of Barnabas

And when I said that I wished I could meet with some one of those who had seen Him, they immediately brought me to one, saying, There is one here who not only is acquainted with Him, but is also of that country, a Hebrew, by name Barnabas, who says that he himself is one of His disciples; and hereabouts he resides, and readily announces to those who will the terms of His promise. Then I went with them; and when I came, I stood listening to his words with the crowd that stood round him; and I perceived that he was speaking the truth not with dialectic art, but was setting forth simply and without preparation what he had heard and seen the manifested Son of God do and say. And even from the crowd who stood around him he produced many witnesses of the miracles and discourses which he narrated.

Chapter X. Cavils of the Philosophers

But while the multitudes were favourably disposed towards the things that he so artlessly spoke, the philosophers, impelled by their worldly learning, set upon laughing at him and making sport of him, upbraiding and reproaching him with excessive presumption, making use of the great armoury of syllogisms. But he set aside their babbling, and did not enter into their subtle questioning, but without embarrassment went on with what he was saying. And then one of them asked, Wherefore it was that a gnat, although it be so small, and has six feet, has wings also; while an elephant, the largest of beasts, is wingless, and has but four feet? But he, after the question had been put, resuming his discourse, which had been interrupted, as though he had answered the question,

resumed his original discourse, only making use of this preface after each interruption: We have a commission only to tell you the words and the wondrous doings of Him who sent us; and instead of logical demonstration, we present to you many witnesses from amongst yourselves who stand by, whose faces I remember, as living images. These sufficient testimonies it is left to your choice to submit to, or to disbelieve. But I shall not cease to declare unto you what is for your profit; for to be silent were to me a loss, and to disbelieve is ruin to you. But indeed I could give answers to your frivolous questions, if you asked them through love of truth. But the reason of the different structure of the gnat and elephant it is not fitting to tell to those who are ignorant of the God of all.

Chapter XI. Clement's Zeal

When he said this, they all, as in concert, set up a shout of laughter, trying to silence him and put him out, as a barbarous madman. But I, seeing this, and seized, I know not how, with enthusiasm, could no longer keep silence with righteous indignation, but boldly cried out, saying, Well has God ordained that His counsel should be incapable of being received by you, foreseeing you to be unworthy, as appears manifestly to such of those who are now present as have minds capable of judging. For whereas now heralds of His counsel have been sent forth, not making a show of grammatical art, but setting forth His will in simple and in artificial words, so that whosoever hear can understand what is spoken, and not with any invidious feeling, as though unwilling to offer it to all; you come here, and besides your not understanding what is for your advantage, to your own injury you laugh at the truth, which, to your condemnation, consorts with the barbarians, and which you will not entertain when it visits you, by reason of your wickedness and the plainness of its words, lest you be convicted of being merely lovers of words, and not lovers of truth and lovers of wisdom. How long will you be learning to speak, who have not the power of speech? For many sayings of yours are not worth one word. What, then, will your Grecian multitude say, being of one mind, if, as he says, there shall be a judgment? Why, O God, did You not proclaim to us Your counsel? Shall you not, if you be thought worthy of an answer at all, be told this? I, knowing before the foundation of the world all characters that were to be, acted towards each one by anticipation according to his deserts without making it known; but wishing to give full assurance to those who have fled to me that this is so, and to explain why from the beginning, and in the first ages, I did not suffer my counsel to be publicly proclaimed; I now, in the end of the world, have sent heralds to proclaim my will, and they are insulted and flouted by those who will not be benefited, and who wilfully reject my friendship. Oh, great wrong! The preachers are exposed to danger even to the loss of life, and that by the men who are called to salvation.

Chapter XII. Clement's Rebuke of the People

And this wrongful treatment of my heralds would have been against all from the beginning, if from the beginning the unworthy had been called to salvation. For that which is now done wrongfully by these men serves to the vindication of my righteous foreknowledge, that it was well that I did not choose from the beginning to expose uselessly to public contempt the word which is worthy of honour; but determined to suppress it, as being honourable, not indeed from those who were worthy from the beginning—for to them also I imparted it—but from those, and such as those, unworthy, as you see them to be,—those who hate me, and who will not love themselves. And now, give over laughing at this man, and hear me with respect to his announcement, or let any one of the hearers who pleases answer. And do not bark like vicious dogs, deafening with disorderly clamour

the ears of those who would be saved, ye unrighteous and God-haters, and perverting the saving method to unbelief. How shall you be able to obtain pardon, who scorn him who is sent to speak to you of the Godhead of God? And this you do towards a man whom you ought to have received on account of his good-will towards you, even if he did not speak truth.

Chapter XIII. Clement Instructed by Barnabas

While I spoke these words, and others to the same effect, there arose a great excitement among the crowd; and some as pitying Barnabas, sympathized with me; but others, being senseless, terribly gnashed their teeth against me. But, as the evening had already come, I took Barnabas by the hand, and by force conducted him, against his will, to my lodging, and constrained him to remain there, lest some one might lay hands on him. And having spent several days, and instructed me briefly in the true doctrine, as well as he could in a few days, he said that he should hasten into Judæa for the observance of the festival, and also because he wished for the future to consort with those of his own nation.

Chapter XIV. Departure of Barnabas

But it plainly appeared to me that he was disconcerted. For when I said to him, Only set forth to me the words which you have heard of the Man who has appeared, and I will adorn them with my speech, and preach the counsel of God; and if you do so, within a few days I will sail with you, for I greatly desire to go to the land of Judæa, and perhaps I shall dwell with you all my life;—when he heard this, he answered: If you wish to inquire into our affairs, and to learn what is for your advantage, sail with me at once. But if you will not, I shall now give you directions to my house, and that of those whom you wish *to meet*, that when you choose to come you may find us. For I shall set out tomorrow for my home. And when I saw that he could not be prevailed upon, I went with him as far as the harbour; and having learned of him the directions which he had promised to give me for finding the dwellings, I said to him, Were it not that tomorrow I am to recover a debt that is due to me, I should straightway set sail with you. But I shall soon overtake you. And having said this, and having given him in charge to those who commanded the ship, I returned grieving, remembering him as an excellent and dear friend.

Chapter XV. Introduction to Peter

But having spent *some* days, and not having been able to recover the whole debt, for the sake of speed I neglected the balance, as being a hindrance, and myself also set sail for Judæa, and in fifteen days arrived at Cæsarea Stratonis. And when I had landed, and was seeking for a lodging, I learned that one named Peter, who was the most esteemed disciple of the Man who had appeared in Judæa, and had done signs and wonders, was going to have a verbal controversy next day with Simon, a Samaritan of Gitthi. When I heard this, I begged to be shown his lodging; and as soon as I learned it, I stood before the door. And those who were in the house, seeing me, discussed the question who I was, and whence I had come. And, behold, Barnabas came out; and as soon as he saw me he embraced me, rejoicing greatly, and weeping. And he took me by the hand, and conducted me to where Peter was, saying to me, This is Peter, of whom I told you as being the greatest in the wisdom of God, and I have spoken to him of you continually. Therefore enter freely, for I have told him your excellent qualities, without falsehood; and, at the same time, have disclosed to him your intention, so that he himself also is desirous to see you. Therefore I offer him

a great gift when by my hands I present you to him. Thus saying, he presented me, and said, This, O Peter, is Clement.

Chapter XVI. Peter's Salutation

Then the blessed man, springing forward as soon as he heard my name, kissed me; and making me sit down, straightway said, You acted nobly in entertaining Barnabas, a herald of the truth, to the honour of the living God, being magnanimously not ashamed, nor fearing the resentment of the rude multitude. Blessed shall you be. For as you thus with all honour entertained the ambassador of the truth, so also truth herself shall constitute you, who are a stranger, a citizen of her own city. And thus you shall greatly rejoice, because you have now lent a small favour; I mean the kindness of good words. You shall be heir of blessings which are both eternal and cannot possibly be taken from you. And do not trouble yourself to detail to me your manner of life; for the veracious Barnabas has detailed to us everything relating to you, making favourable mention of you almost every day. And in order that I may tell to you briefly, as to a genuine friend, what is in hand, travel with us, unless anything hinders you, partaking of the words of truth which I am going to speak from city to city, as far as Rome itself. And if you wish to say anything, speak on.

Chapter XVII. Questions Propounded

Then I set forth my purpose from the beginning, and how I had spent myself upon difficult questions, and all the things that I disclosed to you at the outset, so that I need not write the same things again. Then I said, I hold myself in readiness to journey with you; for this, I know not how, I gladly wish. However, I wish first to be convinced concerning the truth, that I may know whether the soul is mortal or immortal; and whether, if it is eternal, it is to be judged concerning the things which it has done here. Also, whether there is anything that is righteous and well-pleasing to God; and whether the world was made, and for what end it was made; and whether it shall be dissolved; and if it shall be dissolved, whether it shall be made better, or shall not be at all. And not to mention them in detail, I said that I wished to learn these things, and things consequent upon these. And to this he answered: I shall shortly convey to you, O Clement, the knowledge of the things that are; and even now listen.

Chapter XVIII. Causes of Ignorance

The will of God has been *kept* in obscurity in many ways. In the first place, there is evil instruction, wicked association, terrible society, unseemly discourses, wrongful prejudice. Thereby is error, then fearlessness, unbelief, fornication, covetousness, vainglory; and ten thousand other such evils, filling the world as a quantity of smoke fills a house, have obscured the sight of the men inhabiting the world, and have not suffered them to look up and become acquainted with God the Creator from the delineation of *Himself which He has given*, and to know what is pleasing to Him. Wherefore it behooves the lovers of truth, crying out inwardly from their breasts, to call for aid, with truth-loving reason, that some one living within the house which is filled with smoke may approach and open the door, so that the light of the sun which is without may be admitted into the house, and the smoke of the fire which is within may be driven out.

Chapter XIX. The True Prophet

Now the Man who is the helper I call the true Prophet; and He alone is able to enlighten the souls of men, so that with our own eyes we may be able to see the way of eternal salvation. But otherwise it is impossible, as you also know, since you said a little while ago that every doctrine is set up and pulled down, and the same is thought true or false, according to the power of him who advocates it; so that doctrines do not appear as they are, but take the appearance of being or not being truth or falsehood from those who advocate them. On this account the whole business of religion needed a true prophet, that he might tell us things that are, as they are, and how we must believe concerning all things. So that it is first necessary to test the prophet by every prophetic sign, and having ascertained that he is true, thereafter to believe him in every thing, and not to sit in judgment upon his several sayings, but to receive them as certain, being accepted indeed by seeming faith, yet by sure judgment. For by our initial proof, and by strict inquiry on every side, all things are received with right reason. Wherefore before all things it is necessary to seek after the true Prophet, because without Him it is impossible that any certainty can come to men.

Chapter XX. Peter's Satisfaction with Clement

And, at the same time, he satisfied me by expounding to me who He is, and how He is found, and holding Him forth to me as truly to be found, showing that the truth is more manifest to the ear by the discourse of the prophet than things that are seen with the eye; so that I was astonished, and wondered that no one sees those things which are sought after by all, though they lie before him. However, having written this discourse concerning the Prophet by his order, he caused the volume to be dispatched to you from Cæsarea Stratonis, saying that he had a charge from you to send his discourses and his acts year by year. Thus, on the very first day, beginning only concerning the prophet of the truth, he confirmed me in every respect; and then he spoke thus: Henceforth give heed to the discussions that take place between me and those on the other side; and even if I come off at a disadvantage, I am not afraid of your ever doubting of the truth that has been delivered to you, knowing well that I seem to be beaten, but not the doctrine that has been delivered to us by the Prophet. However, I hope not to come off in our inquiries at a disadvantage with men who have understanding—I mean lovers of truth, who are able to know what discourses are specious, artificial, and pleasant, and what are unartificial and simple, trusting only to the truth *that is conveyed* through them.

Chapter XXI. Unalterable Conviction

When he had thus spoken, I answered: Now do I thank God; for as I wished to be convinced, so He has vouchsafed to me. However, so far as concerns me, be you so far without anxiety that I shall never doubt; so much so, that if you yourself should ever wish to remove me from the prophetic doctrine, you should not be able, so well do I know what I have received. And do not think that it is a great thing that I promise you that I shall never doubt; for neither I myself, nor any man who has heard your discourse concerning the Prophet, can ever doubt of the true doctrine, having first heard and understood what is the truth of the prophetic announcement. Wherefore have confidence in the God-willed dogma; for every art of wickedness has been conquered. For against prophecy, neither arts of discourses, nor tricks of sophisms, nor syllogisms, nor any other contrivance, can prevail anything; that is, if he who has heard the true Prophet really is desirous of truth, and does not give heed to anything else under pretext of truth. So that, my lord Peter, be not disconcerted, as though you had presented the greatest good to a senseless person; for you have presented it to one

sensible of the favour, and who cannot be seduced from the truth that has been committed to him. For I know that it is one of those things which one wishes to receive quickly, and not to attain slowly. Therefore I know that I should not despise, on account of the quickness *with which I have got it*, what has been committed to me, what is incomparable, and what alone is safe.

Chapter XXII. Thanksgiving

When I had thus spoken, Peter said: I give thanks to God, both for your salvation and for my satisfaction. For I am truly pleased to know that you apprehend what is the greatness of prophecy. Since, then, as you say, if I myself should ever wish—which God forbid—to transfer you to another doctrine, I shall not be able to persuade you, begin from tomorrow to attend upon me in the discussions with the adversaries. And tomorrow I have one with Simon Magus. And having spoken thus, and he himself having partaken of food in private, he ordered me also to partake; and having blessed the food, and having given thanks after being satisfied, and having giving me an account of this matter, he went on to say: May God grant you in all things to be made like unto me, and having been baptized, to partake of the same table with me. And having thus spoken, he enjoined me to go to rest; for now indeed my bodily nature demanded sleep.

The Infancy Gospel of Thomas

Introduction

The older testimonies about this book have been given already. I now present the three principal forms of it, as given by Tischendorf: two Greek texts, A and B, and one Latin.

The few Greek manuscripts are all late. The earliest authorities are a much abbreviated Syriac version of which the manuscript is of the sixth century, and a Latin palimpsest at Vienna of the fifth or sixth century, which has never been deciphered in full.

The Latin version translated here is found in more manuscripts than the Greek; none of them, I think, is earlier than the thirteenth century.

The stories of Thomas the Israelite, the Philosopher, concerning the works of the Childhood of the Lord.

I. I, Thomas the Israelite, tell unto you, even all the brethren that are of the Gentiles, to make known unto you the works of the childhood of our Lord Jesus Christ and his mighty deeds, even all that he did when he was born in our land: whereof the beginning is thus:

II. 1 This little child Jesus when he was five years old was playing at the ford of a brook: and he gathered together the waters that flowed there into pools, and made them straightway clean, and commanded them by his word alone. 2 And having made soft clay, he fashioned thereof twelve sparrows. And it was the Sabbath when he did these things (or made them). And there were also many other little children playing with him.

3 And a certain Jew when he saw what Jesus did, playing upon the Sabbath day, departed straightway and told his father Joseph: Lo, thy child is at the brook, and he hath taken clay and fashioned twelve little birds, and hath polluted the Sabbath day. 4 And Joseph came to the place and saw: and cried out to him, saying: Wherefore doest thou these things on the Sabbath, which it is not lawful to do? But Jesus clapped his hands together and cried out to the sparrows and said to them: Go! and the sparrows took their flight and went away chirping. 5 And when the Jews saw it they were amazed, and departed and told their chief men that which they had seen Jesus do.

III. 1 But the son of Annas the scribe was standing there with Joseph; and he took a branch of a willow and dispersed the waters which Jesus had gathered together. 2 And when Jesus saw what was done, he was wroth and said unto him: O evil, ungodly, and foolish one, what hurt did the pools and the waters do thee? behold, now also thou shalt be withered like a tree, and shalt not bear leaves, neither root, nor fruit. 3 And straightway that lad withered up wholly, but Jesus departed and went unto Joseph's house. But the parents of him that was withered took him up, bewailing his youth, and brought him to Joseph, and accused him 'for that thou hast such a child which doeth such deeds.'

IV. 1 After that again he went through the village, and a child ran and dashed against his shoulder. And Jesus was provoked and said unto him: Thou shalt not finish thy course (lit. go all thy way). And immediately he fell down and died. But certain when they saw what was done said: Whence was this young child born, for that every word of his is an accomplished work? And the parents of him that was dead came unto Joseph, and blamed him, saying: Thou that hast such a child canst not dwell with us in the village: or do thou teach him to bless and not to curse: for he slayeth our children.

V. 1 And Joseph called the young child apart and admonished him, saying: Wherefore doest thou such things, that these suffer and hate us and persecute us? But Jesus said: I know that these thy words are not thine: nevertheless for thy sake I will hold my peace: but they shall bear their punishment. And straightway they that accused him were smitten with blindness. 2 And they that saw it were sore afraid and perplexed, and said concerning him that every word which he spake whether it were good or bad, was a deed, and became a marvel. And when they (he ?) saw that Jesus had so done, Joseph arose and took hold upon his ear and wrung it sore. 3 And the young child was wroth and said unto him: It sufficeth thee (or them) to seek and not to find, and verily thou hast done unwisely: knowest thou not that I am thine? vex me not.

VI. 1 Now a certain teacher, Zacchaeus by name, stood there and he heard in part when Jesus said these things to his father and he marvelled greatly that being a young child he spake such matters. 2 And after a few days he came near unto Joseph and said unto him: Thou hast a wise child, and he hath understanding. Come, deliver him to me that he may learn letters. And I will teach him with the letters all knowledge and that he salute all the elders and honour them as grandfathers and fathers, and love them of his own years. 3 And he told him all the letters from Alpha even to Omega clearly, with much questioning. But Jesus looked upon Zacchaeus the teacher and saith unto him: Thou that knowest not the Alpha according to its nature, how canst thou teach others the Beta? thou hypocrite, first, if thou knowest it, teach the Alpha, and then will we believe thee concerning the Beta. Then began he to confound the mouth of the teacher concerning the first letter, and he could not prevail to answer him. 4 And in the hearing of many the young child saith to Zacchaeus: Hear, O

teacher, the ordinance of the first letter and pay heed to this, how that it hath [what follows is really unintelligible in this and in all the parallel texts: a literal version would run something like this: how that it hath lines, and a middle mark, which thou seest, common to both, going apart; coming together, raised up on high, dancing (a corrupt word), of three signs, like in kind (a corrupt word), balanced, equal in measure]: thou hast the rules of the Alpha.

VII. 1 Now when Zacchaeus the teacher heard such and so many allegories of the first letter spoken by the young child, he was perplexed at his answer and his instruction being so great, and said to them that were there: Woe is me, wretch that I am, I am confounded: I have brought shame to myself by drawing to me this young child. 2 Take him away, therefore I beseech thee, my brother Joseph: I cannot endure the severity of his look, I cannot once make clear my (or his) word. This young child is not earthly born: this is one that can tame even fire: be like this is one begotten before the making of the world. What belly bare this, what womb nurtured it? I know not. Woe is me, O my friend, he putteth me from my sense, I cannot follow his understanding. I have deceived myself, thrice wretched man that I am: I strove to get me a disciple and I am found to have a master. 3 I think, O my friends, upon my shame, for that being old I have been overcome by a young child;- and I am even ready to faint and to die because of the boy, for I am not able at this present hour to look him in the face. And when all men say that I have been overcome by a little child, what have I to say? and what can I tell concerning the lines of the first letter whereof he spake to me? I am ignorant, O my friends, for neither beginning nor end of it (or him) do I know. 4 Wherefore I beseech thee, my brother Joseph, take him away unto thine house: for he is somewhat great, whether god or angel or what I should call him, I know not.

VIII. 1 And as the Jews were counselling Zacchaeus, the young child laughed greatly and said: Now let those bear fruit that were barren (Gr. that are thine) and let them see that were blind in heart. I am come from above that I may curse them, and call them to the things that are above, even as he commanded which hath sent me for your sakes. 2 And when the young child ceased speaking, immediately all they were made whole which had come under his curse. And no man after that durst provoke him, lest he should curse him, and he should be maimed.

IX. 1 Now after certain days Jesus was playing in the upper story of a certain house, and one of the young children that played with him fell down from the house and died. And the other children when they saw it fled, and Jesus remained alone. 2 And the parents of him that was dead came and accused him that he had cast him down. (And Jesus said: I did not cast him down) but they reviled him still. 3 Then Jesus leaped down from the roof and stood by the body of the child and cried with a loud voice and said: Zeno (for so was his name called), arise and tell me, did I cast thee down? And straightway he arose and said: Nay, Lord, thou didst not cast me down, but didst raise me up. And when they saw it they were amazed: and the parents of the child glorified God for the sign which had come to pass, and worshipped Jesus.

X. 1 After a few days, a certain young man was cleaving wood in the neighbourhood (MSS. corner), and the axe fell and cut in sunder the sole of his foot, and losing much blood he was at the point to die. 2 And when there was a tumult and concourse, the young child Jesus also ran thither, and by force passed through the multitude, and took hold upon the foot of the young man that was smitten, and straightway it was healed. And he said unto the young man: Arise now and cleave the

wood and remember me. But when the multitude saw what was done they worshipped the young child, saying: Verily the spirit of God dwelleth in this young child.

XI. 1 Now when he was six years old, his mother sendeth him to draw water and bear it into the house, and gave him a pitcher: but in the press he struck it against another and the pitcher was broken. 2 But Jesus spread out the garment which was upon him and filled it with water and brought it to his mother. And when his mother saw what was done she kissed him; and she kept within herself the mysteries which she saw him do.

XII. 1 Again, in the time of sowing the young child went forth with his father to sow wheat in their land: and as his father sowed, the young child Jesus sowed also one corn of wheat. 2 And he reaped it and threshed it and made thereof an hundred measures (cors): and he called all the poor of the village unto the threshing floor and gave them the wheat. And Joseph took the residue of the wheat. And he was eight years old when he wrought this sign.

XIII. 1 Now his father was a carpenter and made at that time ploughs and yokes. And there was required of him a bed by a certain rich man, that he should make it for him. And whereas one beam, that which is called the shifting one was too short and Joseph knew not what to do, the young child Jesus said to his father Joseph: Lay down the two pieces of wood and make them even at the end next unto thee (MSS. at the middle part). And Joseph did as the young child said unto him. And Jesus stood at the other end and took hold upon the shorter beam and stretched it and made it equal with the other. And his father Joseph saw it and marvelled: and he embraced the young child and kissed him, saying: Happy am I for that God hath given me this young child.

XIV. 1 But when Joseph saw the understanding of the child, and his age, that it was coming to the full, he thought with himself again that he should not be ignorant of letters; and he took him and delivered him to another teacher. And the teacher said unto Joseph: First will I teach him the Greek letters, and after that the Hebrew. For the teacher knew the skill of the child and was afraid of him: notwithstanding he wrote the alphabet and Jesus pondered thereon a long time and answered him not. 2 And Jesus said to him: If thou be indeed a teacher and if thou knowest letters well, tell me the power of the Alpha and then will I tell thee the power of the Beta. And the teacher was provoked and smote him on the head. And the young child was hurt and cursed him, and straightway he fainted and fell to the ground on his face. 3 And the child returned unto the house of Joseph: and Joseph was grieved and commanded his mother, saying: Let him not forth without the door, for all they die that provoke him to wrath.

XV. 1 And after some time yet another teacher which was a faithful friend of Joseph said to him: Bring the young child unto me to the school, peradventure I may be able by cockering him to teach him the letters. And Joseph said: If thou hast no fear, my brother, take him with thee. And he took him with him, in fear and much trouble of spirit, but the young child followed him gladly. 2 And going with boldness into the school he found a book lying upon the pulpit and he took it, and read not the letters that were therein, but opened his mouth and spake by the Holy Spirit, and taught the law to them that stood by. And a great multitude came together and stood there hearkening, and marvelled at the beauty of his teaching and the readiness of his words, in that being an infant he uttered such things. 3 But when Joseph heard it, he was afraid, and ran unto the school thinking whether this teacher also were without skill (or smitten with infirmity): but the teacher said unto Joseph: Know, my brother, that I received this child for a disciple, but he is full of grace and wisdom;

and now I beseech thee, brother, take him unto thine house. 4 And when the young child heard that, he smiled upon him and said: Forasmuch as thou hast said well and hast borne right witness, for thy sake shall he also that was smitten be healed. And forthwith the other teacher was healed. And Joseph took the young child and departed unto his house.

XVI. 1 And Joseph sent his son James to bind fuel and carry it into his house. And the young child Jesus also followed him. And as James was gathering of faggots, a viper bit the hand of James. 2 And as he was sore afflicted and ready to perish, Jesus came near and breathed upon the bite, and straightway the pain ceased, and the serpent burst, and forthwith James continued whole.

XVII. 1 And after these things, in the neighbourhood of Joseph, a little child fell sick and died, and his mother wept sore. And Jesus heard that there was great mourning and trouble and he ran quickly and found the child dead: and he touched his breast and said: I say unto thee, Child, die not, but live and be with thy mother. And straightway it looked up and laughed. And he said to the woman: Take him up and give him milk, and remember me. 2 And the multitude that stood by saw it and marvelled, and said: Of a truth this young child is either a god or an angel of God; for every word of his is a perfect work. And Jesus departed thence, and was playing with other children.

XVIII. 1 And after some time there was work of building. And there came a great tumult, and Jesus arose and went thither: and he saw a man lying dead, and took hold of his hand and said: Man, I say unto thee, arise and do thy work. And immediately he arose and worshipped him. 2 And when the multitude saw it, they were astonished, and said: This young child is from heaven: for he hath saved many souls from death, and hath power to save them all his life long.

XIX. 1 And when he was twelve years old his parents went according to the custom unto Jerusalem to the feast of the passover with their company: and after the passover they returned to go unto their house. And as they returned the child Jesus went back to Jerusalem; but his parents supposed that he was in their company. 2 And when they had gone a day's journey, they sought him among their kinsfolk, and when they found him not, they were troubled, and returned again to the city seeking him. And after the third day they found him in the temple sitting in the midst of the doctors and hearing and asking them questions. And all men paid heed to him and marvelled how that being a young child he put to silence the elders and teachers of the people, expounding the heads of the law and the parables of the prophets. 3 And his mother Mary came near and said unto him: Child, wherefore hast thou so done unto us? behold we have sought thee sorrowing. And Jesus said unto them: Why seek ye me? know ye not that I must be in my Father's house? 4 But the scribes and Pharisees said: Art thou the mother of this child? and she said: I am. And they said unto her: Blessed art thou among women because God hath blessed the fruit of thy womb. For such glory and such excellence and wisdom we have neither seen nor heard at any time. 5 And Jesus arose and followed his mother and was subject unto his parents: but his mother kept in mind all that came to pass. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and grace. Unto him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

The Acts of Peter and Paul (Short Sections)

It came to pass, after Paul went out of the island Gaudomeleta, that he came to Italy; and it was heard of by the Jews who were in Rome, the elder of the cities, that Paul demanded to come to Cæsar. Having fallen, therefore, into great grief and much despondency, they said among themselves: It does not please him that he alone has afflicted all our brethren and parents in Judæa and Samaria, and in all Palestine; and he has not been pleased with these, but, behold, he comes here also, having through imposition asked Cæsar to destroy us.

Having therefore made an assembly against Paul, and having considered many proposals, it seemed good to them to go to Nero the emperor, *to ask him* not to allow Paul to come to Rome. Having therefore got in readiness not a few presents, and having carried them with them, with supplication they came before him, saying: We beseech you, O good emperor, send orders into all the governments of your worship, to the effect that Paul is not to come near these parts; because this Paul, having afflicted all the nation of our fathers, has been seeking to come hither to destroy us also. And the affliction, O most worshipful emperor, which we have from Peter is enough for us.

And the Emperor Nero, having heard these things, answered them: It is according to your wish. And we write to all our governments that he shall not on any account come to anchor in the parts of Italy. And they also informed Simon the Magian, having sent for him, that, as has been said, he should not come into the parts of Italy.

And while they were thus doing, some of those that had repented out of the nations, and that had been baptized at the preaching of Peter, sent elders to Paul with a letter to the following effect: Paul, dear servant of our Lord Jesus Christ, and brother of Peter, the first of the apostles, we have heard from the rabbis of the Jews that are in this Rome, the greatest of the cities, that they have asked Cæsar to send into all his governments, in order that, wherever you may be found, you may be put to death. But we have believed, and do believe, that as God does not separate the two great lights which He has made, so He is not to part you from each other, that is, neither Peter from Paul, nor Paul from Peter; but we positively believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, into whom we have been baptized, that we have become worthy also of your teaching.

And Paul, having received the two men sent with the letter on the twentieth of the month of May, became eager *to go*, and gave thanks to the Lord and Master Jesus Christ. And having sailed from Gaudomeleta, he did not now come through Africa to the parts of Italy, but ran to Sicily, until he came to the city of Syracuse with the two men who had been sent from Rome to him. And having sailed thence, he came to Rhegium of Calabria, and from Rhegium he crossed to Mesina, and there ordained a bishop, Bacchylus by name. And when he came out of Mesina he sailed to Didymus, and remained there one night. And having sailed thence, he came to Pontiole on the second day.

And Dioscorus the shipmaster, who brought him to Syracuse, sympathizing with Paul because he had delivered his son from death, having left his own ship in Syracuse, accompanied him to Pontiole. And some of Peter's disciples having been found there, and having received Paul, exhorted him to stay with them. And he stayed a week, in hiding, because of the command of Cæsar. And all the toparchs were watching to seize and kill him. But Dioscorus the shipmaster, being himself also bald, wearing his shipmaster's dress, and speaking boldly, on the first day went out into the city of

Pontiole. Thinking therefore that he was Paul, they seized him, and beheaded him, and sent his head to Cæsar.

Cæsar therefore, having summoned the first men of the Jews, announced to them, saying: Rejoice with great joy, for Paul your enemy is dead. And he showed them the head. Having therefore made great rejoicing on that day, which was the fourteenth of the month of June, each of the Jews fully believed it.

And Paul, being in Pontiole, and having heard that Dioscorus had been beheaded, being grieved with great grief, gazing into the height of the heaven, said: O Lord Almighty in heaven, who hast appeared to me in every place whither I have gone on account of Your only-begotten Word, our Lord Jesus Christ, punish this city, and bring out all who have believed in God and followed His word. He said to them therefore: Follow me: And going forth from Pontiole with those who had believed in the word of God, they came to a place called Baias; and looking up with their eyes, they all see that city called Pontiole sunk into the sea-shore about one fathom; and there it is until this day, for a remembrance, under the sea.

And having gone forth from Baias, they went to Gaitas, and there he taught the word of God. And he stayed there three days in the house of Erasmus, whom Peter sent from Rome to teach the Gospel of God. And having come forth from Gaitas, he came to the castle called Taracinas, and stayed there seven days in the house of Cæsarius the deacon, whom Peter had ordained by the laying on of hands. And sailing thence, he came by the river to a place called Tribus Tabernes.

And those who had been saved out of the city of Pontiole that had been swallowed up, reported to Cæsar in Rome that Pontiole had been swallowed up, with all its multitude. And the emperor, being in great grief on account of the city, having summoned the chief of the Jews, said to them: Behold, on account of what I heard from you, I have caused Paul to be beheaded, and on account of this the city has been swallowed up. And the chief of the Jews said to Cæsar: Most worshipful emperor, did we not say to you that he troubled all the country of the East, and perverted our fathers? It is better therefore, most worshipful emperor, that one city be destroyed, and not the seat of your empire; for this had Rome to suffer. And the emperor, having heard their words, was appeased.

And Paul stayed in Tribus Tabernes four days. And departing thence, he came to Appii Forum, which is called Vicusarape; and having slept there that night, he saw one sitting on a golden chair, and a multitude of blacks standing beside him, saying: I have today made a son murder his father. Another said: And I have made a house fall, and kill parents with children. And they reported to him many evil deeds— some of one kind, some of another. And another coming, reported to him: I have managed that the bishop Juvenalius, whom Peter ordained, should sleep with the abbess Juliana. And having heard all these things when sleeping in that Appii Forum, near Vicusarape, straightway and immediately he sent to Rome one of those who had followed him from Pontiole to the bishop Juvenalius, telling him this same thing which had just been done. And on the following day, Juvenalius, running, threw himself at the feet of Peter, weeping and lamenting, and saying what had just befallen; and he recounted to him the matter, and said: I believe that this is the light which you were awaiting. And Peter said to him: How is it possible that it is he when he is dead? And Juvenalius the bishop took to Peter him that had been sent by Paul, and he reported to him that he was alive, and on his way, and that he was at Appii Forum. And Peter thanked and glorified the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Then having summoned his disciples that believed, he sent them to Paul as far as Tribus Tabernes. And the distance from Rome to Tribus Tabernes is thirty-eight miles. And Paul seeing them, having given thanks to our Lord Jesus Christ, took courage; and departing thence, they slept in the city called Aricia.

And a report went about in the city of Rome that Paul the brother of Peter was coming. And those that believed in God rejoiced with great joy. And there was great consternation among the Jews; and having gone to Simon the Magian, they entreated him, saying: Report to the emperor that Paul is not dead, but that he is alive, and has come. And Simon said to the Jews: What head is it, then, which came to Cæsar from Pontiole? Was it not bald also?

And Paul having come to Rome, great fear fell upon the Jews. They came together therefore to him, and exhorted him, saying: Vindicate the faith in which you were born; for it is not right that you, being a Hebrew, and of the Hebrews, should call yourself teacher of Gentiles, and vindicator of the uncircumcised; and, being yourself circumcised, that you should bring to nought the faith of the circumcision. And when you see Peter, contend against his teaching, because he has destroyed all the bulwarks of our law; for he has prevented the keeping of Sabbaths and new moons, and the holidays appointed by the law. And Paul, answering, said to them: That I am a true Jew, by this you can prove; because also you have been able to keep the Sabbath, and to observe the true circumcision; for assuredly on the day of the Sabbath God rested from all His works. We have fathers, and patriarchs, and the law. What, then, does Peter preach in the kingdom of the Gentiles? But if he shall wish to bring in any new teaching, without any tumult, and envy, and trouble, send him word, that we may see, and in your presence I shall convict him. But if his teaching be true, supported by the book and testimony of the Hebrews, it becomes all of us to submit to him.

Paul saying these and such like things, the Jews went and said to Peter: Paul of the Hebrews has come, and entreats you to come to him, since those who have brought him say that he cannot meet whomsoever he may wish until he appear before Cæsar. And Peter having heard, rejoiced with great joy; and rising up, immediately went to him. And seeing each other, they wept for joy; and long embracing each other, they bedewed each other with tears.

And when Paul had related to Peter the substance of all his doings, and how, through the disasters of the ship, he had come, Peter also told him what he had suffered from Simon the Magian, and all his plots. And having told these things, he went away towards evening.

And in the morning of the following day, at dawn, behold, Peter coming, finds a multitude of the Jews before Paul's door. And there was a great uproar between the Christian Jews and the Gentiles. For, on the one hand, the Jews said: We are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, the friends of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, with whom God spoke, to whom He showed His own mysteries and His great wonders. But you of the Gentiles are no great thing in your lineage; if otherwise, you have become polluted and abominable by idols and graven images.

While the Jews were saying such things, and such-like, those of the Gentiles answered, saying: We, when we heard the truth, straightway followed it, having abandoned our errors. But you, both knowing the mighty deeds of your fathers, and seeing the signs of the prophets, and having received the law, and gone through the sea with dry feet, and seen your enemies sunk in its depths,

and the pillar of fire by night and of cloud by day shining upon you, and manna having been given to you out of heaven, and water flowing to you out of a rock — after all these things you fashioned to yourselves the idol of a calf, and worshipped the graven image. But we, having seen none of the signs, believe to be a Saviour the God whom you have forsaken in unbelief.

While they were contending in these and such-like words, the Apostle Paul said that they ought not to make such attacks upon each other, but that they should rather give heed to this, that God had fulfilled His promises which He swore to Abraham our father, that in his seed he should inherit all the nations. For there is no respect of persons with God. As many as have sinned in law shall be judged according to law, and as many as have sinned without law shall perish without law. Romans 2:12 But we, brethren, ought to thank God that, according to His mercy, He has chosen us to be a holy people to Himself: so that in this we ought to boast, whether Jews or Greeks; for you are all one in the belief of His name.

And Paul having thus spoken, both the Jews and they of the Gentiles were appeased. But the rulers of the Jews assailed Peter. And Peter, when they accused him of having renounced their synagogues, said: Hear, brethren, the holy Spirit about the patriarch David, promising, Of the fruit of your womb shall He set upon your throne. Him therefore to whom the Father said, You are my Son, this day have I begotten You, the chief priests through envy crucified; but that He might accomplish the salvation of the world, it was allowed that He should suffer all these things. Just as, therefore, from the side of Adam Eve was created, so also from the side of Christ was created the Church, which has no spot nor blemish. In Him, therefore, God has opened an entrance to all the sons of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in order that they may be in the faith of profession towards Him, and have life and salvation in His name. Turn, therefore, and enter into the joy of your father Abraham, because God has fulfilled what He promised to him. Whence also the prophet says, The Lord has sworn, and will not repent: You are a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek. For a priest He became upon the cross, when He offered the whole burnt-offering of His own body and blood as a sacrifice for all the world.

And Peter saying this and such-like, the most part of the people believed. And it happened also that Nero's wife Libia, and the yoke-fellow of Agrippa the prefect, Agrippina by name, thus believed, so that also they went away from beside their own husbands. And on account of the teaching of Paul, many, despising military life, clung to God; so that even from the emperor's bed-chamber some came to him, and having become Christians, were no longer willing to return to the army or the palace.

When, consequently, the people were making a seditious murmuring, Simon, moved with zeal, rouses himself, and began to say many evil things about Peter, saying that he was a wizard and a cheat. And they believed him, wondering at his miracles; for he made a brazen serpent move itself, and stone statues to laugh and move themselves, and himself to run and suddenly to be raised into the air. But as a set-off to these, Peter healed the sick by a word, by praying made the blind to see, put demons to flight by a command; sometimes he even raised the dead. And he said to the people that they should not only flee from Simon's deceit, but also that they should expose him, that they might not seem to be slaves to the devil.

And thus it happened that all pious men abhorred Simon the Magian, and proclaimed him impious. But those who adhered to Simon strongly affirmed Peter to be a magian, bearing false witness as

many of them as were with Simon the Magian; so that the matter came even to the ears of Nero the Cæsar, and he gave order to bring Simon the Magian before him. And he, coming in, stood before him, and began suddenly to assume different forms, so that on a sudden he became a child, and after a little an old man, and at other times a young man; for he changed himself both in face and stature into different forms, and was in a frenzy, having the devil as his servant. And Nero beholding this, supposed him to be truly the son of God; but the Apostle Peter showed him to be both a liar and a wizard, base and impious and apostate, and in all things opposed to the truth of God, and that nothing yet remained except that his wickedness, being made apparent by the command of God, might be made manifest to them all.

Then Simon, having gone in to Nero, said: Hear, O good emperor: I am the son of God come down from heaven. Until now I have endured Peter only calling himself an apostle; but now he has doubled the evil: for Paul also himself teaches the same things, and having his mind turned against me, is said to preach along with him; in reference to whom, if you shall not contrive their destruction, it is very plain that your kingdom cannot stand.

Then Nero, filled with concern, ordered to bring them speedily before him. And on the following day Simon the Magian, and Peter and Paul the apostles of Christ, having come in to Nero, Simon said: These are the disciples of the Nazarene, and it is not at all well that they should be of the people of the Jews, Nero said: What is a Nazarene? Simon said: There is a city of Judah which has always been opposed to us, called Nazareth, and to it the teacher of these men belonged. Nero said: God commands us to love every man; why, then, do you persecute them? Simon said: This is a race of men who have turned aside all Judæa from believing in me. Nero said to Peter: Why are you thus unbelieving, according to your race? Then Peter said to Simon: You have been able to impose upon all, but upon me never; and those who have been deceived, God has through me recalled from their error. And since you have learned by experience that you can not get the better of me, I wonder with what face you boast yourself before the emperor, and suppose that through your magic art you shall overcome the disciples of Christ. Nero said: Who is Christ? Peter said: He is what this Simon the Magian affirms himself to be; but this is a most wicked man, and his works are of the devil. But if you wish to know, O good emperor, the things that have been done in Judæa about Christ, take the writings of Pontius Pilate sent to Claudius, and thus you will know all. And Nero ordered them to be brought, and to be read in their presence; and they were to the following effect: —

Pontius Pilate to Claudius, greeting. There has lately happened an event which I myself was concerned in. For the Jews through envy have inflicted on themselves, and those coming after them, dreadful judgments. Their fathers had promised that their God would send them his holy one from heaven, who according to reason should be called their king, and he had promised to send him to the earth by means of a virgin. He, then, when I was procurator, came into Judæa. And they saw him enlightening the blind, cleansing lepers, healing paralytics, expelling demons from men, raising the dead, subduing the winds, walking upon the waves of the sea, and doing many other wonders, and all the people of the Jews calling him Son of God. Then the chief priests, moved with envy against him, seized him, and delivered him to me; and telling one lie after another, they said that he was a wizard, and did contrary to their law. And I, having believed that these things were so, gave him up, after scourging him, to their will; and they crucified him, and after he was buried set guards over him. But he, while my soldiers were guarding him, rose on the third day. And to such a degree was the wickedness of the Jews inflamed against him, that they gave money to the

soldiers, saying, Say his disciples have stolen his body. But they, having taken the money, were not able to keep silence as to what had happened; for they have testified that they have seen him (after he was) risen, and that they have received money from the Jews. These things, therefore, have I reported, that no one should falsely speak otherwise, and that you should not suppose that the falsehoods of the Jews are to be believed.

And the letter having been read, Nero said: Tell me, Peter, were all these things thus done by him? Peter said: They were, with your permission, O good emperor. For this Simon is full of lies and deceit, even if it should seem that he is what he is not — a god. And in Christ there is all excellent victory through God and through man, which that incomprehensible glory assumed which through man deigned to come to the assistance of men. But in this Simon there are two essences, of man and of devil, who through man endeavours to ensnare men.

Simon said: I wonder, O good emperor, that you reckon this man of any consequence — a man uneducated, a fisherman of the poorest, and endowed with power neither in word nor by rank. But, that I may not long endure him as an enemy, I shall immediately order my angels to come and avenge me upon him. Peter said: I am not afraid of your angels; but they shall be much more afraid of me in the power and trust of my Lord Jesus Christ, whom you falsely declare yourself to be.

Nero said: Are you not afraid, Peter, of Simon, who confirms his godhead by deeds? Peter said: Godhead is in Him who searches the hidden things of the heart. Now then, tell me what I am thinking about, or what I am doing. I disclose to your servants who are here what my thought is, before he tells lies about it, in order that he may not dare to lie as to what I am thinking about. Nero said: Come hither, and tell me what you are thinking about. Peter said: Order a barley loaf to be brought, and to be given to me secretly. And when he ordered it to be brought, and secretly given to Peter, Peter said: Now tell us, Simon, what has been thought about, or what said, or what done.

Nero said: Do you mean me to believe that Simon does not know these things, who both raised a dead man, and presented himself on the third day after he had been beheaded, and who has done whatever he said he would do? Peter said: But he did not do it before me. Nero said: But he did all these before me. For assuredly he ordered angels to come to him, and they came. Peter said: If he has done what is very great, why does he not do what is very small? Let him tell what I had in my mind, and what I have done. Nero said: Between you, I do not know myself. Simon said: Let Peter say what I am thinking of, or what I am doing. Peter said: What Simon has in his mind I shall show that I know, by my doing what he is thinking about. Simon said: Know this, O emperor, that no one knows the thoughts of men, but God alone. Is not, therefore, Peter lying? Peter said: you, then, who sayest that you are the Son of God, tell what I have in my mind; disclose, if you can, what I have just done in secret. For Peter, having blessed the barley loaf which he had received, and having broken it with his right hand and his left, had heaped it up in his sleeves. Then Simon, enraged that he was not able to tell the secret of the apostle, cried out, saying: Let great dogs come forth, and eat him up before Cæsar. And suddenly there appeared great dogs, and rushed at Peter. But Peter, stretching forth his hands to pray, showed to the dogs the loaf which he had blessed; which the dogs seeing, no longer appeared. Then Peter said to Nero: Behold, I have shown you that I knew what Simon was thinking of, not by words, but by deeds; for he, having promised that he

would bring angels against me, has brought dogs, in order that he might show that he had not god-like but dog-like angels.

Then Nero said to Simon: What is it, Simon? I think we have got the worst of it. Simon said: This man, both in Judæa and in all Palestine and Cæsarea, has done the same to me; and from very often striving with me, he has learned that this is adverse to them. This, then, he has learned how to escape from me; for the thoughts of men no one knows but God alone. And Peter said to Simon: Certainly you feign yourself to be a god; why, then, do you not reveal the thoughts of every man?

Then Nero, turning to Paul, said: Why do you say nothing, Paul? Paul answered and said: Know this, O emperor, that if you permit this magician to do such things, it will bring an access of the greatest mischief to your country, and will bring down your empire from its position. Nero said to Simon: What do you say? Simon said: If I do not manifestly hold myself out to be a god, no one will bestow upon me due reverence. Nero said: And now, why do you delay, and not show yourself to be a god, in order that these men may be punished? Simon said: Give orders to build for me a lofty tower of wood, and I, going up upon it, will call my angels, and order them to take me, in the sight of all, to my father in heaven; and these men, not being able to do this, are put to shame as uneducated men. And Nero said to Peter: Have you heard, Peter, what has been said by Simon? From this will appear how much power either he or your god has. Peter said: O most mighty emperor, if you were willing, you might perceive that he is full of demons. Nero said: Why do you make to me roundabouts of circumlocutions? Tomorrow will prove you.

Simon said: Do you believe, O good emperor, that I who was dead, and rose again, am a magician? For it had been brought about by his own cleverness that the unbelieving Simon had said to Nero: Order me to be beheaded in a dark place, and there to be left slain; and if I do not rise on the third day, know that I am a magician; but if I rise again, know that I am the Son of God.

And Nero having ordered this, in the dark, by his magic art he managed that a ram should be beheaded. And for so long did the ram appear to be Simon until he was beheaded. And when he had been beheaded in the dark, he that had beheaded him, taking the head, found it to be that of a ram; but he would not say anything to the emperor, lest he should scourge him, having ordered this to be done in secret. Thereafter, accordingly. Simon said that he had risen on the third day, because he took away the head of the ram and the limbs — but the blood had been there congealed — and on the third day he showed himself to Nero, and said: Cause to be wiped away my blood that has been poured out; for, behold, having been beheaded, as I promised, I have risen again on the third day.

And when Nero said, Tomorrow will prove you, turning to Paul, he says: You, Paul, why do you say nothing? Either who taught you, or whom you have for a master, or how you have taught in the cities, or what things have happened through your teaching? For I think that you have not any wisdom, and art not able to accomplish any work of power. Paul answered: Do you suppose that I ought to speak against a desperate man, a magician, who has given his soul up to death, whose destruction and perdition will come speedily? For he ought to speak who pretends to be what he is not, and deceives men by magic art. If you consent to hear his words, and to shield him, you shall destroy your soul and your kingdom, for he is a most base man. And as the Egyptians Jannes and Jambres led Pharaoh and his army astray until they were swallowed up in the sea, so also he, through the instruction of his father the devil, persuades men to do many evils to themselves, and

thus deceives many of the innocent, to the peril of your kingdom. But as for the word of the devil, which I see has been poured out through this man, with groanings of my heart I am dealing with the Holy Spirit, that it may be clearly shown what it is; for as far as he seems to raise himself towards heaven, so far will he be sunk down into the depth of Hades, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. But about the teaching of my Master, of which you asked me, none attain it except the pure, who allow faith to come into their heart. For as many things as belong to peace and love, these have I taught. Round about from Jerusalem, and as far as Illyricum, Romans 15:19 I have fulfilled the word of peace. For I have taught that in honour they should prefer one another; Romans 12:10 I have taught those that are eminent and rich not to be lifted up, and hope in uncertainty of riches, but to place their hope in God; 1 Timothy 6:17 I have taught those in a middle station to be content with food and covering; I have taught the poor to rejoice in their own poverty; I have taught fathers to teach their children instruction in the fear of the Lord, children to obey their parents in wholesome admonition; I have taught wives to love their own husbands, and to fear them as masters, and husbands to observe fidelity to their wives; I have taught masters to treat their slaves with clemency, and slaves to serve their own masters faithfully; Colossians 3:18-22 I have taught the churches of the believers to reverence one almighty, invisible, and incomprehensible God. And this teaching has been given me, not from men, nor through men, but through Jesus Christ, Galatians 1:1 who spoke to me out of heaven, who also has sent me to preach, saying to me, Go forth, for I will be with you; and all things, as many as you shall say or do, I shall make just.

Nero said: What do you say, Peter? He answered and said: All that Paul has said is true. For when he was a persecutor of the faith of Christ, a voice called him out of heaven, and taught him the truth; for he was not an adversary of our faith from hatred, but from ignorance. For there were before us false Christs, like Simon, false apostles, and false prophets, who, contrary to the sacred writings, set themselves to make void the truth; and against these it was necessary to have in readiness this man, who from his youth up set himself to no other thing than to search out the mysteries of the divine law, by which he might become a vindicator of truth and a persecutor of falsehood. Since, then, his persecution was not on account of hatred, but on account of the vindication of the law, the very truth out of heaven held intercourse with him, saying, I am the truth which you persecute; cease persecuting me. When, therefore, he knew that this was so, leaving off that which he was vindicating, he began to vindicate this way of Christ which he was persecuting.

Simon said: O good emperor, take notice that these two have conspired against me; for I am the truth, and they purpose evil against me. Peter said: There is no truth in you; but all you say is false.

Nero said: Paul, what do you say? Paul said: Those things which you have heard from Peter, believe to have been spoken by me also; for we purpose the same thing, for we have the same Lord Jesus the Christ. Simon said: Do you expect me, O good emperor, to hold an argument with these men, who have come to an agreement against me? And having turned to the apostles of Christ, he said: Listen, Peter and Paul: if I can do nothing for you here, we are going to the place where I must judge you. Paul said: O good emperor, see what threats he holds out against us. Peter said: Why was it necessary to keep from laughing outright at a foolish man, made the sport of demons, so as to suppose that he cannot be made manifest?

Simon said: I spare you until I shall receive my power. Paul said: See if you will go out hence safe. Peter said: If you do not see, Simon, the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, you will not believe yourself not to be Christ. Simon said: Most sacred emperor, do not believe them, for they are circumcised knaves. Paul said: Before we knew the truth, we had the circumcision of the flesh; but when the truth appeared, in the circumcision of the heart we both are circumcised, and circumcise. Peter said: If circumcision be a disgrace, why have you been circumcised, Simon?

Nero said: Has, then, Simon also been circumcised? Peter said: For not otherwise could he have deceived souls, unless he feigned himself to be a Jew, and made a show of teaching the law of God. Nero said: Simon, you, as I see, being carried away with envy, persecute these men. For, as it seems, there is great hatred between you and their Christ; and I am afraid that you will be worsted by them, and involved in great evils. Simon said: You are led astray, O emperor. Nero said: How am I led astray? What I see in you, I say. I see that you are manifestly an enemy of Peter and Paul and their master.

Simon said: Christ was not Paul's master. Paul said: Yes; through revelation He taught me also. But tell me what I asked you — Why were you circumcised? Simon said: Why have you asked me this? Paul said: We have a reason for asking you this. Nero said: Why are you afraid to answer them? Simon said: Listen, O emperor. At that time circumcision was enjoined by God when I received it. For this reason was I circumcised.

Paul said: Do you hear, O good emperor, what has been said by Simon? If, therefore, circumcision be a good thing, why have you, Simon, given up those who have been circumcised, and forced them, after being condemned, to be put to death? Nero said: Neither about you do I perceive anything good. Peter and Paul said: Whether this thought about us be good or evil has no reference to the matter; but to us it was necessary that what our Master promised should come to pass. Nero said: If I should not be willing? Peter said: Not as you will, but as He promised to us.

Simon said: O good emperor, these men have reckoned upon your clemency, and have bound you. Nero said: But neither have you yet made me sure about yourself. Simon said: Since so many excellent deeds and signs have been shown to you by me, I wonder how you should be in doubt. Nero said: I neither doubt nor favour any of you; but answer me rather what I ask.

Simon said: Henceforward I answer you nothing. Nero said: Seeing that you lie, therefore you say this. But if even I can do nothing to you, God, who can, will do it. Simon said: I no longer answer you. Nero said: Nor do I consider you to be anything: for, as I perceive, you are a liar in everything. But why do I say so much? The three of you show that your reasoning is uncertain; and thus in all things you have made me doubt, so that I find that I can give credit to none of you.

Peter said: We preach one God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that has made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that therein is, who is the true King; and of His kingdom there shall be no end. Luke 1:33 Nero said: What king is lord? Paul said: The Saviour of all the nations. Simon said: I am he whom you speak of. Peter and Paul said: May it never be well with you, Simon, magician, and full of bitterness.

Simon said: Listen, O Cæsar Nero, that you may know that these men are liars, and that I have been sent from the heavens: tomorrow I go up into the heavens, that I may make those who believe in me blessed, and show my wrath upon those who have denied me. Peter and Paul said: Us long ago God called to His own glory; but you, called by the devil, hasten to punishment. Simon said: Cæsar Nero, listen to me. Separate these madmen from you, in order that when I go into heaven to my father, I may be very merciful to you. Nero said: And whence shall we prove this, that you go away into heaven? Simon said: Order a lofty tower to be made of wood, and of great beams, that I may go up upon it, and that my angels may find me in the air; for they cannot come to me upon earth among the sinners. Nero said: I will see whether you will fulfil what you say.

Then Nero ordered a lofty tower to be made in the Campus Martius, and all the people and the dignities to be present at the spectacle. And on the following day, all the multitude having come together, Nero ordered Peter and Paul to be present, to whom also he said: Now the truth has to be made manifest. Peter and Paul said: We do not expose him, but our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, whom he has falsely declared himself to be.

And Paul, having turned to Peter, said: It is my part to bend the knee, and to pray to God; and yours to produce the effect, if you should see him attempting anything, because you were first taken in hand by the Lord. And Paul, bending his knees, prayed. And Peter, looking steadfastly upon Simon, said: Accomplish what you have begun; for both your exposure and our call is at hand: for I see my Christ calling both me and Paul. Nero said: And where will you go to against my will? Peter said: Whithersoever our Lord has called us. Nero said: And who is your lord? Peter said: Jesus the Christ, whom I see calling us to Himself. Nero said: Do you also then intend to go away to heaven? Peter said: If it shall seem good to Him that calls us. Simon said: In order that you may know, O emperor, that these are deceivers, as soon as ever I ascend into heaven, I will send my angels to you, and will make you come to me. Nero said: Do at once what you say.

Then Simon went up upon the tower in the face of all, and, crowned with laurels, he stretched forth his hands, and began to fly. And when Nero saw him flying, he said to Peter: This Simon is true; but you and Paul are deceivers. To whom Peter said: Immediately shall you know that we are true disciples of Christ; but that he is not Christ, but a magician, and a malefactor. Nero said: Do you still persist? Behold, you see him going up into heaven. Then Peter, looking steadfastly upon Paul, said: Paul, look up and see. And Paul, having looked up, full of tears, and seeing Simon flying, said: Peter, why are you idle? Finish what you have begun; for already our Lord Jesus Christ is calling us. And Nero hearing them, smiled a little, and said: These men see themselves worsted already, and are gone mad. Peter said: Now you shall know that we are not mad. Paul said to Peter: Do at once what you do.

And Peter, looking steadfastly against Simon, said: I adjure you, you angels of Satan, who are carrying him into the air, to deceive the hearts of the unbelievers, by the God that created all things, and by Jesus Christ, whom on the third day He raised from the dead, no longer from this hour to keep him up, but to let him go. And immediately, being let go, he fell into a place called Sacra Via, that is, Holy Way, and was divided into four parts, having perished by an evil fate.

Then Nero ordered Peter and Paul to be put in irons, and the body of Simon to be carefully kept three days, thinking that he would rise on the third day. To whom Peter said: He will no longer rise, since he is truly dead, being condemned to everlasting punishment. And Nero said to him: Who

commanded you to do such a dreadful deed? Peter said: His reflections and blasphemy against my Lord Jesus Christ have brought him into this gulf of destruction. Nero said: I will destroy you by an evil taking off. Peter said: This is not in your power, even if it should seem good to you to destroy us; but it is necessary that what our Master promised to us should be fulfilled.

Then Nero, having summoned Agrippa the proprætor, said to him: It is necessary that men introducing mischievous religious observances should die. Wherefore I order them to take iron clubs, and to be killed in the sea-fight. Agrippa the proprætor said: Most sacred emperor, what you have ordered is not fitting for these men, since Paul seems innocent beside Peter. Nero said: By what fate, then, shall they die? Agrippa answered and said: As seems to me, it is just that Paul's head should be cut off, and that Peter should be raised on a cross as the cause of the murder. Nero said: You have most excellently judged.

Then both Peter and Paul were led away from the presence of Nero. And Paul was beheaded on the Ostesian road.

And Peter, having come to the cross, said: Since my Lord Jesus Christ, who came down from the heaven upon the earth, was raised upon the cross upright, and He has deigned to call to heaven me, who am of the earth, my cross ought to be fixed head down most, so as to direct my feet towards heaven; for I am not worthy to be crucified like my Lord. Then, having reversed the cross, they nailed his feet up.

And the multitude was assembled reviling Cæsar, and wishing to kill him. But Peter restrained them, saying: A few days ago, being exhorted by the brethren, I was going away; and my Lord Jesus Christ met me, and having adored Him, I said, Lord, whither are You going? And He said to me, I am going to Rome to be crucified. And I said to Him, Lord, were You not crucified once for all? And the Lord answering, said, I saw you fleeing from death, and I wish to be crucified instead of you. And I said, Lord, I go; I fulfil Your command. And He said to me, Fear not, for I am with you. On this account, then, children, do not hinder my going; for already my feet are going on the road to heaven. Do not grieve, therefore, but rather rejoice with me, for today I receive the fruit of my labours. And thus speaking, he said: I thank You, good Shepherd, that the sheep which You have entrusted to me, sympathize with me; I ask, then, that with me they may have a part in Your kingdom. And having thus spoken, he gave up the ghost.

And immediately there appeared men glorious and strange in appearance; and they said: We are here, on account of the holy and chief apostles, from Jerusalem. And they, along with Marcellus, an illustrious man, who, having left Simon, had believed in Peter, took up his body secretly, and put it under the terebinth near the place for the exhibition of sea-fights in the place called the Vatican.

And the men who had said that they came from Jerusalem said to the people: Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, because you have been deemed worthy to have great champions. And know that Nero himself, after these not many days, will be utterly destroyed, and his kingdom shall be given to another.

And after these things the people revolted against him; and when he knew of it, he fled into desert places, and through hunger and cold he gave up the ghost, and his body became food for the wild beasts.

And some devout men of the regions of the East wished to carry off the relics of the saints, and immediately there was a great earthquake in the city; and those that dwelt in the city having become aware of it, ran and seized the men, but they fled. But the Romans having taken them, put them in a place three miles from the city, and there they were guarded a year and seven months, until they had built the place in which they intended to put them. And after these things, all having assembled with glory and singing of praise, they put them in the place built for them.

And the consummation of the holy glorious Apostles Peter and Paul was on the 29th of the month of June — in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be glory and strength.

The Story of Perpetua

And as Paul was being led away to be beheaded at a place about three miles from the city, he was in irons. And there were three soldiers guarding him who were of a great family. And when they had gone out of the gate about the length of a bow-shot, there met them a God-fearing woman; and she, seeing Paul dragged along in irons, had compassion on him, and wept bitterly. And the name of the woman was called Perpetua; and she was one-eyed. And Paul, seeing her weeping, says to her: Give me your handkerchief, and when I turn back I shall give it to you. And she, having taken the handkerchief, gave it to him willingly. And the soldiers laughed, and said to the woman: Why do you wish, woman, to lose your handkerchief? Do you not know that he is going away to be beheaded? And Perpetua said to them: I adjure you by the health of Cæsar to bind his eyes with this handkerchief when you cut off his head. Which also was done. And they beheaded him at the place called Aquæ Salvizæ, near the pine tree. And as God had willed, before the soldiers came back, the handkerchief, having on it drops of blood, was restored to the woman. And as she was carrying it, straightway and immediately her eye was opened.

And the three soldiers who had cut off the head of Saint Paul, when after three hours they came on the same day with the Bulla bringing it to Nero, having met Perpetua, they said to her: What is it, woman? Behold, by your confidence you have lost your handkerchief. But she said to them: I have both got my handkerchief, and my eye has recovered its sight. And as the Lord, the God of Paul, lives, I also have entreated him that I may be deemed worthy to become the slave of his Lord. Then the soldiers who had the Bulla, recognising the handkerchief, and seeing that her eye had been opened, cried out with a loud voice, as if from one mouth, and said: We too are the slaves of Paul's master. Perpetua therefore having gone away, reported in the palace of the Emperor Nero that the soldiers who had beheaded Paul said: We shall no longer go into the city, for we believe in Christ whom Paul preached, and we are Christians. Then Nero, filled with rage, ordered Perpetua, who had informed him of the soldiers, to be kept fast in irons; and as to the soldiers, he ordered one to be beheaded outside of the gate about one mile from the city, another to be cut in two, and the third to be stoned. And Perpetua was in the prison; and in this prison there was kept Potentiana, a noble maiden, because she had said: I forsake my parents and all the substance of my father, and I wish to become a Christian. She therefore joined herself to Perpetua, and ascertained from her everything about Paul, and was in much anxiety about the faith in Christ. And the wife of Nero was Potentiana's sister; and she secretly informed her about Christ, that those who believe in Him see everlasting joy, and that everything here is temporary, but there eternal: so that also she fled out of the palace, and some of the senators' wives with her. Then Nero, having inflicted many tortures upon Perpetua, at last tied a great stone to her neck, and ordered her to be

thrown over a precipice. And her remains lie at the Momentan gate. And Potentiana also underwent many torments; and at last, having made a furnace one day, they burned her.

The Preaching of Peter

Again our principal source of knowledge is Clement of Alexandria, who makes a series of quotations from it.

Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* i. 29. 182. And in the Preaching of Peter you may find the Lord called 'Law and Word'.

Twice again he quotes this phrase.

vi. 5. 39. But that the most approved of the Greeks do not know God by *direct* knowledge, but indirectly, Peter says in his Preaching: Know ye then that there is one God who made the beginning of all things and hath power over their end; and: The invisible who seeth all things, uncontainable, who containeth all, having need of nought, of whom all things stand in need and for whose sake they exist, incomprehensible, perpetual, incorruptible, uncreated, who made all things by the word of his power.....that is, the Son.[1]

Then he goes on: This God worship ye, not after the manner of the Greeks.....showing that we and the good (approved) Greeks worship the same God, though not according to *perfect* knowledge for they had not learned the tradition of the Son. 'Do not', he says, 'worship' - he does not say 'the god whom the Greeks worship', but 'not after the manner of the Greeks': he would change the method of worship of God, not proclaim another God. What, then, is meant by 'not after the manner of the Greeks'? Peter himself will explain, for he continues: Carried away by ignorance and not knowing God as we do, according to the perfect knowledge, *but* shaping those things over which he gave them power, for their use, *even* wood and stones, brass and iron, gold and silver (forgetting) their material and *proper* use, they set up things subservient to their existence and worship them; and what things God hath given them for food, the fowls of the air and the creatures that swim in the sea and creep upon the earth, wild beasts and fourfooted cattle of the field, weasels too and mice, cats and dogs and apes; yea, their own eatables do they sacrifice as offerings to eatable *gods*, and offering dead things to the dead as to gods, they show ingratitude to God, by these practices denying that he exists... He will continue again in this fashion: Neither worship ye him as do the Jews, for they, who suppose that they alone know God, do not know him, serving angels and archangels, the month and the moon: and if no moon be seen, they do not celebrate what is called the first sabbath, nor keep the new moon, nor the days of unleavened bread, nor the feast (of tabernacles?), nor the great day (of atonement).

Then he adds the finale (colophon) of what is required: So then do ye, learning in a holy and righteous sort that which we deliver unto you, observe it, worshipping God through Christ in a new way. For we have found in the Scriptures, how the Lord saith: Behold, I make with you a new covenant, not as the covenant with your fathers in mount Horeb. He hath made a new one with us: for the *ways* of the Greeks and Jews are old, but we are they that worship him in a new way in a third generation (*or race*), *even* Christians.[2]

Shortly after this he cites Paul 'in addition to the Preaching of Peter' as referring to the Sibyl and Hystaspes. The passage is given below as a possible fragment of the Acts of Paul.

After his quotation from Paul, Clement continues:

Therefore Peter says that the Lord said to the apostles: If then any of Israel will repent, to believe in God through my name, his sins shall be forgiven him: (and) after twelve years go ye out into the world, lest any say: We did not hear.

In the next chapter (vi. 6) he has:

For example, in the Preaching of Peter the Lord says: I chose out you twelve, judging you to be disciples worthy of me, whom the Lord willed, and thinking you faithful apostles; sending you unto the world to preach the Gospel to men throughout the world, that they should know that there is one God; to declare by faith in me [the Christ] what shall be, that they that have heard and believed may be saved, and that they which have not believed may hear and bear witness, not having any defence so as to say 'We did not hear'.

After a few lines:

And to all reasonable souls it hath been said above: Whatsoever things any of you did in ignorance, not knowing God clearly, all his sins shall be forgiven him.

vi. 15. 128. Peter in the Preaching, speaking of the apostles, says: But we having opened the books of the prophets which we had, found, sometimes expressed by parables, sometimes by riddles, and sometimes directly (authentically) and in so many words naming Jesus Christ, both his coming and his death and the cross and all the other torments which the Jews inflicted on him, and his resurrection and assumption into the heavens before Jerusalem was founded (*MS.* judged), even all this things as they had been written, what he must suffer and what shall be after him. When, therefore, we took knowledge of these things, we believed in God through that which had been written of him.

And a little after he adds that the prophecies came by Divine providence, in these terms: For we know that God commanded them in very deed, and without the Scripture we say nothing.

The character of the heathen worship, with its mention of weasels, cats, Cc., and the fact that our authorities are all Alexandrine, point to the Egyptian origin and currency of the Preaching. We see also that it was an orthodox book. Origen even faces the possibility of its being genuine in whole or in part. The earliest of the Greek apologists for Christianity whose work we have, Aristides, takes a very similar line to the Preaching, and is thought to have used it.

A Syriac Preaching of Simon Cephas in the city of Rome (to be found in Cureton's *Syriac Documents*) has nothing in common with our book. Its gist is, briefly, this: A great assembly gathers to hear Peter. He speaks to them of the life and death of Jesus, and the call of the apostles, exhorts them to shun idolatry: reverts to the signs at the crucifixion, and the report of Pilate to Caesar and the senate, and warns them against Simon Magus. We then have the incident of the dead man raised by Peter after Simon had failed. Peter's episcopate of twenty-five years, his martyrdom and that of Paul, Nero's death, and a famine which ensued after many years, are shortly told.

In the Clementine Recognitions, Cc., a great deal is said about books of Preachings of Peter: but these are to a great extent imaginary, and, if ever they existed, must have belonged to the same peculiar school of thought as the rest of that literature.

There are certain other fragments of a 'Teaching of Peter' which may be another name for the Preaching. Opinion is divided. Probably the first, from Origen, is from the Preaching. The others are of a different complexion.

Origen *on First Principles* i, prologue 8. But if any would produce to us from that book which is called The Doctrine of Peter, *the passage* where the Saviour is represented as saying (*lit.* seems to say) to the disciples: I am not a bodiless spirit (demon): he must be answered in the first place that that book is not reckoned among the books of the church: (and then) it must be shown that the writing is neither by Peter nor by any one else who was inspired by the spirit of God.

The quotation agrees with one from the gospel according to the Hebrews. See p. 4.

Gregory of Nazianzus, *ep.* 16. 'A soul in trouble is near unto God', saith Peter somewhere - a marvellous utterance.

(John of Damascus), *Sacred Parallels*, A. 12:

Of Peter: Wretched that I am, I remembered not that God seeth the mind and observeth the voice of the soul. Allying myself with sin, I said unto myself: God is merciful, and will bear with thee: and because I was not immediately smitten, I ceased not, but rather despised pardon, and exhausted the long-suffering of God.

ibid. From the Teaching of Peter: Rich is he that hath mercy on many, and he that, imitating God, giveth of that he hath. For God hath given all things unto all, of his own creatures. Understand then, ye rich, that ye ought to minister, for ye have received more than ye yourselves need. Learn that others lack the things ye have in superfluity. Be ashamed to keep things that belong to others. Imitate the fairness (equality) of God, and no man will be poor.

Oecumenius *on James*, v. 16. And that happens to us which blessed Peter says: One building and one pulling down! they gain nought but their labour.

The Apocalypse of Baruch (Additional Sections)

In addition to the Book of Baruch, a translation of which is contained in the Apocrypha of our English Bibles, there had from old time been known to exist a certain document in the Syrian language, called "The Epistle of Baruch the scribe to the nine-and-a-half tribes beyond the Euphrates."¹⁶⁹ This had been published in 131 the London and Paris Polyglots in Syriac and Latin, in Latin alone by Fabricius in his *Codex Pseudepigr. Vet. Test.*, and in English by G. Whiston in his *Authentic Records*. Later, a French rendering was given by Migne in the *Dictionnaire des Apocryphes*, and Lagarde put forth again the Syriac version in his Syriac edition of the Old Testament Apocrypha. Many questions resulted from the publication of this document. Was it a complete work or a fragment of some larger treatise? What was its connection, if any, with the usually-received apocryphal work of Baruch? What was its original language? Who and of what

country was its author? Jew or Christian? And when was the letter written? These inquiries greatly exercised the minds of scholars abroad, and the theories evoked by the discussion show a wide divergence of opinion.¹⁷⁰ But many of these questions were answered by the discovery in 1866 of a Syriac version of the Apocalypse of Baruch, of which this Epistle formed the concluding portion. This interesting work was brought to light by the industry of A. N. Ceriani, the learned librarian at Milan, to whom we are indebted for the disinterment of that long-lost book, the Assumption of Moses. In a MS. of the sixth century, Ceriani found a complete copy of the Apocalypse, which he published first in a Latin translation, and then in the original Syriac, both in ordinary type, and later (1883) in a photo-lithographed facsimile. This Latin version has been reprinted by Fritzsche, with a few emendations,¹³² and is commonly regarded as equivalent to the genuine copy.¹⁷¹

Before discussing the contents of the book, a few words must be prefixed on the subject of the author and matters connected therewith.

The earliest quotation of the book occurs in a lost work of Papias, the disciple of St. John, cited by Irenaeus (*Adv. Hæres.* v. 33. 3). Herein it is asserted that in Messiah's days the vine shall have a thousand branches, and each branch shall produce a thousand bunches, and each bunch shall have a thousand grapes, and each grape shall make a cor of wine. Before it was known whence this legend was derived, neologian critics, assuming it to have Christ as its author, found in it a subject of ridicule and offence. It is now shown to occur in the Apocalypse of Baruch, chap. xxix. That the saying was attributed to Christ is easily accounted for. Papias wrote his lost work between 120 and 130 A.D., by which time our book must have become well known among Christians. The mention of Messiah occurs just before the legend; and doubtless persons remembered the story of the vine in connection with the Messiah, and at last quoted it as spoken by Christ Himself.¹⁷² Whether the Apocalypse is referred to in any of the catalogues of sacred books may reasonably be doubted. The term "Baruch," in Pseudo-Athanasius' *Synopsis*, and in the *Stichometria* of Nicephorus, belongs¹³³ probably to the book so called in the Septuagint version. There are also other apocryphal books bearing this name, some of Gnostic, some of Christian origin, and it is possible that they were known to the writers of the catalogues. But a portion of the work from early times formed an integral part of the Syriac Bible, and to this day is used among the Jacobites in their funeral service.¹⁷³ Its real date, however, can only approximately be determined. Of course, the writer merely assumes the person of Baruch, the son of Neriah, for literary purposes, not with any idea of imposing upon the credulity of his hearers. He announces at the commencement that the word of the Lord came to him in the twenty-fifth year of Jechoniah, king of Judah. This at once places the revelation in an unhistorical region; for Jechoniah lived eleven years before the destruction of Jerusalem, reigned only three months, and then was carried captive to Babylon. And the departure from historical fact is continued in chap. vi., where it is said that on the next day after this revelation was made the city was taken by the Chaldaeans. The clue to this apparent mistake is to be found in the nature of the treatise. It is an Apocalypse, and in it real events are introduced with the special purpose of foreshadowing or delineating other circumstances. Now this first destruction of Jerusalem adumbrated its final destruction under Titus, and we cannot doubt that the seer is referring to this latter calamity under the figure of the first. If he means that the vision came to him twenty-five years after the Chaldaean invasion, he intends to affirm that he received¹³⁴ the revelation so long after the ruin of the holy city, that is, about 95 A.D. Or the twenty-five years may be dated from the captivity of Jechoniah, which was some eleven years earlier, a

mode of reckoning used by Ezekiel (e.g. chap. xxix. 17, xxx. 20, xxxi. 1) and the exiles in Chaldea. This would make the date of our book to be about 84 A.D. That it was composed in early Christian times may be gathered from certain passages which bear evident marks of being no late interpolations, but portions of the original work. Omitting for the present those which contain Messianic teaching, we will quote a few which betray a Christian spirit or some acquaintance with the literature of the New Testament.¹⁷⁴ Chap. x. 13, 14: "Ye bridegrooms, enter not into your chambers; ye women, pray not that ye array bear children; for the barren shall rejoice, and they that have not sons shall be glad, and they that have sons shall be sorrowful" (comp. Matt. xxiv. 19; Luke xxiii. 29). Chap. xxi. 13: "If this were the only life which men have, nothing could be more miserable" (1 Cor. xv. 19). Chap. xxiv. 1: "Lo the days come, and the books shall be opened, in which are written the sins of those who have sinned, and the treasure-houses shall be disclosed in which is gathered the righteousness of those who were justified on earth" (Rev. xx. 12). Chap. xlviii. 34: "There shall be rumours many and messengers not a few; and mighty works shall be shown, and promises made of which some shall be vain and some shall be confirmed" (Matt. xxiv. 24–26). Chap. xx. 1, 2: "The days shall come when the times shall hasten more than 135 of old, and the hours shall speed on quicker than before, and the years shall pass away more rapidly than now. For this I have sustained Zion, that I might rather hasten and visit the world in her time" ("For the elect's sake those days shall be shortened," Matt. xxiv. 22). Chap. liv. 10: "Blessed is my mother among them that bear children, praised shall she be among women" (Luke i. 42, xi. 27). "For what gain have men lost their life, and what have they who were once on earth given in exchange for their soul" (chap. 1.). This is remarkably similar to Matt. xvi. 25, 26, especially as in both passages the pleasures of this life are contrasted with the joys of heaven. The many parallelisms between our book and the Revelation of St. John make it almost a certainty that the seer was acquainted with the latter work.¹⁷⁵ Thus it is said, chaps. xx., xlviii., that the end of the times draws near (Rev. i. 1, 3, xxii. 7); chaps. xxi., lix., that spirits stand before the throne of God like burning lamps (Rev. i. 4, iv. 5); chaps. ii., xiv., that the righteous intercede for sinners before God (Rev. v. 8, viii. 3); chap. xlviii., evil spirits and those who are inspired by them shall work miracles (Rev. xiii. 13, xvi. 14); chap. xxix., the hidden manna shall be given as a reward to the righteous (Rev. ii. 17). Chaps. lxxvii., lxxxvii., an eagle is sent to make a solemn announcement (Rev. viii. 13 ἀετοῦ); chap. xxviii., the number three and a half is used in mystic computation of time (Rev. iii. 9, etc.); chap. iv., the sacred city Jerusalem is taken up to heaven, which St. John sees descending (Rev. iii. 12, xxi. 2). Then there are many expressions which have a Christian sound, as Faith, Faithful, Those who believe, The written law, Future judgment, Promise of the life to come, The new world, The mouth of hell, The place of hope, Saved in his works (Jas. ii. 14). These and suchlike terms do not necessarily imply that the writer was a Christian, which notion his views concerning the Messiah decidedly nullify; but they show that he was conversant with Christian ideas, and had some acquaintance with the new literature which had sprung up under the gospel. It is supposed that the book was written before the Second Book of Esdras (as it is called in our Bibles). That in many points the two works have a remarkable affinity cannot be disputed. The only doubt is, which of the two is prior to the other. Many critics have decided that Baruch borrowed from Ezra; but their arguments are very weak, and Schiirer has given reasons for deciding the other way, and assigning priority, of composition to our book. According to him, Esdras is of a much more finished character, and shows greater maturity of thought and more lucidity of style—points which intimate a later origin. But the point must be left undecided.

Why the writer has assumed the name of Baruch is not difficult to imagine. The fame of one so well known, and associated with the great prophet Jeremiah, would add an authority to a work which no other personality would have offered. Since, too, as must be allowed, the book has a close and remarkable analogy with what we call the Second Book of Esdras,¹⁷⁶ another reason may be found for the appropriation of the name Baruch. We need not, with Ewald, hold that the two works are the production of the same author (as indeed there are some facts which militate against this view); or that the Book of Baruch was intended to correct some erroneous opinions of Esdras concerning original sin; but let us suppose that the Second Esdras was well known to our writer. Not wishing to repeat the personification of his predecessor, and yet desirous of giving his composition an authorization not inferior, he fixed on the follower of Jeremiah as the recipient of the Revelation which he purposed to publish. Whether in this he was consciously treading in the steps of the composer of the apocryphal Book of Baruch is a matter of doubt. Kneucker identifies the two. His view is, that, whereas in chap. lxxvii. the seer was to write two letters, one to the nine-and-a-half tribes to be conveyed by an eagle, and one to the brethren in Babylon to be taken thither by three men, and only the former of these is forthcoming in the Apocalypse, the other is the "Baruch" of the Septuagint. This is described in the Syriac MS. as "the Second Epistle of Baruch the Scribe," the first being that to the nine-and-a-half tribes. Opposed to this conjecture is the fact, that the Book or Epistle of Baruch, according to the Received text, is sent from Babylon to Jerusalem, not from Jerusalem to Babylon, and is generally allowed to be of a much earlier date than the Apocalypse, and of Hebrew origin. The Syriac inscription is probably an unauthorised interpolation intended to show a connection between the two treatises, but warranted neither by internal nor external evidence. That the work was written originally in Greek is evident from an examination of the Syriac version, wherein are found actual Greek words transliterated, as well as what were evidently paronomasias in the original, but which have lost their force in translation.¹⁷⁷ Besides this, the superscription in the Syriac MS. expressly notifies that the work is a translation from the Greek; and there is some evidence of the use of the Septuagint in the references to the Old Testament, as where Baruch is said to have received a revelation under the oak near Hebron (chaps. vi., xlvii.; lxxvii.), which idea is probably derived from Gen. xiii. 18: παρὰ τὴν ὄρυν τὴν Μαμβρῆ, ἣ ἦν ἐν Χεβρώμ. It is certain, too, that the author's locality is Jerusalem. "Your brethren," he says, chap. lxxx., "are carried captive to Babylon, we, a poor remnant, are left here." Only in Palestine or Alexandria could such a book have been composed in the Greek language. But there is no trace of Judo-Alexandrian philosophy (such as meets us in Philo's writings and the Book of Wisdom) to be found in the Apocalypse. Like Ecclesiasticus, it takes its stand on the plain dogmatic teaching of the Scriptures and the traditions concerning Messiah then extant. To none but Palestinian Jews, who had seen their holy city destroyed, could this prophecy, which promised restoration and prosperity to their ruined capital, have been addressed. This point being settled, we may fix the date at about A.D. 90. We have noticed above an argument for this date from the author's own statement concerning the time that the revelation was made unto him. Another may be drawn from Papias' reference to the book. The lost work of this Father was written about A.D. 120–130. Now he quotes this Apocalypse as well known to his readers. Such an acquaintance could hardly have been obtained under thirty years or more. This lands us again at the same period. So does the inference (if legitimate) that it was written after St. Matthew's Gospel and the Revelation of St. John. Nor could it have been composed after the total overthrow of Jerusalem by Adrian (A.D. 135). The destruction of the city by Nebuchadnezzar and by Titus is mentioned, but no hint of a third and

more effectual demolition is given. On the contrary, restoration is promised after the second ruin, and the people, groaning under this calamity, are comforted with the thought of speedy and most complete re-establishment. This will place the writing between A.D. 70 and A.D. 135, and help to confirm our previous conclusion.

The book is divided into two unequal parts, the first (chaps. i.–lxxvii.) containing the historical points and the revelation of past and future, the second being the letter to the nine-and-a-half tribes. The former is sent to Babylon, which we must consider to mean Rome; the latter, to the Jews dispersed in the Parthian kingdom; “across the river,” as it is expressed, the Euphrates being the boundary line dividing the Eastern empire of the Parthians from the Western empire of the Romans. This distinction between the two great members of the dispersion is found in many other documents of this time, most of which, however, were written with reference to Rome.¹⁷⁸ The entire demolition of ancient Jerusalem, 140 with all its calamitous consequences, under Adrian led to the loss of much of the literature of the period, the preservation of any portion being probably due to the care of Christians. These carried with them in their wanderings the books which have come down to us or were known to the early Fathers. The letter at the end of the Apocalypse, as being addressed to the Eastern Jews, was soon separated from the other part, and translated into Syriac and widely circulated; while the other section, comprising three-fourths of the whole, was so completely lost that it soon existed only in a Syriac version, which, as has been mentioned, itself remained unknown until quite recently.

In these and such like apocalyptic writings there is a certain similarity which greatly conduces to their correct interpretation. Under the general design of comforting his countrymen in times of trouble and defeat with the hope of the speedy appearance of the Messiah, the seer composes a prophecy which shall embrace the past, the present, and the future. He represents himself as receiving direct communication from God, and enjoined to make known the revelation to men. Placing himself in the distant past, he gives a summary of the history of his people up to the present time, touches lightly on the events that pass before his own eyes, and then in figure and type shadows forth a glorious future which shall abundantly compensate the distress and humiliation now prevalent. This is very nearly an outline of the Apocalypse of Baruch. The first portion, comprising chaps. i.–lxxvii., is divided into seven sections, the close of each section being usually marked by a fast of seven 141 days.¹⁷⁹ First Section: In the twenty-fifth year of Jechoniah, king of Judah, it was revealed to Baruch that Jerusalem and her people should be destroyed, and the inhabitants of the land should be carried away captive. Upon his asking whether the end of the world should come then, he is told that the prophecies which spoke of the everlasting covenant referred to a new world and a new Jerusalem which should be eternal. On the next day the Chaldaeans took the city; but first, that the enemy might not be able to vaunt their power, the angels destroy the walls, and hide in the earth the precious things of the temple. Zedekiah, the king, is taken captive to Babylon, while Baruch and Jeremiah are left in Jerusalem, and weep and fast seven days (i.–ix.). Then Jeremiah, by Divine command, is sent to Babylon; but Baruch stays amid the ruins of the city to receive a revelation, which comes to him after another seven days’ fast (x.–xii.).¹⁸⁰ Second Section: As he stands on Mount Zion, a voice falls from heaven, telling him that his people are chastised in mercy in order to lead them to repentance: he complains that good men are no better off than sinners and the heathen, though this world was made for God’s people;¹⁸¹ and the Lord answers, that this 142 life is short and full of trouble, but the life to come shall set right all

present anomalies. And he bids Baruch prepare himself for a new revelation (xiii.–xx.). *Third Section:* At the end of seven days the seer comes to the appointed place, and asks impatiently to know the meaning and the issue of God's dealings with men. He is told that he is ignorant, but is comforted with the hope that the end is near, when good and evil shall meet their reward; and the signs that shall precede this final time are enumerated under twelve divisions, concluding with the days of Messiah and His two advents—the first to establish an earthly kingdom; the second to manifest His eternal reign, when He shall raise up those who have slept in hope, and reward them with heavenly glory. To the question as to the extent of the tribulation which shall precede this time, the seer is told that it will affect the whole earth. Then Baruch summons a meeting of the elders, and announces to them that Zion shall be destroyed, but shall be rebuilt again; yet again it shall be ruined, and for the last time restored gloriously so as to last for ever (xxi.–xxxiv.). *Fourth Section:* Then the prophet, as he sleeps amid the ruins of the Holy Place, sees in a vision on one side a mighty forest girt by mountains, and on the other a vine, from whose roots issued a placid streamlet. Anon this streamlet became a great river, and it overthrew the mountain, and tore up the forest, leaving of it nothing but one cedar, which also at length it destroyed. And the vine and the stream exulted over the fallen cedar, and the vine grew more and more, and all the plain was filled with flowers that fade not. The seer is told that hereby 143 is signified the fate of four kingdoms which have afflicted Zion, the last of which, the most powerful and most evil of them all, is to perish before the arms of Messiah. "Then shall be revealed the chieftainship of my Messiah, who is like a spring and a vine, and He on His appearing will annihilate that congregation. And that cedar which thou rawest is the last prince (*dux ultimus*) who is left alive. He shall be brought in chains before Messiah on Mount Zion, and there be put to death" (xxxv.–xlvi.). *Fifth Section:* After another seven days' fast Baruch tells the people of his approaching departure, and urges them to continue faithful to the law, explaining to them the retribution of the world to come. Another seven days' fast intervenes, and then Baruch, in answer to his prayer, is told of the tribulations that are to come upon the earth, and of the manner of the resurrection both of the evil and the good, and their punishment and reward (xlvi.–lii.). *Sixth Section:* After this, he sees a vision of alternate dark and bright waters, which is explained as a record of Israel's history from Adam to Messiah (xlvi.–lxxi.). The glories of Messiah's eternal kingdom are then unfolded. Baruch is informed that shortly he will be taken from earth, though not by death (lii.–lxxvi.).¹⁸² *Seventh Section:* He again announces his departure to his friends, prays for their welfare, and on the twenty-first day of the eighth month writes two letters, one to the exiles in Babylon, which he sends by the hands of men, and one to the nine-and-a-half tribes beyond the river, which he entrusts to an eagle. The latter Epistle is given in full, and concludes the book. 144 In it he comforts his distant brethren under their trials with the remembrance that God has not cast off His love for them, but is only temporarily chastening them for their disobedience. Nebuchadnezzar indeed has been permitted to afflict them grievously, but it was the Lord who destroyed the forts and walls; and He also hid the sacred vessels that the heathen should not rejoice over them. All shall be changed ere long; the day is soon coming when the Gentiles shall be punished for their iniquity, and Israel shall be rewarded; only let them prepare for the life to come by virtue and obedience, and all shall be well with them (lxxvii.–lxxxvii.). The other Epistle is not given, and some, as I mentioned above, have considered the Septuagintal "Baruch" to be the missing document. But as this theory is inadmissible; we must deem either that the writing is wholly lost, or that the two Epistles were identical. There is nothing improbable in the latter supposition. Their tenor would naturally be similar, and it is difficult to see what more the seer

could have said than he had already expressed in the extant letter. The conclusion of the book may have told how Baruch was taken from the earth, after he had seen in a vision all the regions of the world, as it had been promised him.

Such being a general view of the contents of the Apocalypse, we can now enter more particularly into some of the matters contained in it. And first, there are some puzzles connected with numbers which must be mentioned. Two such riddles confront us, a shorter and a longer.¹⁸³ The former concerns the end of the 145present world. This is to happen at the conclusion of "two parts weeks of seven weeks."¹⁸⁴ The seven weeks, which are probably derived from Dan. ix. 25, imply an interval of 49 years, which must be reckoned from the destruction of Jerusalem, A.D. 70. The expression "two parts" means two-thirds, as in Hebrew and Latin. Two-thirds of this period, say 33 years, would land us in the reign of Trajan (A.D. 98–117). In the chapter preceding this prophecy the seer foretells a course of twelve calamities, each more crushing than its predecessor, which should happen before the end. These may be well understood of events up to the death of Domitian (A.D. 96). But all this is pure speculation, and calculations founded hereon cannot be trusted. The longer riddle is on safer ground, being a history of past events in the form of prophecy (chaps. liii.–lxxiv.). The seer beholds a vast cloud rising from the sea, and discharging black and clear water alternately twelve times in succession. Under this image of dark and bright waters following each other in succession, the writer represents the history of man from Adam to the first destruction of Jerusalem. The alternation of light and shade, prosperity and adversity, reward and punishment, in human records, is compressed into twelve great periods, the character of which is marked by the changed appearance of the waters in the vision. "And it came to pass," says the 146seer, "that the cloud began to rain down upon the earth the waters with which it was charged. And I saw that the aspect of the waters was not one; for first they were black for a time, and then they became bright, but these were scanty; and afterwards I saw black waters a second time and then again bright; and this was done twelve times; but the black were always more abundant than the bright. Last of all, the cloud poured forth waters blacker than ever, and fire mingled with them. This fire was lightning, which gave shine to the whole earth, and healed the regions on which the dark waters had fallen. Then twelve streams arose from the sea, and subjected themselves to this lightning." Upon the seer praying for the interpretation of this mystery; the angel Ramiel is sent to explain it thus: "Whereas thou sawest first black waters descend upon the earth, this is the sin which Adam, the first man, sinned. For since by his transgression came into the world death, which was not in his time, and sorrow and pain, and labour, what could there be blacker than these things? Adam endangered his own soul and the souls of other men, so that all who lived on earth perished in the Flood. These are the first black waters. And whereas after these thou didst see bright waters, this denotes the advent of Abraham and his son and his sons' sons and those who are like unto them; because at that time, though there was no written law among them, yet the commandments were duly observed, and faith in the judgment to come arose, and the hope of a new world was then built up, and the promise of the life hereafter was planted in men's hearts. These are the first bright waters which thou sawest." And thus the 147angel expounds the signification of the vision unto the first destruction of Jerusalem and onwards to Messiah's time. Then we have the doings of subsequent sinful generations, especially the Egyptians, contrasted with Moses, Joshua, and the Sinaitic revelations; the works of the Amorites and magicians contrasted with the times of David and Solomon; the revolt of Jeroboam and the sins and punishments of his successors set against the piety of Hezekiah and his defeat of Sennacherib; the ungodliness of Manasseh against the integrity

of Josiah. The eleventh downpour represents the tribulation in Baruch's own time; and the twelfth bright water adumbrates the restoration of Israel. The last dark water represents the tumult and tribulation which will come upon the earth before the final advent of Messiah. In this interpretation some points are noteworthy. There is a strange opinion about Manasses, king of Judah (chap. lxiv.). It is said that his impiety was so heinous that he was condemned to the penal fire. Ignoring the old tradition of his repentance and consequent acceptance with God (2 Chron. xxxiii. 12, 13, 19), of a belief in which the apocryphal "Prayer of Manasses" is an evidence, Pseudo-Baruch testifies that though his prayer was heard, he himself was lost. "When he was placed in the brazen horse," probably an image connected with the worship of Moloch, "the figure was melted with the ardent heat, and he perished therein, a sign of the end that awaited him. For he had not lived a perfect life, nor was he worthy; but by this sign he learned by whom he was to be tormented hereafter. For He who can reward is also able to punish." The legend found in the *Apostolical Constitutions* and elsewhere¹⁸⁵ gives a very different result. According to these authorities, at his prayer, the image fell to pieces, and he escaped unharmed, returned to Jerusalem, and lived afterwards piously and prosperously. The opinion of Manasses' damnation in spite of his prayer is, as far as we know, peculiar to Pseudo-Baruch. Concerning the angels who "kept not their first estate," our seer holds the notion that they fell by their commerce with the daughters of men. "Adam," he says, "imperilled not only his own soul but the angels also. For at the time when he was created they had full liberty, and some of them descended and had intercourse with women; and then they who thus offended were tormented in chains. But the rest of the host of angels, an innumerable company, kept themselves pure." This interpretation of Gen. vi. 4 is, in the main, one that is common enough in Jewish, and indeed in Christian, commentaries. But it has a special feature which differentiates it from other glosses. The writer seems to teach that, as the tree of knowledge was the trial of Adam's faith and constancy, so the beauty of mortal women was appointed to be the probation of angels; and that the difference between good and bad angels consisted in the continence of the one and the unchastity of the other. The "tormenting in chains" reminds us of 2 Pet. ii. 4 and Jude 6, and is confirmed by many expressions in the Book of Enoch.¹⁸⁶

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There are some other peculiarities in this book which are interesting. The seer claims to have revelations made to him in two ways, by an angel, and by the voice of God. The angel he names Ramiel, "who presides over the visions of truth" (chap. lv.), and who tells him (chap. lxiii.) that he was the agent in the destruction of the host of Sennacherib in Hezekiah's reign. The name of this angel is not found elsewhere except in the Syriac version of 4 Esdr. iv. 36, v. 20, where the Latin has Jeremiel in most MSS., but in one (Turicensis) Huriel. Probably the name Ramiel is a corruption of Jeremiel, which word was formed from Jeremiah, who might well be called the prophet of truth, and give his name to the angel of the vision. The close connection between Baruch and Jeremiah makes this supposition very probable. In other passages of Esdras (iv. 1, v. 20; x. 28), Uriel is the heavenly messenger, which is in accordance with statements in the Book of Enoch (e.g. chaps. ix., xx., lxxiv.), where an angel of this name is often introduced. But it is very possible that the three names refer to the same heavenly being. Revelation by the direct voice of God seems to be an unusual claim on the part of Jewish apocalyptic writers. Inspiration by Bathkol, the daughter of the voice, indeed is asserted by the Rabbis up to the time of the composition of the Mishna; but this was never considered to be the voice of God Himself, but that of an angel, His agent or minister. Thus when

the voice from heaven came to our Lord (John xii. 28), some of the people supposed that an angel spoke to Him; when God called to Moses from the bush, it was an angel who addressed him; and 150 when the Law was uttered from Sinai, it was given "by the disposition of angels."¹⁸⁷ But Pseudo-Baruch especially distinguishes the heavenly voice from the revelation by the angel. "It came to pass after this," he says (chap. xxii.), "the heavens were opened, and I saw, and power was given unto me, and a voice from the highest was heard, and He said unto me." It is not till some time afterwards that Ramiel is said to interpret the vision of the waters. Langen supposes that the seer, being acquainted with St. Matthew's Gospel, took the hint of the narrative in chap. iii., and thus made the voice come immediately from God. I should think rather that the writer used the ambiguity of expression in the Old Testament to enhance the dignity of the revelation he was making. To do this he had no need to imitate St. Matthew's account.

On the subject of original sin our seer is thought to oppose the more orthodox doctrine enunciated by Esdras. Both writers speak of the evil introduced into the world by Adam's sin, but they diverge when treating of its effects on his descendants. While Esdras teaches that Adam communicated an infected nature to his posterity,¹⁸⁸ 151 Pseudo-Baruch sometimes affirms that the sin of Adam is transferred to others by imitation alone. "If," he says (chap. liv.), "Adam first sinned, and brought untimely death upon all men; yet also they who are born from him, each one of them hath prepared future torment for his own soul; and again, each one hath chosen future glory for himself. Adam was the cause of guilt to his own soul only; but we, each of us, are the Adam to our own souls." It is curious to trace here indications of that doctrine which, developed into Pelagianism, became the cause of serious controversy in the Christian Church. The received maxim among the Jews was that the whole world was comprised in Adam and sinned in his sin. The expression in Job xiv. 4 ("Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one"), whether we take it interrogatively or optatively, comes to the same thing, and intimates that the old belief obtained: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Ps. li. 5).

Let us turn now to the doctrine of the Messiah contained in our book. As we know that the apostles and early believers expected the second coming of Christ to happen shortly, so Pseudo-Baruch looks for the appearance of Messiah in the course of a few years. In their utter dejection and distress, seated amid the ruins of their beloved Jerusalem, the sorrowing Jews could find comfort in nothing but the hope of a speedy restoration under the leadership of Messiah. The actual time of this Parousia is concealed under a veil of symbolical words; but it is to be preceded by exceeding heavy calamities, confirming the saying "that man's extremity 152 is God's opportunity." In his vision the seer beholds a kingdom (Rome), the power of which shall be greater and more evil than any before it; and it shall rule supreme for many ages and be highly exalted; in it truth shall not dwell, but all who are stained with crime shall find refuge therein, as evil beasts hide themselves in the forest. "And it shall come to pass when the time of its fall shall approach, then the dominion of Messiah shall be revealed, and He shall root up the multitude of that kingdom" (chap. xxxix.). But before that event, "the harvest of the good seed and the bad shall come, and the Almighty will bring upon the earth and its inhabitants and upon its rulers confusion of spirit and stupor of heart. And they shall hate one another and provoke one another to battle, and the base-born shall lord over those of high degree, and the mean shall be exalted above men of renown, and the many shall be delivered to the few, and those who were nothing shall rule the mighty, and the poor shall be more than the rich, and the wicked shall be raised above the heroic, and wise men shall hold their peace

and fools shall speak: the thought of men shall then not be confirmed, nor the counsel of the Almighty, nor the hope of those that hope. And when what has been foretold shall come to pass, on all men shall come confusion, and some of them shall fall by the sword in battle, and some shall perish in great tribulation, and some shall be ensnared by their own friends. But the Most High shall reveal it to those nations whom He prepared before, and they shall come and fight with the leaders who shall then remain. And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall escape ¹⁵³from the war shall die in the earthquake, and whosoever shall escape from the earthquake shall be consumed in the fire, and whosoever shall escape from the fire shall perish in the famine. And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall escape from all these evils, of the conquerors and of the conquered, shall be delivered into the hands of my servant Messiah. For the earth shall devour the inhabitants thereof" (chap. lxx.). Other signs are mentioned (chap. xlviii.), some of which, as we have seen above, have a striking similarity to those which our Lord foretold should usher in the last day. No safety shall anywhere be found except in the Holy Land, which "shall have pity on its own children and protect them in that day" (chap. lxxi.). And then shall Messiah begin to be revealed.

In his idea of the reign of Messiah, Pseudo-Baruch takes a different line from Esdras and other apocalyptic writers. The common notion of a great Leader, who by a course of uninterrupted triumph should restore and enhance the glory of the depressed Israelites, does not satisfy his hopes. This is only one and a partial view of the effects of this Divine interference. The Messiah has a twofold kingdom, an earthly one which passes away; and a heavenly one which is everlasting. Such a question as that of the apostles (Acts i. 6): "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" spoke only of temporal restitution and sovereignty, and would not have intimated the full hope that we see to have been conceived by our seer. Of a suffering Messiah he has no notion; nor does he give any trace of the later belief in two Messiahs, a Messiah ben David of whom ¹⁵⁴were predicted glory and triumph, and a Messiah ben Joseph to whose lot fell all the foretold sufferings and woe. His Messiah is one only person viewed at different times and under a different aspect. First He comes as the great earthly conqueror, who was to emancipate the people from the dominion of Rome, punish their enemies, and restore the Jews to more than pristine glory. In this earthly kingdom all the Israelites who are then alive shall have their part; and while those who have oppressed them shall perish, they who have never known them or had connection with them, and they who have joined themselves unto their God as proselytes, shall be saved, being in subjection to the ancient people. This dominion shall be established in the Holy Land, when the last leader of the enemy is brought in chains to Zion, and is there condemned and executed by Messiah. The glories of this kingdom, in accordance more or less with ancient prophecy, are thus described (chap. lxxiii.): "It shall come to pass when He shall have humbled whatsoever is in the world, and sat down in peace for ever upon the throne of His kingdom, then shall He be revealed in happiness, and a great calm shall ensue. Health shall descend like dew, and sickness shall pass away, and care and distress and groaning shall no more be found among men; and joy shall pace through all the earth. No one shall die before he hath filled his days, no sudden calamity shall happen to any. Trials, accusations, contentions, revenge, bloodshed, avarice, envy, hatred, and all such things shall be utterly abolished. For these are the things which have filled this world with evil and vexed the life of men. Then the wild beasts shall come ¹⁵⁵forth from the forests and minister unto men; and asps and snakes shall issue from their holes to become a little one's plaything. Women shall be delivered without pain. The reaper shall not be wearied, the builder shall feel no fatigue, for all works shall co-operate with the labourers in that time of peace." Like other

apocalyptic writers, Pseudo-Baruch represents the happiness of Messiah's kingdom under the figure of a splendid banquet, in which mighty animals shall be served up as the food of the righteous guests. The Lord says to him, chap. xxix.: "Behemoth shall be brought to light from his place, and Leviathan shall ascend from the sea, two great creatures which I made on the fifth day of the creation, and have reserved unto this time;¹⁸⁹ and then they shall be for food for them that are left. The earth also shall give her fruits, ten thousand for one." Then comes the passage about the vine (quoted by Papias) given above. He proceeds: "Those who have hungered shall be gladdened, and they shall again see prodigies daily. For spirits¹⁹⁰ shall go forth from my presence every morning to bring the odour of aromatic fruits, and at the close of day clouds dropping the dew of health. And then shall fall a second time the treasure of manna, and they shall eat thereof in those years, since these are they which have come to the end of the time."

Such is our seer's description of the earthly reign of Messiah. But we may note that in two points he differs from many of the writers of Apocalypses. First he takes a more liberal view of the Gentile world than his contemporaries. While others were content to believe that salvation was of the Jews, and belonged to them exclusively, Pseudo-Baruch admits certain of the Gentiles to share the glories of Messiah's kingdom. Proselytes from the heathen, and any that had taken no active part in oppressing Israel, or from their remoteness of position knew nothing of God's people, would be allowed to participate in the blessings of the Messianic reign, provided that they came in humbly as subjects of the heavenly Prince. It is interesting to observe an abatement of that jealousy which so frequently meets us in the Gospels, where an extension of God's favour to the Gentiles is reprobated by the Jews as an opinion profane and detestable. Our seer has lighted upon a great truth, though he knew not its full import, how that the Christ should be not only the glory of Israel, but, as the aged Simeon believed, a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.¹⁹¹

The other point in which our seer differs from many Hebrew writers is this: he allows a participation in Messiah's earthly kingdom to those Jews only who are alive at His appearing. The common opinion among the Jews was that the righteous dead should rise from the brave to inherit His glory: this was to be their privilege; they were to obtain part in the first resurrection which was quite distinct from the general resurrection at the day of judgment. Of this opinion Pseudo-Baruch makes no mention. "Messiah," he says, 157 "shall protect the people who are found in the appointed place," *i.e.* Zion.¹⁹²

How long this earthly kingdom is supposed to last is nowhere distinctly stated. The seer speaks of the time of Messiah's appearance being fulfilled (chap. xxx.), before He returns again in glory, but he does not assign any definite period to His earthly sojourn. The notion of a reign of a thousand years, which is generally supposed to have originated in Judaism and to have passed from thence to Christianity, does not appear in our book. There is a passage in Esdras¹⁹³ which reckons the duration at four hundred years. This, is probably derived from the consideration that the period of affliction in Egypt was to be compensated by a similar period of refreshment and rest. But Pseudo-Baruch gives no confirmation to this opinion. Nor does he assert with Esdras¹⁹⁴ that Messiah shall die. He passes over this event in silence, and proceeds to picture His return in glory in the fulness of time. At His coming all men shall arise again, not Jews only, but all men; and not the righteous only, but sinners also. "To the dust it shall be said, Restore that which is not thine, and place thou here all that thou hast kept safe till now" (chap. xlii.). "And the storehouses¹⁹⁵ shall be opened wherein have

been kept the souls of the righteous, and they shall 158 come forth, and the multitude of souls shall appear in one concordant assembly, and the first shall rejoice and the last shall not be sad, for they shall know that the end of all the times has come. But the souls of sinners, when they shall see all things, shall pine away the more; for they know that their punishment has come and the hour of their damnation" (chap. xxx.). "The earth shall restore the dead which it had to keep, changing nothing in their form; but as it received them so it shall restore them, and as I [the Lord] have committed them unto it, thus shall it place them before me. And they shall recognise each other" (chap. 1.). Here again Pseudo-Baruch is not in agreement with the usual opinion of his contemporaries. Josephus¹⁹⁶ asserts that the Pharisees believed that the souls of the righteous alone would rise again, while the wicked would remain in prison everlastingly, suffering there eternal punishment. This dogma probably could not be truly predicated of all Pharisees,¹⁹⁷ but it was undoubtedly held by a large majority of Jews. The Book of Enoch,¹⁹⁸ which represents the current belief, teaches that the souls of sinners shall suffer vengeance without being united again to their bodies, but the righteous shall be raised, body and soul, to participate in the blessings of Messiah's reign. And such, with certain modifications, was the opinion that generally obtained in these and later times; while Pseudo-Baruch teaches that synchronally with 159 Messiah's return shall be the general resurrection, the judgment, and the eternal reign. Whether the period between the first and second advent of Messiah corresponds with the millennium of St. John in Rev. xx. is a question which we cannot now discuss. That no mention of the first resurrection is made in our book is a fact which separates it from Jewish and Christian speculations. One thing is plain, that what others call the second or general resurrection is the great event which Pseudo-Baruch foresees as appertaining to Messiah's second appearance in glory.

In presenting the details of this resurrection, the seer says, as St. Paul, that all will be changed, the aspect of the evil becoming more horrible, and that of the righteous more glorious; the one being transformed to the splendour of the angels, the other terror-stricken by fearful sights and visions; the one made bright and beautiful to receive the blessings of the eternal world, the other tantalised with the sight of the blessed and sent away to punishment.¹⁹⁹ On the subject of the happiness of the saved he enlarges in many passages. "They shall see the world which is now invisible to them; they shall see the time which is now hidden from them. And time shall never more grow old to them; for they shall dwell in the high places of that world, and shall be like unto the angels and equal to the stars, and shall be transformed into all the beauty that they can desire, and changed from light unto the radiance of glory. In their sight shall be unfolded the breadths of Paradise, and there shall be displayed before them the comeliness of the 160 majesty of the living creatures which are beneath the throne,²⁰⁰ and all the hosts of angels who now are holden by my word from being seen, and holden by my command that they should stay in their own places till the time of their appearance is come. Thus the excellency of the righteous shall surpass that of the angels. For the first shall succeed the last, those for whom they waited, and the last those whom they heard to have passed by; and they have been delivered from this world of sorrow, and have laid down the weight of care." If it might seem an extravagant belief in the mouth of a Jew that, admitted to the life beyond the grave, he should be more excellent than the angels, yet his hope is far inferior to that of the Christian. We are told that we shall see God, behold "the King in His beauty." The Jewish prophet holds out no hope of this blessed vision. The righteous shall see highest orders of angels, and all the hosts of heaven, yea, the glory of God, the light in which He dwells; but Himself no eye of man, however holy and blessed, shall behold.²⁰¹

The scene of this happiness is the new world which God shall create especially for His true servants. And that the prophecies of the glory of Jerusalem may be rightly understood, the seer is taught that the earthly city may be destroyed once and again, but it shall be renewed in glory, and receive an everlasting crown (chap. xxxii.). "Dost thou remember," says the Lord, "what that city is of which I said, 'I have graven thee 161 upon the palm of my hands'?" No earthly city this, but a heavenly, mystic one, prepared before the world was made, shown to Adam before he fell in Paradise, but withdrawn, as Eden itself, after he had sinned.²⁰² Abraham, too, beheld it when he kept watch between his victims slain; and to Moses it was revealed on Mount Sinai, when he received the communication touching the Tabernacle and its appurtenances. Since then it has been kept in the secret place of God till the time for its disclosure should arrive.²⁰³ This glorious city shall be the abode of the righteous. But the seer, unlike St. John, attempts not to describe its splendours; no revelation of these particulars is made unto him, and he leaves it in its beauty a wonder and a mystery. The Paradise, in which he locates both the throne of God and the home of the blessed, is not the place in the other world where the souls of the just await the day of judgment, which was its usual signification among the Jews, but heaven itself, and, as one would suppose, the so-called third heaven. St. Paul, in the account of his own rapture (2 Cor. xii.), seems to make a distinction between Paradise and the third heaven, speaking of being on one occasion "caught up even to the third heaven," and on another, "being caught up into Paradise." But in this, as in some other points before noticed, Pseudo-Baruch does not adhere closely to the received opinion, 162 but follows another tradition, or takes an original view.

With regard to the punishment of the wicked, the seer holds this opinion. They shall first see the glory of the righteous, and then shall be led away to punishment,—their home shall be in the eternal fire (chap. xlv.). Of the annihilation of the condemned other writers have spoken;²⁰⁴ but nothing of the kind is found in our book. Sinners are said, indeed, to waste away ("tabescere"), but this is only an expression to characterise their torment, which they are transfigured to endure.²⁰⁵

Such are the chief points of interest in this book; and they are useful in many ways, but chiefly as conveying instruction on the tenets and expectations of the Jews about the period of the first Christian century, and exhibiting the contrast between real and spurious revelations.

The Testament of Solomon

The Testament of Solomon is extant in unedited Semitic manuscripts (viz. Bib. Nat. Fonds Syriacque 194, ff. 153a-156b; Vat. ar. 448, ff. 39r-54r; cf. G. Graf, *Geschichte*, p. 210) and in Greek. The latter was edited by C. C. McCown (*The Testament of Solomon* [Untersuch. z. N. T. 9] Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1922. Pp. 3*-120*), and translated into English from an earlier edition by F. C. Conybeare ("The Testament of Solomon," *JQR* 11 [1898] 1-45).

This pseudepigraphon is neither so late nor so early as some older scholars claimed. McCown (esp. pp. 105-08) argued persuasively for an early third-century A.D. date for the original compilation (so also J. B. Frey in *DBSup* 1, col. 456; K. Preisendanz in Pauly-Wissows n. B. Sup. 8 [1956] cols. 684-90, esp. col. 689; A.-M. Denis, no. 24, p. 67), which incorporates a first-century A.D. Jewish composition (McCown's siglum *d*). Scholars correctly do not follow Conybeare's contention (p. 12) that the original Jewish work is to be identified with the Solomonic incantations cited by Josephus near the end of the first century A.D. (*Ant.* 8.2, 5). Josephus does not appear to be referring to a particular text but to the numerous liquid traditions about Solomon's control over demons. McCown (pp. 38-43) argued that the original language is Greek (so also Preisendanz, col. 689; J. Petroff, no. 1367), except for a possible Semitic original in recension A in the list of *decani* (18:24-40 [H]). He suggested that the provenance, in ascending order of probability, is Galilean, Egyptian, or Asian; the section containing the list of *decani*, however, is Egyptian (p. 42). Frey (col. 456) proposed an Egyptian provenance for the entire work.

The pseudepigraphon is either a Jewish composition which was eventually reworked by a Christian (so Conybeare, pp. 11f.; Frey, col. 455; Ginzberg, *Legende*, vol. 6, p. 292; B. M. Metzger, no. 1365) or a Christian writing which incorporated some Jewish material (McCown, pp. 108f.). Clearly Christian passages are found in sections 54, 65, and 122 (cf. 71 and 104). These passages emphasize the cross and virgin birth.

The Testament of Solomon contains 130 sections, according to Conybeare's translation (26 chapters according to McCown's edition of the longest recension). The work is called a testament because Solomon writes the *diatheken* (130=26:8) in order that those who read it may pray and heed the last things (*tois eschatois*). This exhortation mirrors Solomon's egregious error, his lust for a Shunammite girl and subsequent idolatry. Earlier (66=15:13) Solomon states that he wrote his testament before his death so that the children of Israel would know the powers and shapes of the demons, and the names of the angels who have power over them.

The pseudepigraphon recounts how Solomon is able to build the Temple by defeating demons and employing their skills by means of a ring and its seal given to him by the Archangel Michael. Solomon's greatness is acknowledged by a visit from the Queen of the South, who is a witch, and by a letter from the king of the Arabs. Solomon succeeds in building the Temple only to fall into idolatry through lust for a Shunammite girl.

If the Testament of Solomon is not late, as early scholars claimed, then it belongs in the Pseudepigrapha. In light of the emphasis upon demons and angels and the central concern for the Temple it will be interesting to see if there is a relation between this pseudepigraphon and the Qumranic Temple Scroll (cf. Y. Yadin, "The Temple Scroll," *New Directions in Biblical Archaeology*, eds. D. N. Freedman and J. C. Greenfield. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1971; pp. 156-66).

D. C. Duling writes: "The virgin, the reference to the Son of God, the temptation of Jesus, Jesus' rule over the demons, the crucifixion, and the name Emmanouel are clear. Moreover, there is the curious reference to the number 644. This number is connected with the name Emmanouel in manuscript P of 6:8, which states in response to Solomon's question about a thwarting angel that the one who thwarts Beelzeboul is 'the holy and precious name of the almighty God, the one called *by the Hebrews* by a row of numbers, of which the sum is 644, and among the Greeks it is Emmanouel.' [Italics mine.] Now 11:6 speaks of a suffering Emmanouel as one who thwarts the

Lion-Shaped One, and adds, 'As he moves about he is conjured up by means of three letters.' The three letters used for the number 644 in manuscript P of 6:8, however, are *Greek* letters (*chi, mu, delta*). Moreover, manuscript P of 11:6 adds, "The 'Great Among Men' who is to suffer many things whose name is the formula 644, who is Emmanouel . . ." It is never explicitly stated, but the *Greek* letters of Emmanouel's name also add up to 644 (TSol 6:8, n. i)." (*The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 1, p. 955)

The Prayer of Nabonidus (Qumran)

In October 539 BCE, the Persian king Cyrus took Babylon, the ancient capital of an oriental empire covering modern Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Israel. In a broader sense, Babylon was the ancient world's capital of scholarship and science. The subject provinces soon recognized Cyrus as their legitimate ruler. Since he was already lord of peripheral regions in modern Turkey and Iran (and Afghanistan?), it is not exaggerated to say that the conquest of Babylonia meant the birth of a true world empire. The Achaemenid empire was to last for more than two centuries, until it was divided by the successors of the Macedonian king Alexander the Great. A remarkable aspect of the capture of Babylon is the fact that Cyrus allowed the Jews (who were exiled in Babylonia) to return home.

The following Aramaic text belongs to the famous Dead Sea Scrolls: four scraps of parchment from Cave 4, usually called 4Q242, copied from an older original in the second half of the first century BCE. The story is similar to Daniel's account of a king of Babylon who is ill, lives isolated for seven years, and becomes convinced of the truth of the monotheistic creed. The difference is that in *Daniel*, the subject is Nebuchadnezzar, not Nabonidus.

There must have circulated a Jewish story about the mad king Nabonidus who went to Tayma to recover his wits and recognized the supreme God. Two people reworked this original: one of the authors of *Daniel* changed the name of the monarch, the author of the *Prayer* changed the illness (to make the story fit *Leviticus* 13?). The reconstructed story independently confirms two points made by the author of the *Verse Account*: Nabonidus suffered from a mental disease and insulted the Babylonian clergy by his monotheistic ideas. This does not prove that Nabonidus was really mad, but it makes it plausible that the accusation was very old.

Prayer of Nabonidus

[1] Words of the prayer, said by Nabonidus, king of Babylonia, [the great] king, [when afflicted]

[2] with an ulcer on command of the most high God in Tayma:

["I, Nabonidus,] was afflicted [with an evil ulcer]

[3] for seven years, and far from [men] I [was driven, until I prayed to the most high God.] And

[4] an exorcist pardoned my sins. He was a Jew from [among the children of the exile of Judah, and said:]

[5] "Recount this in writing to glorify and exalt the name of [the most high God."Then I wrote this:]
"When

[67] I was afflicted for seven years [by the most high God] with an evil ulcer during my stay at Tayma,

[7] I prayed [to] the gods of silver and gold, [bronze and iron,] wood, stone and lime,{It is interesting to notice that the line "have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron,

[8] wood and stone" returns in Daniel, just twenty-two lines below the story of the madness of Nebuchadnezzar.}} because [I thought and considered] them gods [...]"

The Vision of Amram

Visions of Anran, also referred to as 4Q543-549, is a collection of five extremely fragmented copies found in Qumran cave 4. In 1972, Jozef T. Milik published a significant fragment of the Visions of Amram.^[1] Since then, controversy has surrounded this document at every turn. In this testament, Amram gathers his sons, Moses and Aaron, to his deathbed and relates stories of his life, providing wisdom and commanding understanding.^[2] This document is named for a vision shared during this time.

This document has many distinguishing features that separate it from the other Dead Sea Scrolls found in the Qumran Caves. Primarily, copies of Visions of Amram are written in Aramaic,^[1] unlike the majority of the Qumran texts which were scripted in Hebrew. This unique feature, along with its suspected dating to the second century BCE, leads most scholars to believe these documents were written prior to and apart from the Qumran sectarian documents.^[3] Due to the multiple copies, organization and comprehension of this fragmented document is two-fold. 1) First, fragments are categorized into five groups based on manuscript, creating pieces of a whole, yet incomprehensible, document. 2) Secondly, fragments are overlapped and mixed to create a single, somewhat coherent, account. Unfortunately, this document is far from complete. Vast sections of this account have been put together through intensive reconstruction, leading to controversy and further uncertainties.

Manuscript content

[edit]

Upon the year of his death (136 years old), Amram, (son of Kohath, son of Levi)^[2] gave in marriage his 30-year-old daughter, Miriam, to his brother, Uzziel. The wedding was 7 days long. After the feast, Amram called for his children and began to recollect the story of his time in Biblical Egypt. Amram tells his son Aaron to summon his son Malachijah. Then Amram tells him that he will give them wisdom. Amram and Kohath went to Canaan from Egypt to build tombs for those who perished during the Egyptian sojourn. Amram stayed in Canaan to finish the tombs, while Kohath left for Egypt due to the threat of war. Amram was unable to go back to his wife and family in Egypt for 41 years, until the war between Egypt, Canaan and Philistia was over ^[2]

Next, Amram presents his vision. He accounts two divine figures fighting over the fate of his judgement. Amram inquires about their claimed authority and challenges their rule in his life. In apparent unison, the figures declare their rule over humanity, and offer him a choice of destiny. One presents himself as Belial, Prince of Darkness, and Melkirisha, King of Evil, who is empowered over all Darkness.^[4] The other figure, dubbed Melchizedek, Prince of Light and King of Righteousness, rules over the Light.^[4] Amram tells his audience that he wrote down his vision as soon as he awoke.^[2]

Amram also differentiates between light and darkness. He tells his audience that the Sons of Light will be made light and Sons of Darkness will be made dark.^[4] Sons of Light are destined for light and joy, while Sons of Darkness are destined for death and darkness.^[4] It fundamentally explains how light will triumph over darkness, and it is declared that the Son of Darkness will be destroyed.^[4]

Type of literature

The type of genre of the Visions of Amram is decided according to common features found in relation to other texts. However, according to Jorg Frey, there needs to be room for uniqueness and character.^[5] It is essential to use different types of scholarly genres to categorize the texts, even though ancient authors did not use them or used them quite differently.^[5] This is a reason why there is ambiguity surrounding whether or not the Visions of Amram are classified as "testaments" or "visions".

Jean Starcky was the first to believe that the Visions fall under the testament genre, because of the multiple similarities with the Testament of Levi.^[6] Here scholars compared the introductory narrative of the Visions of Amram with the introductory sections of the Testaments of the 12 Patriarchs, most specifically the Testament of Levi.^[7] Officially, Józef Milik was the first to call the Visions of Amram a testament.^[6]

However, people began to question why the author called it the Visions of Amram and not the Testament of Amram.^[5] Here, differing views started to emerge and the word "testament" used to describe the Visions, slowly began to disappear.^[7] Furthermore, John J. Collins, pointed out how the introductory narrative does not have the usual format of a testament. Instead it has a summary heading.^[7] Collins would say that it is a vision of the demonic Melchiresha and its angel counterpart.^[7] Similarly, Henryk Drawnel would say that the genre of the visions seems to be didactic.^[8]

Dualism in Visions of Amram



Example of fragmented manuscripts found at the Qumran Caves (due to copyright, could not upload pictures of Visions of Amram)

It is relatively certain that Visions of Amram originated well before the scribes of Qumran, and likely existed beyond this community.^[3] Nevertheless, based on the evidence of multiple copies found fragmented in cave 4, this text appears to have been significant to the people of Qumran.^[9] Although never explicitly referenced in Qumran sectarian literature,^[1] Amram's vision reflects prominent themes, such as dualism, which were cornerstone to the Qumran beliefs.

Dualism in the Qumran community is defined by the belief in a divine predetermined plan, which offers two ways of existence. On one end of the spectrum lies goodness and light and on the other, darkness and evil. These sides are in continuous combat, but in the end God will determine ultimate victory to the Sons of Light.^[10] Terms used in Visions of Amram, such as Sons of Light and Sons of Darkness, are also reflected throughout Qumran Sectarian literature. The Vision of Amram depicts a scene of two divine figures who claim to rule all humanity. These figures are extensively reflected in significant Qumran literature, such as the Community Rule, where the theme of dualism is prominent.^[10]

This extremely fragmentary piece of literature, given its early origins, could have had huge implications on the way dualism developed in Qumran. Unfortunately, due to its thoroughly incomplete nature, most of the insights on dualism gleaned from these documents only find their footing in speculation. For example, 4Q544 has been reconstructed to account a choice of fate offered to Amram, represented by these two figures. In the Qumran community, predeterminism was the common belief which would have led to incongruencies with this text.^[10] It is difficult to draw an absolute conclusion on the specific brand of dualism depicted in the Visions of Amram due to its uncertain translation.^[3] Nevertheless, it is valuable in providing a more complete look on the traditions and literature that may have inspired and driven the beliefs of the Qumran community.

The Letter of Peter to Philip

The Letter of Peter which he sent to Philip

"Peter, the apostle of Jesus Christ, to Philip, our beloved brother and our fellow apostle, and (to) the brethren who are with you: greetings!

Now I want you to know, our brother, that we received orders from our Lord and the Savior of the whole world that we should come together to give instruction and preach in the salvation which was promised us by our Lord Jesus Christ. But as for you, you were separate from us, and you did not desire us to come together and to know how we should organize ourselves in order that we might tell the good news. Therefore would it be agreeable to you, our brother, to come according to the orders of our God Jesus?"

When Philip had received these (words), and when he had read them, he went to Peter rejoicing with gladness. Then Peter gathered the others also. They went upon the mountain which is called "the (mount) olives," the place where they used to gather with the blessed Christ when he was in the body.

Then, when the apostles had come together, and had thrown themselves upon their knees, they prayed thus saying, "Father, Father, Father of the light, who possesses the incorruptions, hear us just as thou hast taken pleasure in thy holy child Jesus Christ. For he became for us an illuminator in the darkness. Yea hear us!"

And they prayed again another time, saying, "Son of life, Son of immortality, who is in the light, Son, Christ of immortality, our Redeemer, give us power, for they seek to kill us!"

Then a great light appeared so that the mountains shone from the sight of him who had appeared. And a voice called out to them saying, "Listen to my words that I may speak to you. Why are you asking me? I am Jesus Christ who am with you forever."

Then the apostles answered and said, "Lord, we would like to know the deficiency of the aeons and their pleroma." And: "How are we detained in this dwelling place?" Further: "How did we come to this place?" And: "In what manner shall we depart?" Again: "How do we have the authority of boldness?" And: "Why do the powers fight against us?"

Then a voice came to them out of the light saying, "It is you yourselves who are witnesses that I spoke all these things to you. But because of your unbelief I shall speak again. First of all concerning the deficiency of the aeons, this is the deficiency, when the disobedience and the foolishness of the mother appeared without the commandment of the majesty of the Father. She wanted to raise up aeons. And when she spoke, the Arrogant One followed. And when she left behind a part, the Arrogant One laid hold of it, and it became a deficiency. This is the deficiency of the aeons. Now when the Arrogant One had taken a part, he sowed it. And he placed powers over it and authorities. And he enclosed it in the aeons which are dead. And all the powers of the world rejoiced that they had been begotten. But they do not know the pre-existent Father, since they are strangers to him. But this is the one to whom they gave power and whom they served by praising him. But he, the Arrogant One, became proud on account of the praise of the powers. He became an envier and he wanted to make an image in the place of an image, and a form in the place of a

form. And he commissioned the powers within his authority to mold mortal bodies. And they came to be from a misrepresentation, from the semblance which had merged."

"Next concerning the pleroma: I am the one who was sent down in the body because of the seed which had fallen away. And I came down into their mortal mold. But they did not recognize me; they were thinking of me that I was a mortal man. And I spoke with him who belongs to me, and he harkened to me just as you too who harkened today. And I gave him authority in order that he might enter into the inheritance of his fatherhood. And I took [...] they were filled [...] in his salvation. And since he was a deficiency, for this reason he became a pleroma."

"It is because of this that you are being detained, because you belong to me. When you strip off from yourselves what is corrupted, then you will become illuminators in the midst of mortal men."

"And this (is the reason) that you will fight against the powers, because they do not have rest like you, since they do not wish that you be saved."

Then the apostles worshiped again saying, "Lord, tell us: In what way shall we fight against the archons, since the archons are above us?"

Then a voice called out to them from the appearance saying, "Now you will fight against them in this way, for the archons are fighting against the inner man. And you are to fight against them in this way: Come together and teach in the world the salvation with a promise. And you, gird yourselves with the power of my Father, and let your prayer be known. And he, the Father, will help you as he has helped you by sending me. Be not afraid, I am with you forever, as I previously said to you when I was in the body." Then there came lightning and thunder from heaven, and what appeared to them in that place was taken up to heaven.

Then the apostles gave thanks to the Lord with every blessing. And they returned to Jerusalem. And while coming up they spoke with each other on the road concerning the light which had come. And a remark was made concerning the Lord. It was said, "If he, our Lord, suffered, then how much (must) we (suffer)?"

Peter answered saying, "He suffered on our behalf, and it is necessary for us too to suffer because of our smallness." Then a voice came to them saying, "I have told you many times: it is necessary for you to suffer. It is necessary that they bring you to synagogues and governors, so that you will suffer. But he who does not suffer and does not [...] the Father [...] in order that he may [...]."

And the apostles rejoiced greatly and came up to Jerusalem. And they came up to the temple and gave instruction in salvation in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. And they healed a multitude.

And Peter opened his mouth, he said to his (fellow) disciples, "Did our Lord Jesus, when he was in the body, show us everything? For he came down. My brothers, listen to my voice." And he was filled with a holy spirit. He spoke thus: "Our illuminator, Jesus, came down and was crucified. And he bore a crown of thorns. And he put on a purple garment. And he was crucified on a tree and he was buried in a tomb. And he rose from the dead. My brothers, Jesus is a stranger to this suffering. But we are the ones who have suffered through the transgression of the mother. And because of this, he did everything like us. For the Lord Jesus, the Son of the immeasurable glory of the Father, he is the author of our life. My brothers, let us therefore not obey these lawless ones, and walk in [...]."

[...] Then Peter gathered together the others also, saying, "O, Lord Jesus Christ, author of our rest, give us a spirit of understanding in order that we also may perform wonders."

Then Peter and the other apostles saw him, and they were filled with a holy spirit, And each one performed healings. And they parted in order to preach the Lord Jesus. And they came together and greeted each other saying, "Amen."

Then Jesus appeared saying to them, "Peace to you all and everyone who believes in my name. And when you depart, joy be to you and grace and power. And be not afraid; behold, I am with you forever."

Then the apostles parted from each other into four words in order to preach. And they went by a power of Jesus, in peace.

The Book of Noah

Chapter 1

Fragment from 1 Enoch 35

[1] And it will come to pass in these days that the chosen and holy children will come down from the high Heavens and their offspring will become one with the sons of men.

[2] In those days Enoch received books of indignation and anger and books of tumult and confusion.

Chapter 2

Fragment from 1 Enoch 7

[1] And they took wives for themselves and everyone chose for himself one each. And they began to go into them and were promiscuous with them. And they taught them charms and spells, and they showed them the cutting of roots and trees.

[2] And they became pregnant and bore large giants. And their height was three thousand cubits.

[3] These devoured all the toil of men; until men were unable to sustain them.

[4] And the giants turned against them in order to devour men.

[5] And they began to sin against birds, and against animals, and against reptiles, and against fish, and they devoured one another's flesh, and drank the blood from it.

[6] Then the Earth complained about the lawless ones.

Chapter 3

Fragment from 1 Enoch 8

[1] And Azazel taught men to make swords, and daggers, and shields, and breastplates. And he showed them the things after these, and the art of making them; bracelets, and ornaments, and the

art of making up the eyes, and of beautifying the eyelids, and the most precious stones, and all kinds of coloured dyes. And the world was changed.

[2] And there was great impiety, and much fornication, and they went astray, and all their ways became corrupt.

[3] Amezarak taught all those who cast spells and cut roots, Armaros the release of spells, and Baraqiel astrologers, and Kokabiel portents, and Tamiel taught astrology, and Asradel taught the path of the Moon.

[4] And at the destruction of men they cried out; and their voices reached Heaven.

Chapter 4

Fragment from 1 Enoch 6

[1] And then Michael, Gabriel, Suriel and Uriel, looked down from Heaven and saw the mass of blood that was being shed on the earth and all the iniquity that was being done on the earth.

[2] And they said to one another: "Let the devastated Earth cry out with the sound of their cries, up to the Gate of Heaven.

[3] And now to you, Oh Holy Ones of Heaven, the souls of men complain, saying: "Bring our complaint before the Most High."

[4] And they said to their Lord, the King: "Lord of Lords, God of Gods, King of Kings! Your glorious throne endures for all the generations of the world, and blessed and praised!

[5] You have made everything, and power over everything is yours. And everything is uncovered, and open, in front of you, and you see everything, and there is nothing that can be hidden from you.

[6] See then what Azazel has done; how he has taught all iniquity on the earth and revealed the eternal secrets that are made in Heaven.

[7] And Semyaza has made known spells, he to whom you gave authority to rule over those who are with him.

[8] And they went into the daughters of men together, lay with those women, became unclean, and revealed to them these sins.

[9] And the women bore giants, and thereby the whole Earth has been filled with blood and iniquity.

[10] And now behold the souls which have died cry out and complain unto the Gate of Heaven, and their lament has ascended, and they cannot go out in the face of the iniquity which is being committed on the earth.

[11] And you know everything, before it happens, and you know this, and what concerns each of them. But you say nothing to us. What ought we to do with them, about this?"

Chapter 5

Fragment from 1 Enoch 10

[1] And then the Most High, the Great and Holy One, spoke and sent Arsyalalyur to the son of Lamech, and said to him:

[2] "Say to him in my name; hide yourself! And reveal to him the end, which is coming, because the whole earth will be destroyed. A deluge is about to come on all the earth; and all that is in it will be destroyed.

[3] And now teach him so that he may escape and his offspring may survive for the whole Earth."

[4] And further the Lord said to Raphael: "Bind Azazel by his hands and his feet and throw him into the darkness. And split open the desert, which is in Dudael, and throw him there.

b[5] And throw on him jagged and sharp stones and cover him with darkness. And let him stay there forever. And cover his face so that he may not see the light.

[6] And so that, on the Great Day of Judgment, he may be hurled into the fire.

[7] And restore the Earth which the Angels have ruined. And announce the restoration of the Earth. For I shall restore the Earth so that not all the sons of men shall be destroyed because of the knowledge which the Watchers made known and taught to their sons.

[8] And the whole Earth has been ruined by the teaching of the works of Azazel; and against him write: ALL SIN."

[9] And the Lord said to Gabriel: "Proceed against the bastards, and the reprobates, and against the sons of the fornicators. And destroy the sons of the fornicators, and the sons of the Watchers, from amongst men. And send them out, and send them against one another, and let them destroy themselves in battle; for they will not have length of days.

[10] And they will petition you, but the petitioners will gain nothing in respect of them, for they hope for eternal life, and that each of them will live life for five hundred years."

[11] And the Lord said to Michael: "Go, inform Semyaza, and the others with him, who have associated with the women to corrupt themselves with them in all their uncleanness.

[12] When all their sons kill each other, and when they see the destruction of their loved ones, bind them for seventy generations, under the hills of the earth, until the day of their judgment and of their consummation, until the judgment, which is for all eternity, is accomplished.

[13] And in those days, they will lead them to the Abyss of Fire; in torment, and in prison they will be shut up for all eternity.

[14] And then Semyaza will be burnt, and from then on destroyed with them; together they will be bound until the end of all generations.

[15] And destroy all the souls of lust, and the sons of the Watchers, for they have wronged men.

[16] Destroy all wrong from the face of the Earth and every evil work will cease.

[17] And now all the righteous will be humble, and will live until they beget thousands. And all the days of their youth, and their sabbaths, they will fulfill in peace.

[18] And in those days the whole earth will be tilled in righteousness and all of it will be planted with trees; and it will be filled with blessing.

[19] And all the pleasant trees they will plant on it and they will plant on it vines. And the vine that is planted on it will produce fruit in abundance; and every seed that is sown on it, each measure will produce a thousand, and each measure of olives will produce ten baths of oil.

[20] And you cleanse the Earth from all wrong, and from all iniquity, and from all sin, and from all impiety, and from all the uncleanness which is brought about on the earth.

[21] And all the sons of men shall be righteous, and all the nations shall serve and bless me and all shall worship me.

[22] And the Earth will be cleansed from all corruption, and from all sin, and from all wrath, and from all torment; and I will not again send a flood upon it, for all generations, forever.

Chapter 6

Fragment from 1 Enoch 11

[1] And in those days, I will open the Storehouses of Blessing, which are in Heaven, so that I may send them down upon the Earth, upon the work, and upon the toil, of the sons of men.

[2] Peace and truth will be united, for all the days of eternity, and for all the generations of eternity.

Chapter 7

Fragment from 1 Enoch 60:7

[7] And on that day two monsters will be separated from one another, a female monster whose name is Leviathan, to dwell in the depths of the sea, above the springs of the waters.

[8] And the name of the male is Behemoth who occupies with his breast an immense desert named Dendayn on the east of the Garden where the chosen and the righteous dwell. Where my great-grandfather was received, who was seventh from Adam, the first man whom the Lord of Spirits made.

[9] And I asked that other Angel to show me the power of those monsters, how they were separated on one day, and thrown, one into the depths of the sea and the other on to the dry ground of the desert.

[10] And he said to me: "Son of man, you here wish to know what is secret."

[11] And the other Angel spoke to me, the one who went with me and showed me what is secret; what is first and last in Heaven, in the heights, and under the dry ground, in the depths, and at the Ends of Heaven, and at the Foundations of Heaven, and in the Storehouses of the Winds.

[12] And how the spirits are distributed, and how they are weighed. And how the springs, and the winds, are counted according to the power of their spirit. And the power of the light of the Moon. And the divisions of the stars according to their names. And how all the divisions are made.

[13] And the thunder - according to the places where it falls. And all the divisions that are made in lightning - so that it may flash. And its hosts - how they quickly obey.

[14] For the thunder has fixed intervals, which have been given to its sound, for waiting. And the thunder and the lightning are not separate although not the same. Through a spirit the two of them move inseparably.

[15] For when the lightning flashes the thunder utters its voice, and the spirit, at the proper time, causes it to rest, and divides equally between them because the storehouse of the times for their occurrence is like that of the sand. And each of them, at the proper time, is held by a rein, and turned back by the power of the spirit, and likewise driven forward, according to the number of the regions of the Earth.

[16] And the spirit of the sea is male and strong, and according to the power of its strength, the spirit turns it back with a rein, and likewise it is driven forward, and scattered amongst all the mountains of the Earth.

[17] And the spirit of the hoarfrost is its own Angel; and the spirit of the hail, is a good Angel.

[18] And the spirit of the snow has withdrawn because of its power, and it has a special spirit, and that which rises from it is like smoke and its name is frost.

[19] And the spirit of the mist is not associated with them in their storehouse but has a special storehouse; for its course is glorious both in light and darkness, and in winter and in summer, and its storehouse is an Angel.

[20] The spirit of the dew has its dwelling at the ends of Heaven and is connected with the storehouses of the rain. And its course is in winter and in summer and its clouds. And the clouds of the mist are associated and one gives to the other.

[21] And when the spirit of the rain moves from its storehouse the Angels come and open the storehouse and bring it out. And when it is scattered over all the dry ground it joins with all the water that is on the dry ground. And whenever it joins with the water that is on the dry ground.(.)

[22] For the waters are for those who dwell upon the dry ground, for they are nourishment for the dry ground, from the Most High who is in Heaven. Therefore there is a fixed measure for the rain and the Angels comprehend it.

[23] All these things, I saw towards the Garden of Righteousness.

[24] And the Angel of Peace who was with me, said to me: "These two monsters, prepared in accordance with the greatness of the Lord, will feed them that Punishment of the Lord. And children will be killed with their mothers and sons with their fathers.

THE BIRTH OF NOAH

Compiled from:

- 1 Enoch 10c-107
- 1QapGn Columns 1-5

- 6Q8 1
- 1Q19 3-11

Chapter 12

Fragment from 1 Enoch 106:1-3

[1] (v.1) And after those days my son Methuselah chose a wife for his son Lamech and she became pregnant by him and bore a son.

[2] (v.2) And his body was white like snow, and red like the flower of a rose, and the hair of his head was white like wool. And his eyes were beautiful and when he opened his eyes he made the whole house bright, like the Sun, so that the whole house was exceptionally bright.

[3] (v.3) And when he was taken from the hand of the midwife he opened his mouth and spoke to the Lord of Righteousness.

Fragment from 1QapGen Col. 2

[4] (Line 1) Then suddenly it occurred to [Lamech] that the conception was from Watchers, and the seed from Holy Ones, and of Nephilin.

[5] (Line 2) And [his] mind wavered concerning this infant.

[6] (Lines 3-7) I, Lamech, was upset, so I approached Batenosh my wife and said to her: "I bear witness by the Most High, by the Mighty Lord, by the King of all Ages, [that this is one of] the sons of Heaven, [and] that you must truthfully recount everything for me, without lies. The son (born) from you is unique."

[7] (Lines 8-10) Then Batenosh my wife spoke with me very harshly, and wept and she said: "O my brother and my husband, you yourself should remember my pleasure... in the heat of the moment, and my panting breath! Now I [am telling] you everything truthfully [and] entirely." [11] Then my mind wavered greatly within me.

[8] (Line 12) And when Batenosh my wife saw that my demeanor had changed because of [my] anger

[9] (Line 13) Then she controlled her emotions and continued speaking with me.

[10] (Lines 14-18) She was saying to me, "O my husband and my brother, my pleasure. I swear to you by the Great Holy One, by the King of Heaven that this seed is from you, and from you this conception, and from you the planting of [this] fruit and not from any stranger, nor from any of the Watchers, nor from any of the sons of Heaven. Why is the appearance of your face changed and contorted like this, and your spirit upon you like this? I am speaking truthfully with you."

(1QapGen Column 5: Line 29) *A copy of the book of the words of Noah*

Fragment from 1 Enoch 106: 4-1G

[11] (v.4) And his father Lamech was afraid of him, and fled, and went to his father Methuselah.

[12] (v.5) And he said to him: "I have begotten a strange son; he is not like a man but is like the children of the Angels of Heaven, of a different type and not like us. And his eyes are like the rays of the Sun and his face glorious.

[13] (v.6) And it seems to me that he is not sprung from me but from the Angels and I am afraid that something extraordinary may be done on the earth in his days.

[14] (v.7) And now, my father, I am entreating you and petitioning you, to go to our father Enoch, and learn from him the truth, for his dwelling is with the Angels."

[15] (v.8) And when Methuselah heard the words of his son he came to me, at the ends of the Earth, [the land of Parvain (1QapGen 2:23)] for he had heard that I was there. And he cried out, and I heard his voice and went to him. And I said to him: "Behold I am here my son, for you have come to me."

[16] (v.9) And he answered me, and said: "Because of a great matter I have come to you, and because of a disturbing vision, have I come near.

[17] (v.10) And now hear me, my father, for a child has been born to my son Lamech, whose form and type are not like the type of a man. His colour is whiter than snow, and redder than the flower of the rose, and the hair of his head is whiter than white wool. And his eyes are like the rays of the Sun; and he opened his eyes and made the whole house bright.

[18] (v.11) And he was taken from the hand of the midwife, and he opened his mouth, and blessed the Lord of Heaven.

[19] (v.12) And his father Lamech was afraid and fled to me. And he does not believe he is sprung from him but thinks him to be from the Angels of Heaven. And behold, I have come to you, so that you may make known to me the truth."

[20] (v.13) And I, Enoch, answered and said to him: "The Lord will do new things on Earth, and this I have already seen in a vision, and made known to you. For in the generation of my father, Jared, some from the height of Heaven transgressed the word of the Lord.

[21] (v.14) And behold, they commit sin and transgress the law, and have been promiscuous with women, and commit sin with them, and have married some of them, and have begotten children by them.

[22] (v.15) And there will be great destruction over the whole Earth, and there will be a deluge, and there will be great destruction for one year.

[23] (v.16) But this child, who has been born to you, will be left on the Earth, and his three sons will be saved with him. When all the men who are on the Earth die he and his sons will be saved.

[24] (v.17) They will beget on the Earth giants, not of spirit, but of flesh, and there will be great wrath on Earth, and the Earth will be cleansed of all corruption.

[25] (v.18) And now make known to your son Lamech that the one who has been born is truly his son. And call his name Noah, for he will be a remnant for you and he and his sons will be saved from the destruction which is coming on the earth because of all the sin and all the iniquity, which will be committed on the Earth in his days.

[26] (v.19) But after this, there will be yet greater iniquity than that which was committed on the earth before. For I know the mysteries of the Holy Ones, for the Lord showed them to me and made them known to me, and I read them in the Tablets of Heaven.

Fragment from 1 Enoch 107

[27] (v.1) And I saw written on them, that generation upon generation will do wrong, until a generation of righteousness shall arise, and wrongdoing shall be destroyed, and sin shall depart from the earth, and everything good shall come upon it.

[28] (v.2) And now, my son, go, make known to your son Lamech, that this child that has been born, is truly his son, and this is no lie.

[29] (v.3) And when Methuselah had heard the words of his father Enoch - for he showed him everything which is secret - he returned, having seen him, and called the name of that child Noah; for he will comfort the Earth after all the destruction.

Chapter 13

Fragment from 1 QapGn Column 6

(Line 1) Through the uterus of she who bore me I burst forth for uprightness, and when I emerged from my mother's womb I was planted for righteousness.

(Lines 2-3) All of my days I conducted myself uprightly, continually walking in the paths of everlasting truth. For [the] Holy One had instructed me to walk in the ways of the paths of truth and to keep myself away from the highway of deceit, which lead to everlasting darkness.

(Lines 4-5) So I girded my loins in the vision of truth and wisdom, in the robe of supplication.

(Line 6) Then I, Noah, became a grown man. I held fast to righteousness and strengthened myself in wisdom.

(Lines 7-9) []... I went and took [Emzera](#) his daughter as my wife. She conceived by way of me and gave birth to three sons, [and daughters.] Then I took wives for my sons from among the daughters of my brothers, and gave my daughters to the sons of my brothers according to the custom of the eternal statute, which the Lord of Eternity gave to humanity.

(Lines 10-11) In my days, when there were completed for me, according to the calculation by which I reckoned, ten jubilees. Then the time of my sons taking women for themselves in marriage came to a close, and the Lord of Heaven [appeared to me] in a vision. I looked and was shown and informed about the conduct of sons of Heaven,

(Line 12) I hid this mystery within my heart, and did not make it known to anyone.

(Lines 13-14) And the great Watcher on an errand to me, and by an emissary of the great Holy One to me, he revealed, and he spoke with me in a vision. He stood before me and loudly proclaimed, "To you, O Noah ...[]"

(Line 15) And from an emissary of the great Holy One to me I was hearing a voice, "They are speaking to you, O Noah, ...[]"

(Lines 16-17) So I considered all the behavior of the sons of the earth. I understood and saw all of [] they would succeed, and they chose among them ...[]

(Line 18-19) []... two weeks. Then was sealed up... bearing witness to the blood that the Nephilin had poured out. I was silent, and waited until ...[]

(Line 20-22) []... holy ones, who with the daughters of men [were] making (it) unclean by the divinatory arts. And I approached [one] of them and he said, "To you...[] and examining ...[]"

(Line 23) But I, Noah, found grace, prominence, and righteousness in the eyes of the Lord.

(Line 24) []... the eternal people, and the blood of jealousy the Most High, who ...[]

(Line 25) []... unto the gates of heaven, which the King of all Ages ...[]

(Line 26) []... to humans and cattle and wild animals and birds and ...[]

(Line 27) []... the entire deed, and every ...[]

End Column c

THE COMMANDMENTS THROUGH NOAH

Compiled from:

- Jubilees 7:20; 20:7; 21:5-10; 7:21-39*
- 1 QapGn Col. 6
- 1 Enoch 10:1-3

'Chapter 14

Fragment from Jubilees 7:20

[1] (7:20) And in the twenty-eighth jubilee [1324-1372 A.M.] Noah began to enjoin upon his sons' sons the ordinances and commandments, and all the judgments that he knew, and he exhorted his sons to observe righteousness, and to cover the shame of their flesh, and to bless their Creator, and honour father and mother, and love their neighbour, and guard their souls from fornication and uncleanness and all iniquity.

Fragment from Jubilees 20:7

[2] (20:7) I implore you, my sons, love the God of heaven And cleave ye to all His commandments.

Fragment from Jubilees 21:5-10

[3] (5) And walk not after the abominations and after the graven images and after the molten images.

[4] (6) And eat no blood at all of animals or cattle, or of any bird which flies in the heaven.

[5] (7) And if thou dost slay a victim as an acceptable peace offering, slay ye it, and pour out its blood upon the altar, and all the fat of the offering offer on the altar with fine flour and the meat

offering mingled with oil, with its drink offering -offer them all together on the altar of burnt offering; it is a sweet savour before the Lord.

[6] (8) And thou wilt offer the fat of the sacrifice of thank offerings on the fire which is upon the altar, and the fat which is on the belly, and all the fat on the inwards and the two kidneys, and all the fat that is upon them, and upon the loins and liver thou shalt remove, together with the kidneys.

[7] (9) And offer all these for a sweet savour acceptable before the Lord, with its meat-offering and with its drink-offering, for a sweet savour, the bread of the offering unto the Lord.

[8] (10.a) And eat its meat on that day and on the second day, and let not the sun on the second day go down upon it till it is eaten, and let nothing be left over for the third day; for it is not acceptable [for it is not approved] and let it no longer be eaten, and all who eat thereof will bring sin upon themselves;

(10.b) *for thus I have found it written in the books of my forefathers, and in the words of Enoch, and in the words of Noah.*

Fragment from Jubilees 7:21-3G

[9] (21) For owing to these [three] things came the flood upon the earth, namely, owing to the fornication wherein the Watchers against the law of their ordinances went a whoring after the daughters of men, and took themselves wives of all which they chose:

[10] (22) and they made the beginning of uncleanness. And they begat sons the Naphidim, and they were all unlike, and they devoured one another:

[11] (23) and the Giants slew the Naphil, and the Naphil slew the Eljo, and the Eljo mankind, and one man another.

[12] (24) And every one sold himself to work iniquity and to shed much blood, and the earth was filled with iniquity. And after this they sinned against the beasts and birds, and all that moves and walks on the earth: and much blood was shed on the earth, and every imagination and desire of men imagined vanity and evil continually.

[13] (25) And the Lord destroyed everything from off the face of the earth; because of the wickedness of their deeds, and because of the blood which they had shed in the midst of the earth He destroyed everything.

[14] (26) 'And we were left, I and you, my sons, and everything that entered with us into the ark, and behold I see your works before me that ye do not walk in righteousness: for in the path of destruction ye have begun to walk, and ye are parting one from another, and are envious one of another, and (so it comes) that ye are not in harmony, my sons, each with his brother.

[15] (27) For I see, and behold the demons have begun (their) seductions against you and against your children and now I fear on your behalf, that after my death ye will shed the blood of men upon the earth, and that ye, too, will be destroyed from the face of the earth.

[16] (28) For who so sheddeth man's blood, and whoso eateth the blood of any flesh, shall all be destroyed from the earth.

[17] (29) And there shall not be left any man that eateth blood, or that sheddeth the blood of man on the earth, Nor shall there be left to him any seed or descendants living under heaven; For into Sheol shall they go, And into the place of condemnation shall they descend, And into the darkness of the deep shall they all be removed by a violent death.

[18] (30) There shall be no blood seen upon you of all the blood there shall be all the days in which ye have killed any beasts or cattle or whatever flies upon the earth, and work ye a good work to your souls by covering that which has been shed on the face of the earth.

[19] (31) And ye shall not be like him who eats with blood, but guard yourselves that none may eat blood before you: cover the blood, for thus have I been commanded to testify to you and your children, together with all flesh.

[20] (32) And suffer not the soul to be eaten with the flesh, that your blood, which is your life, may not be required at the hand of any flesh that sheds (it) on the earth.

[21] (33) For the earth will not be clean from the blood which has been shed upon it; for (only) through the blood of him that shed it will the earth be purified throughout all its generations.

[22] (34) And now, my children, harken: work judgment and righteousness that ye maybe planted in righteousness over the face of the whole earth, and your glory lifted up before my God, who saved me from the waters of the flood.

[23] (35) And behold, ye will go and build for yourselves cities, and plant in them all the plants that are upon the earth, and moreover all fruit-bearing trees.

[24] (36) For three years the fruit of everything that is eaten will not be gathered: and in the fourth year its fruit will be accounted holy [and they will offer the first-fruits], acceptable before the Most High God, who created heaven and earth and all things. Let them offer in abundance the first of the wine and oil (as) first-fruits on the altar of the Lord, who receives it, and what is left let the servants of the house of the Lord eat before the altar which receives (it).

[25] (37) And in the fifth year make ye the release so that ye release it in righteousness and uprightness, and ye shall be righteous, and all that you plant shall prosper.

[26] (38) For thus did Enoch, the father of your father command Methuselah, his son, and Methuselah his son Lamech, and Lamech commanded me all the things which his fathers commanded him.

[27] (39) And I also will give you commandment, my sons, as Enoch commanded his son in the first jubilees: whilst still living, the seventh in his generation, he commanded and testified to his son and to his son's sons until the day of his death.'

Chapter 54

Fragment from 1 Enoch 54

[7] And in those days, the punishment of the Lord of Spirits will go out, and all the storehouses of the waters which are above the sky and under the earth, will be opened.

[8] And all the waters will be joined with the waters that are above the sky. The water that is above the sky is male and the water that is under the Earth is female.

[9] And all those who dwell upon the dry ground, and those who dwell under the ends of Heaven, will be wiped out.

[10] And because of this they will acknowledge their iniquity which they have committed on the Earth and through this they will be destroyed."

Chapter 55

Fragment from 1 Enoch 55

[1] And after this, the Head of Days repented, and said: "I have destroyed to no purpose all those who dwell upon the dry ground."

[2] And he swore by His Great Name: "From now on I will not act like this towards all those who dwell upon the dry ground. And I will put a sign in Heaven, and it will be a pledge of faith between me and them forever, so long as Heaven is above the Earth.

Chapter 65

Fragment of 1 Enoch c5

[1] And in those days, Noah saw the Earth had tilted and that its destruction was near.

[2] And he set off from there and went to the ends of the Earth and cried out to his great-grandfather Enoch; and Noah said three times in a bitter voice: "Hear me, hear me, hear me!"

[3] And he said to him: "Tell me, what is it that is being done on the Earth, that the Earth is so afflicted and shaken, lest I be destroyed with it!"

[4] And immediately there was a great disturbance on the Earth and a voice was heard from Heaven and I fell upon my face.

[5] And my great-grandfather Enoch came, stood by me, and said to me: "Why did you cry out to me, with such bitter crying and weeping?

[6] And a command has gone out from the Lord against those who dwell upon the dry ground that this must be their end. For they have learnt all the secrets of the Angels, and all the wrongdoings of the satans, and all their secret power, and all the power of those who practice magic arts, and the power of enchantments, and the power of those who cast molten images for all the Earth.

[7] And further, how silver is produced from the dust of the earth and how soft metal occurs on the earth.

[8] For lead and tin are not produced from the earth, like the former; there is a spring which produces them, and an Angel who stands in it, and that Angel distributes them."

[9] And after this, my great-grandfather Enoch took hold of me with his hand, and raised me, and said to me: "Go, for I have asked the Lord of Spirits about this disturbance on the earth."

[10] And he said to me: "Because of their iniquity, their judgment has been completed, and they will no longer be counted before me; because of the sorceries they have searched out and learnt, the Earth and those who dwell upon it will be destroyed.

[11] And for these, there will be no place of refuge, for ever, for they showed to them what is secret, and they have been condemned; but not so for you, my son; the Lord of Spirits knows that you are pure and innocent of this reproach concerning the secrets.

[12] And he has established your name among the Holy, and will keep you from amongst those who dwell upon the dry ground; and he has destined your offspring in righteousness, to be kings, and for great honours. And from your offspring will flow out a spring of the Righteous and Holy, without number forever."

Chapter 66

Fragment of 1 Enoch cc

[1] And after this, he showed me the Angels of Punishment, who were ready to come and release all the forces of the water, which is under the earth, in order to bring judgment and destruction on all those who reside and dwell upon the dry ground.

[2] And the Lord of Spirits commanded the Angels who were coming out, not to raise their hands, but to keep watch; for those Angels were in charge of the forces of the waters.

[3] And I came out from before Enoch.

Chapter 67

Fragment of 1 Enoch c7

[1] And in those days, the word of the Lord came to me, and he said to me: "Noah, behold; your lot has come up before me, a lot without reproach, a lot of love and uprightness.

[2] And now the Angels are making a wooden structure, and when the Angels come out from that task, I will put my hand on it, and keep it safe. And a change shall take place so that the dry ground may not remain empty.

[3] And I will establish your offspring before me, forever and ever, and I will scatter those who dwell with you, over the face of the dry ground. I will not again put them to the test, on the face of the Earth, but they will be blessed and increase on the dry ground in the name of the Lord."

[4] And they will shut up those Angels, who showed iniquity, in that burning valley, which my great-grandfather Enoch had shown to me previously, in the west, near the mountains of gold and silver and iron and soft metal and tin.

[5] And I saw that valley, in which there was a great disturbance, and a heaving of the waters.

[6] And when all this happened, from the fiery molten metal, and the disturbance, which disturbed the waters in that place, a smell of sulphur was produced, and it was associated with those waters. And that valley of the Angels, who led men astray, burns under the ground.

[7] And through the valleys of that same area, flow out rivers of fire where those Angels will be punished, who led astray those on the dry ground.

[8] And in those days, those waters will serve the kings, and the mighty, and the exalted, and those who dwell upon dry ground, for the healing of soul and body, but also for the punishment of the spirit. And their spirits are so full of lust that they will be punished in their bodies, for they denied the Lord of Spirits. And they see their punishment every day yet they do not believe in His Name.

[9] And the more their bodies are burnt, the more a change will come over their spirits, for ever and ever; for no one can speak an idle word in front of the Lord of Spirits.

[10] For judgment will come upon them, for they believe in the lust of their bodies, but deny the spirit of the Lord.

[11] And those same waters will undergo a change in those days; for when those Angels are punished in those days, the temperature of those springs of water will change, and when the Angels come up, that water of the springs will change, and become cold.

[12] And I heard the Holy Michael answering and saying: "This judgment, with which the Angels are judged, is a testimony for the kings and the mighty who possess the dry ground.

[13] For these waters of judgment serve for the healing of the bodies of the kings, and for the lust of their bodies; but they do not see, and do not believe, that these waters will change, and will become a fire which burns forever."

Chapter 68

Fragment of 1 Enoch c8

[1] And after this, my great-grandfather Enoch gave me the explanation of all the secrets, in a book, and the parables that had been given to him; and he put them together for me, in the words of the Book of Parables.

[2] And on that day the Holy Michael answered Raphael, saying: "The power of the spirit seizes me and makes me tremble because of the harshness of the judgment of the Angels. Who can endure the harshness of the judgment which has been executed and before which they melt with fear?"

[3] And the Holy Michael answered Raphael again, and said to him: "Who would not soften his heart over it, and whose mind would not be disturbed by this word? Judgment has gone out against them, upon those whom they have led out like this."

[4] But it came to pass, when he stood before the Lord of Spirits, that the Holy Michael spoke as follows to Raphael: "I will not take their part under the eye of the Lord, for the Lord of Spirits is angry with them, because they act as if they were the Lord.

[5] Because of this the hidden judgment will come upon them for ever and ever; for neither any other Angel, nor any man, will receive their lot, but they alone have received their judgment for ever and ever.

Chapter 69

Fragment of 1 Enoch cS

[1] And after this judgment I will terrify them, and make them tremble, for they have shown this to those who dwell upon the dry ground."

[2] And behold, the names of those Angels: - The first of them is Semyaza (Azza), and the second Artaqifa, and the third Armen, and the fourth Kokabiel, and the fifth Turiel, and the sixth Ramiel, and the seventh Daniel, and the eighth Nuqael, and the ninth Baraqiel, and the tenth Azazel, and the eleventh Armaros, the twelfth Batriel, the thirteenth Basasael, the fourteenth Ananel, the fifteenth Turiel, the sixteenth Samsiel, the seventeenth Yetarel, the eighteenth Tumiel, the nineteenth Turiel, the twentieth Rumiel, the twenty-first Azazel.

[3] And these are the chiefs of their Angels, and the names of the leaders of hundreds, and their leaders of fifties, and their leaders of tens.

[4] The name of the first is Yequn; this is the one who led astray all the children of the Holy Angels, and he brought them down onto the dry ground, and led them astray through the daughters of men.

[5] And the name of the second is Asbeel; this one suggested an evil plan to the children of the Holy Angels, and led them astray, so that they corrupted their bodies with the daughters of men.

[6] And the name of the third is Gadreel; this is the one that showed all the deadly blows to the sons of men. And he led astray Eve. And he showed the weapons of death to the children of men, the shield and the breastplate, and the sword for slaughter, and all the weapons of death to the sons of men.

[7] And from his hand they have gone out against those who dwell the dry ground from that time and forever and ever.

[8] And the name of the fourth is Penemue; this one showed the sons of men the bitter and the sweet and showed them all the secrets of their wisdom.

[9] He taught men the art of writing with ink and paper, and through this many have gone astray, from eternity to eternity, and to this day.

[10] For men were not created for this, that they should confirm their faith like this, with pen and ink.

[11] For men were created no differently from the Angels, so that they might remain righteous and pure, and death, which destroys everything, would not have touched them; but through this knowledge of theirs they are being destroyed and through this power death consumes them.

[12] And the name of the fifth is Kasdeyae; this one showed the sons of men all the evil blows of the spirits and of the demons, and the blows that attack the embryo in the womb so that it miscarries. And the blows that attack the soul: the bite of the serpent. And the blows that occur at midday, and the son of the serpent - who is strong.

[13] And this is the task of Kesbeel, the chief of the oath, who showed the oath to the Holy ones when he dwelt on high in glory. And his name is Beqa.

[14] And this one told the Holy Michael that he should show him the secret name so that they might mention it in the oath, so that those, who showed the sons of men everything that is secret, trembled before that name and oath.

[15] And this is the power of this oath, for it is powerful and strong, and he placed this oath, Akae, in the charge of the Holy Michael.

[16] And these are the secrets of this oath, and they are strong through this oath, and Heaven was suspended, before the world was created, and forever.

[17] And through it the earth was founded upon the water, and from the hidden recesses of the mountains come beautiful waters, from the creation of the world and for ever.

[18] And through that oath the sea was created, and as its foundation, for the time of anger, he placed for it the sand, and it does not go beyond it, from the creation of the world and for ever.

[19] And through that oath the deeps were made firm, and they stand and do not move from their place, from the creation of the world and for ever.

[20] And through that oath the Sun and the Moon complete their course and do not transgress their command, from the creation of the world and for ever.

[21] And through that oath the stars complete their course, and he calls their names, and they answer him, from the creation of the world and for ever.

[22] And likewise the spirits of the water, of the winds, and of all the breezes, and their paths, according to all the groups of the spirits.

[23] And there are kept the storehouses of the sound of thunder, and of the light of the lightning; and there are kept the storehouses of the hail, and the hoarfrost, and the storehouses of the mist, and the storehouses of the rain and dew.

[24] And all these make their confession and give thanks in front of the Lord of Spirits and sing praises with all their power. And their food consists of all their thanksgiving and they give thanks, praise, and exalt, in the name of the Lord of Spirits, forever and ever.

[25] And this oath is strong over them and through it they are kept safe and their courses are not disturbed.

NARRATIVE OF THE DELUGE

Jubilees 5:24-28

1 QapGn Columns 7-9

THE ATONEMENT BY NOAH

1 QapGn Columns 10-15

Jubilees 6:2-4

Jubilees 6:10-14

Jubilees 7:23-37

Testament of Levi Mount Athos

Chapter 10

Fragment from Jubilees 6:2-4

[1] (v.2) And he [Noah] made atonement for the earth, and took a kid and made atonement by its blood for all the guilt of the earth; for everything that had been on it had been destroyed, save those that were in the ark with Noah.

[2] (v.3) And he placed the fat thereof on the altar, and he took an ox, and a goat, and a sheep and kids, and salt, and a turtle-dove, and the young of a dove, and placed a burnt sacrifice on the altar, and poured thereon an offering mingled with oil, and sprinkled wine and strewed frankincense over everything, and caused a goodly savour to arise, acceptable before the Lord.

[3] (v.4) And the Lord smelt the goodly savour, and He made a covenant with him that there should not be any more a flood to destroy the earth; that all the days of the earth seed-time and harvest should never cease; cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night should not change their order, nor cease for ever.

Fragment from 1 QapGn Column 10

[4] (Lines 1-7) Then I blessed the Lord of All, who [] kept safe...[]

[5] (Lines 8-10) Now (you all) go and give praise and glory, for the Creator [] and listen to [] all of you to your Lord, and to the King of all Ages forever and ever, unto all ages.

[6] (Lines 11-14) []... the ark rested on one of the mountains of Ararat, and the eternal fire [] and I atoned for all the earth in its entirety. To begin, the [he-goat] was placed upon [] first, and after it came upon [] and I burned the fat upon the fire. Second, ...[]

[7] (Lines 15-16) Then [] all of their blood to the base of the altar and I poured it out, and all of their flesh I burned upon the altar. Third, I offered the young turtledoves with them upon the altar; their blood and all (of the rest) of them upon it. I placed fine wheat flour, mixed together with oil containing incense, for their meal-offerings.

[8] (Lines 17-35) []... I said a blessing, and was putting salt on all of them, and the scent of my offering rose up to the heavens. [] Then the Most High blessed ...[]

Ends column 10

Chapter 11

Jubilees 6:10-12, 14a

[1] (v.10) And Noah and his sons swore that they would not eat any blood that was in any flesh, and he made a covenant before the Lord God for ever throughout all the generations of the earth in this month.

[2] (v.11) On this account He spake to thee that thou shouldst make a covenant with the children of Israel in this month upon the mountain with an oath, and that thou shouldst sprinkle blood upon them because of all the words of the covenant, which the Lord made with them for ever.

[3] (v.12) And this testimony is written concerning you that you should observe it continually, so that you should not eat on any day any blood of beasts or birds or cattle during all the days of the earth, and the man who eats the blood of beast or of cattle or of birds during all the days of the earth, he and his seed shall be rooted out of the land.

[4] (v.14a) And for this law there is no limit of days, for it is for ever.

Fragment from 1 QapGn Column 11

[5] (Line 1) Now I, Noah, was at the door of the ark the springs receded ...[]

[6] (Lines 2-10) []... And my son [] their sons [] and all of them [] the mountains and the wildernesses, the hinterlands and the coastlands, all [] four.

[7] (Lines 11-14) Then I, Noah, went out and walked throughout the land, through its length and through its breadth, [] ; rejuvenation in their leaves and in their fruit. The entire land was full of grass, herbs, and grain. Then I blessed the Lord of Heaven, whose praise endures forever, and to whom (be) the glory! Once again I blessed the one who had compassion on the land, and who removed and obliterated from it all those doing violence and wickedness and deceit, but rescued the righteous man [] one, and he obtained all for his sake.

[8] (Line 15) And [] appeared to me from heaven, speaking with me and saying to me, "Do not fear, O Noah! I am with you and with those of your sons who will be like you forever.

[9] (Lines 16-35) []... be fruitful and multiply, and fill the land. Rule over all of all of them; over its seas and over its wildernesses, over its mountains and over everything that is in them. I am now giving everything to you and to your sons for food; that of the vegetation and herbs of the land. But all blood you shall not eat. The awe and fear of you [] forever. He said to [] I am for you [] through years [] your children ...[].

Ends column 11

Chapter 12

Fragment from 1 QapGn Column 12

[1] (Lines 1-6) []... I have now placed my bow [in a cloud], and it has become a sign for me [].

[2] (Lines 7-9) []... my son [] on the mountains of Ararat. After this, I went down to the base of this mountain, my sons and I, and we built cities [] for the devastation on the land was great. Then sons and daughters were born to my sons after the flood.

[3] (Line 10) To my oldest son Shem was born first a son, Arpachshad, two years after the flood. And all the sons of Shem, all together, were Elam and Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud and Aram, as well as five daughters.

[4] (Line 11) And the sons of Ham (were) Cush, Mitzrain, Put, and Canaan, as well as seven daughters.

[5] (Line 12) And the sons of Japheth (were) Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras, as well as four daughters.

[6] (Line 13) Then I, along with all of my sons, began to cultivate the earth. I planted a great vineyard on Mount Lubar, and in four years it produced abundant wine for me, and I brought forth all of the wine.

[7] (Lines 14-16) When the first feast came, on day one of the first feast, which is in the [first] month, [] in my vineyard, and in the midst of my vineyard I opened this vessel, and began to drink from it on the first day of the fifth year after the planting of the vineyard. On that day I called together my sons, my grandsons, and all of our wives and their daughters.

[8] (Line 17) We gathered together and went [] the altar. I was blessing the Lord of Heaven, the Most High God, the great Holy One, who saved us from the destruction ...[]

[9] (Lines 18-35) []..., and for all [] his [], which my fathers hid and [] until [] beautiful [] by my righteousness. And I lay down upon my bed, and the wine [] pure [] I stirred ...[]

Ends column 12

Chapter 13

Fragment from 1 QapGn Column 13

[1] (Lines 1-7) []... and to you [] the king, [] and the decree [] to all ...[]

[2] (Lines 8-10a) []...the wood [] the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, the cattle of the land, and the creeping things of the dry ground going [] the stones, and the clay objects (they) were chopping, taking of it for themselves. As I continued watching, the gold, the silver, the [], the iron, and all of the trees (they) were chopping, taking of it for themselves.

[3] (Lines 10b-12) As I continued watching, the sun, the moon, and the stars (they) were chopping, taking of it for themselves. I was watching until the swarming things of the earth and the swarming things of the water consumed it. So the water ceased, and it ended.

[4] (Lines 13-15) I turned to see the olive tree, and the olive tree had grown in height! [] This continued for many hours, with a bursting forth of many branches [] good and beautiful fruit appearing in them. I was pondering this olive tree, and the abundance of its leaves [] everything, and tying ropes [] onto it. Now I wondered very greatly about this olive tree and its leaves.

[5] (Lines 16-24) I was (still) wondering when [] the [four] winds of heaven blowing powerfully and violently against this olive tree, knocking off its branches and breaking it to pieces. First, [] a wind swelled up from [] west. It struck it, caused its leaves and fruit to fall from it, and scattered it to the winds. And after this a wind swelled up [] and a northern wind from [] and from its fruit...[]

Ends column 13

Chapter 14

Fragment from 1 QapGen Column 14

[1] (Lines 1-8) []... its fruit. You were contemplating the wood, an upper part being knocked off from [] all of the branches, and all the fruit of the foliage [] we know. Look! ...[].

[2] (Lines 9-10) Now listen and hear! You are the great cedar tree that was standing before you on a mountain top in your dream. And the shoot which emerged from it, grew high, and was rising up to its height [] three sons [] water from [] the earth.

[3] (Line 11) As for the fact that you saw the first shoot adhering to the cedar trunk, note too the one division branching off, and the wood from it...

[4] (Lines 12-13) Now the first son will not separate from you for all of his days, and among his seed your name shall be recalled. From his division all your sons [] and in him [] the first son shall come forth as a righteous planting for all [] the day, and [] standing fast forever.

[5] (Line 14) As for the fact that you saw the shoot adhering to the trunk of the cedar tree ...[].

[6] (Lines 15-16) []... As for the fact that you saw the branch of the last shoot, which [] from it [] the darkness, and a few of their boughs entering into the midst of the boughs of the first one, (concerns) two sons [] branches ...[].

[7] (Lines 17-18) []... one to the south of the Land and one to the north of the Land. As for the fact that you saw a few of their boughs entering into the midst of the boughs of the first one [] of this shoot were settling in his land and all the coastlands [] to the Great Sea, and not [] they settled in the midst of the coastlands ...[].

[8] (Lines 19-34) []... to comprehend the mystery, there will be to you an end... you will search [] and the mystery [] entering into it, and the first one [] for himself their every god [] which [] for himself [] in an allotment in Amania, next to Elam [] the Great Sea [] serve, first, exchanging his allotment for an allotment [] by a miracle (supra) [] and a seed (supra) [] the cedar tree ...[].

Ends column 14

Chapter 15

Fragment from 1 QapGen Column 15

[1] (Lines 1-9) []with evil to all [] until there was [] the Merciful One to. [] from them a profusion of wrongdoing, and settling in your land [] the ends of the earth. As for the fact that you saw all of those crying out and turning away, the majority of them will be evil.

[2] (Lines 10-11) As for the fact that you saw [] the great warrior coming from the south of the Land, the sickle in his hand and the fire with him, he has crushed all [] and the Mighty Lord is the one who will come from the south of the Land ...[].

[3] (Line 12) [] the torches and the evil one. And he threw all the rebellious ones onto the fire[] and the pits [] were covered, [].

[4] (Lines 13-18) As for the fact that you saw (that) they plucked up [] south a chain on them, four mighty angels [] for them a chain, from all the peoples of the earth who will not have power over [] the agitated one because of their conduct, their inadvertent error, their wavering on account of a great blasphemer, and their fruit [] such that he may couple this people to himself. He will cut out a great mountain, and from it he will consecrate and separate between [] all the peoples, and all of them will be serving them and getting entangled ...[]

[5] (Lines 19-20) You, Noah, do not be amazed at this dream, and may there not be added upon it []. I have related everything to you in truth, and thus it is written concerning you [] and I will join some of your people to you ...[].

[6] (Lines 21-35) Then I, Noah, awoke from my sleep. The sun rose, and I, Noah, [went] to bless the Everlasting God. And I went to Shem, my son, and related everything to him [] the righteous one [] "...to make known [] to you [] to take for yourself the Most High God." ...[]

Ends column 15

Fragment from Jubilees 7:25-37

[7] (v.25) "And the Lord destroyed everything from off the face of the earth; because of the wickedness of their (Naphidim) deeds, and because of the blood which they had shed in the midst of the earth He destroyed everything.

[8] (v.26) 'And we were left, I and you, my sons, and everything that entered with us into the ark, and behold I see your works before me that ye do not walk in righteousness: for in the path of destruction ye have begun to walk, and ye are parting one from another, and are envious one of another, and (so it comes) that ye are not in harmony, my sons, each with his brother.

[9] (v.27) For I see, and behold the demons have begun (their) seductions against you and against your children and now I fear on your behalf, that after my death ye will shed the blood of men upon the earth, and that ye, too, will be destroyed from the face of the earth.

[10] (v.28) For whoso sheddeth man's blood, and whoso eateth the blood of any flesh, shall all be destroyed from the earth.

[11](v.29) And there shall not be left any man that eateth blood, or that sheddeth the blood of man on the earth, Nor shall there be left to him any seed or descendants living under heaven; For into Sheol shall they go, And into the place of condemnation shall they descend, And into the darkness of the deep shall they all be removed by a violent death.

[12] (v.30) There shall be no blood seen upon you of all the blood there shall be all the days in which ye have killed any beasts or cattle or whatever flies upon the earth, and work ye a good work to your souls by covering that which has been shed on the face of the earth.

[13] (v.31) And ye shall not be like him who eats with blood, but guard yourselves that none may eat blood before you: cover the blood, for thus have I been commanded to testify to you and your children, together with all flesh.

[14] (v.32) And suffer not the soul to be eaten with the flesh, that your blood, which is your life, may not be required at the hand of any flesh that sheds (it) on the earth.

[15] (v.33) For the earth will not be clean from the blood which has been shed upon it; for (only) through the blood of him that shed it will the earth be purified throughout all its generations.

[16] (v.34) And now, my children, harken: work judgment and righteousness that ye maybe planted in righteousness over the face of the whole earth, and your glory lifted up before my God, who saved me from the waters of the flood.

[17] (v.35) And behold, ye will go and build for yourselves cities, and plant in them all the plants that are upon the earth, and moreover all fruit-bearing trees.

[18] (v.36) For three years the fruit of everything that is eaten will not be gathered: and in the fourth year its fruit will be accounted holy [and they will offer the first-fruits], acceptable before the Most High God, who created heaven and earth and all things. Let them offer in abundance the first of the wine and oil (as) first-fruits on the altar of the Lord, who receives it, and what is left let the servants of the house of the Lord eat before the altar which receives (it).

[19] (v.37) And in the fifth year make ye the release so that ye release it in righteousness and uprightness, and ye shall be righteous, and all that you plant shall prosper.

[20] (v.38) For thus did Enoch, the father of your father command Methuselah, his son, and Methuselah his son Lamech, and Lamech commanded me all the things which his fathers commanded him.

[21] (v.39) And I also will give you commandment, my sons, as Enoch commanded his son in the first jubilees: whilst still living, the seventh in his generation, he commanded and testified to his son and to his son's sons until the day of his death."

THE ALLOTMENTS FOR THE SONS OF NOAH

1 QapGen Columns 16-17^[3]

Jubilees 8:9-9:15^[3]

Jubilees 10:1-15*

Chronography of Syncellus^[3]

Fragment from 1 QapGen Column 16 (Lines 8-10) []... as a spring in [the gulf to the] west [] until it reaches [] the source of the Mahaq up to the Tina River. It then passes as a spring the entire length of the land of the north, all of it, until it reaches to (the) source [] and up to the land ...[]

(Line 11) This boundary line crosses the waters of the Great Sea until it reaches Gadera, and ...[]

(Lines 12-13) And Noah divided (it) by lot for Japheth and his sons to receive as an inheritance forever.

(Line 14) For Shem emerged the second lot, for him and his sons to receive as an inheritance forever,

(Lines 15-25) []... the waters of this Tina River emerge, until [] up to the Tina River, which [] the Maeota Sea, which reaches the gulf of the Great Salt Sea. And this boundary goes as a spring from this gulf, [] up to the gulf of the sea that faces toward Egypt. It then passes [] until it reaches the allotment of [] to the east ...[].

(Lines 26-35) And for Ham there emerged the third share [] to inherit for him and his sons forever [] up to the Gihon River [] reaches to the south ...[].

Ends Column 1c

Fragment from 1 QapGen Column 17 (Lines 6-7) [And] Shem divided his portion between his sons. There fell first to Elam (an area) in the north, along the waters of the Tigris River, until it reaches the Erythrean Sea, to its source which is in the north.

(Line 8) And after him (there fell) to Asshur (the area) toward the west, until it reaches the Tigris ...[].

(Line 9) And after him (there fell) to Aram the land that is between the two rivers until it reaches the peak of Mount Ararat, at this settlement.

(Lines 10-11) And after him to Lud [] fell this Mount Taurus. This portion passes to the west until it reaches Magog; everything along the [] gulf that is by the Eastern Sea, in the north, adjoining this gulf – that which is above the three portions to [the] its south.

(Line 12) For Arpachshad [] until it reaches to [] which turns to the south; the entire land irrigated by the Euphrates,

Lines (13-15) And all [] of the valleys and the plains that are between them, and the coastlands that are within this gulf; [] until it reaches [] to Amana, which abuts Mount Ararat, and (from) Amana until it reaches the Euphrates [] until it reaches [] the portion that Noah, his father, divided for him and gave to him.

(Lines 16-17) [And] Japheth divided between his sons. First, he gave to Gomer (an area) in the north, until it reaches the Tina River. And after him (he gave) to Magog, and after him to Madai, and after him to Yavan; all the islands that are alongside Lud, and between the gulf that is next to Lud and the second gulf.

(Lines 18-21) To Tubal (he gave) that which is across [the] second gulf. To Meshech... []. To [Tiras] (he gave) four islands, and up to the [] next to it, within [the Sea that reaches alongside to the portion of the sons of Ham...

(Lines 22-24) []... the sons of Noah divided their allotments between their sons ...[]

Ends Column 17

Chapter 8

Fragment from Jubilees 8:10-30

(10) And it came to pass in the beginning of the thirty-third jubilee [1569 A.M.] that they divided the earth into three parts, for Shem and Ham and Japheth, according to the inheritance of each, in the first year in the first week, when one of us who had been sent, was with them.

(11) And he called his sons, and they drew nigh to him, they and their children, and he divided the earth into the lots, which his three sons were to take in possession, and they reached forth their hands, and took the writing out of the bosom of Noah, their father.

(12) And there came forth on the writing as Shem's lot the middle of the earth which he should take as an inheritance for himself and for his sons for the generations of eternity, from the middle of the mountain range of Raza, from the mouth of the water from the river Tigris, and his portion goes towards the west through the midst of this river, and it extends till it reaches the water of the abysses, out of which this river goes forth and pours its waters into the sea Me'at, and this river flows into the great sea. And all that is towards the north is Japheth's, and all that is towards the south belongs to Shem.

(13) And it extends till it reaches Karaso: this is in the bosom of the tongue which looks towards the south.

(14) And his portion extends along the great sea, and it extends in a straight line till it reaches the west of the tongue which looks towards the south: for this sea is named the tongue of the Egyptian Sea.

(15) And it turns from here towards the south towards the mouth of the great sea on the shore of (its) waters, and it extends to the west to 'Afra, and it extends till it reaches the waters of the river Gihon, and to the south of the waters of Gihon, to the banks of this river.

(16) And it extends towards the east, till it reaches the Garden of Eden, to the south thereof, [to the south] and from the east of the whole land of Eden and of the whole east, it turns to the east and proceeds till it reaches the east of the mountain named Raza, and it descends to the bank of the mouth of the river Tigris.

(17) This portion came forth by lot for Shem and his sons, that they should possess it for ever unto his generations for evermore.

(18) And Noah rejoiced that this portion came forth for Shem and for his sons, and he remembered all that he had spoken with his mouth in prophecy; for he had said: 'Blessed be the Lord God of Shem And may the Lord dwell in the dwelling of Shem.'

(19) And he knew that the Garden of Eden is the holy of holies, and the dwelling of the Lord, and Mount Sinai the centre of the desert, and Mount Zion -the centre of the navel of the earth: these three were created as holy places facing each other.

(20) And he blessed the God of gods, who had put the word of the Lord into his mouth, and the Lord for evermore.

(21) And he knew that a blessed portion and a blessing had come to Shem and his sons unto the generations for ever -the whole land of Eden and the whole land of the Red Sea, and the whole land of the east and India, and on the Red Sea and the mountains thereof, and all the land of Bashan, and all the land of Lebanon and the islands of Kaftur, and all the mountains of Sanir and 'Amana, and the mountains of Asshur in the north, and all the land of Elam, Asshur, and Babel, and Susan and Ma'edai, and all the mountains of Ararat, and all the region beyond the sea, which is beyond the

mountains of Asshur towards the north, a blessed and spacious land, and all that is in it is very good.

(22) And for Ham came forth the second portion, beyond the Gihon towards the south to the right of the Garden, and it extends towards the south and it extends to all the mountains of fire, and it extends towards the west to the sea of 'Atel and it extends towards the west till it reaches the sea of Ma'uk -that (sea) into which everything which is not destroyed descends.

(23) And it goes forth towards the north to the limits of Gadir, and it goes forth to the coast of the waters of the sea to the waters of the great sea till it draws near to the river Gihon, and goes along the river Gihon till it reaches the right of the Garden of Eden.

(24) And this is the land which came forth for Ham as the portion which he was to occupy for ever for himself and his sons unto their generations for ever.

(25) And for Japheth came forth the third portion beyond the river Tina to the north of the outflow of its waters, and it extends north- easterly to the whole region of Gog, and to all the country east thereof.

(26) And it extends northerly to the north, and it extends to the mountains of Qelt towards the north, and towards the sea of Ma'uk, and it goes forth to the east of Gadir as far as the region of the waters of the sea.

(27) And it extends until it approaches the west of Fara and it returns towards 'Aferag, and it extends easterly to the waters of the sea of Me'at.

(28) And it extends to the region of the river Tina in a north-easterly direction until it approaches the boundary of its waters towards the mountain Rafa, and it turns round towards the north.

(29) This is the land which came forth for Japheth and his sons as the portion of his inheritance which he should possess for himself and his sons, for their generations for ever; five great islands, and a great land in the north.

(30) But it is cold, and the land of Ham is hot, and the land of Shem is neither hot nor cold, but it is of blended cold and heat.

Chapter G

Fragnent from Jubilees Chapter G

(1) And Ham divided amongst his sons, and the first portion came forth for Cush towards the east, and to the west of him for Mizraim, and to the west of him for Put, and to the west of him [and to the west thereof] on the sea for Canaan.

(2) And Shem also divided amongst his sons, and the first portion came forth for Ham and his sons, to the east of the river Tigris till it approachcs the east, the whole land of India, and on the Red Sea on its coast, and the waters of Dedan, and all the mountains of Mebri and Ela, and all the land of Susan and all that is on the side of Pharnak to the Red Sea and the river Tina.

(3) And for Asshur came forth the second Portion, all the land of Asshur and Nineveh and Shinar and to the border of India, and it ascends and skirts the river.

(4) And for Arpachshad came forth the third portion, all the land of the region of the Chaldees to the east of the Euphrates, bordering on the Red Sea, and all the waters of the desert close to the tongue of the sea which looks towards Egypt, all the land of Lebanon and Sanir and 'Amana to the border of the Euphrates.

(5) And for Aram there came forth the fourth portion, all the land of Mesopotamia between the Tigris and the Euphrates to the north of the Chaldees to the border of the mountains of Asshur and the land of 'Arara.

(6) And there came forth for Lud the fifth portion, the mountains of Asshur and all appertaining to them till it reaches the Great Sea, and till it reaches the east of Asshur his brother.

(7) And Japheth also divided the land of his inheritance amongst his sons.

(8) And the first portion came forth for Gomer to the east from the north side to the river Tina; and in the north there came forth for Magog all the inner portions of the north until it reaches to the sea of Me'at.

(9) And for Madai came forth as his portion that he should possess from the west of his two brothers to the islands, and to the coasts of the islands.

(10) And for Javan came forth the fourth portion every island and the islands which are towards the border of Lud.

(11) And for Tubal there came forth the fifth portion in the midst of the tongue which approaches towards the border of the portion of Lud to the second tongue, to the region beyond the second tongue unto the third tongue.

(12) And for Meshech came forth the sixth portion, all the region beyond the third tongue till it approaches the east of Gadir.

(13) And for Tiras there came forth the seventh portion, four great islands in the midst of the sea, which reach to the portion of Ham [and the islands of Kamaturi came out by lot for the sons of Arpachshad as his inheritance].

(14) And thus the sons of Noah divided unto their sons in the presence of Noah their father, and he bound them all by an oath, imprecating a curse on every one that sought to seize the portion which had not fallen (to him) by his lot.

(15) And they all said, 'So be it; so be it ' for themselves and their sons for ever throughout their generations till the day of judgment, on which the Lord God shall judge them with a sword and with fire for all the unclean wickedness of their errors, wherewith they have filled the earth with transgression and uncleanness and fornication and sin.

Chapter 10

Fragment from Jubilees 10:1-15

[1] And in the third week of this jubilee the unclean demons began to lead astray the children of the sons of Noah, and to make to err and destroy them.

[2] And the sons of Noah came to Noah their father, and they told him concerning the demons which were leading astray and blinding and slaying his sons' sons.

[3] And he prayed before the Lord his God, and said:

'God of the spirits of all flesh, who hast shown mercy unto me
And hast saved me and my sons from the waters of the flood,
And hast not caused me to perish as Thou didst the sons of perdition;
For Thy grace has been great towards me,
And great has been Thy mercy to my soul;
Let Thy grace be lift up upon my sons,
And let not wicked spirits rule over them
Lest they should destroy them from the earth.

[4] But do Thou bless me and my sons, that we may increase and Multiply and replenish the earth.

[5] And Thou knowest how Thy Watchers, the fathers of these spirits, acted in my day: and as for these spirits which are living, imprison them and hold them fast in the place of condemnation, and let them not bring destruction on the sons of thy servant, my God; for these are malignant, and created in order to destroy.

[6] And let them not rule over the spirits of the living; for Thou alone canst exercise dominion over them. And let them not have power over the sons of the righteous from henceforth and for evermore.'

[7] And the Lord our God bade us to bind all.

[8] And the chief of the spirits, Mastema, came and said: 'Lord, Creator, let some of them remain before me, and let them harken to my voice, and do all that I shall say unto them; for if some of them are not left to me, I shall not be able to execute the power of my will on the sons of men; for these are for corruption and leading astray before my judgment, for great is the wickedness of the sons of men.'

[9] And He said: Let the tenth part of them remain before him, and let nine parts descend into the place of condemnation.'

[10] And one of us He commanded that we should teach Noah all their medicines; for He knew that they would not walk in uprightness, nor strive in righteousness.

[11] And we did according to all His words: all the malignant evil ones we bound in the place of condemnation and a tenth part of them we left that they might be subject before Satan on the earth.

[12] And we explained to Noah all the medicines of their diseases, together with their seductions, how he might heal them with herbs of the earth.

[13] And Noah wrote down all things in a book as we instructed him concerning every kind of medicine. Thus the evil spirits were precluded from (hurting) the sons of Noah.

[14] And he gave all that he had written to Shem, his eldest son; for he loved him exceedingly above all his sons.

[15] And Noah slept with his fathers, and was buried on Mount Lubar in the land of Ararat.

The Testaments of the Three Patriarchs

This apocryphal work of the Hebrew Scriptures was first published by M. R. James (*The Testament of Abraham, the Greek Text now first edited with an Introduction and Notes. With an appendix containing extracts from the Arabic Version of the Testaments of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, by Barnes, Texts and Studies*, ii. 2: Cambridge). The Greek testament of Abraham is preserved in two recensions from six and three MSS. respectively. This testament is also edited by Vassiliev in his *Anecdota Graeco-Byzantina*, 1893, i. 292–308 from a Vienna MS. already used by James. According to James, it was written in Egypt in the 2nd century A.D., and was translated subsequently into Slavonic (Tichonrawow, *Pamjatniki otretschennoi russkoi Literaturi*, 1863, i. 79–90), Rumanian (Gaster, *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, 1887, ix. 195–226), Ethiopic and Arabic.

This testament deals with Abraham's reluctance to die and the means by which his death was brought about. As regards its origin James writes (*op. cit.*, p. 55); "The Testament was originally put together in the second century by a Jewish Christian: for the narrative portions he employed existing Jewish legends, and for the apocalyptic, he drew largely on his imagination." He holds that the book is referred to by Origen, *Hom. in Luc.* xxxv. With the exception of x.–xi. the work is really a legend and not an apocalypse.

To the above conclusions Schürer, *Gesch. des jüd. Volkes*, 3rd ed., iii. 252, takes objection. He denies the reference in Origen, and asserts that there are no grounds for the assumption of a partial Jewish origin. But the present writer cannot agree with Schürer in these criticisms, but is convinced that a large body of Jewish tradition lies behind the book. Indeed, Kohler (*Jewish Quarterly Review*, 1895, v. 581–606) has given adequate grounds for regarding this apocryph as in the main an independent work of Jewish origin subsequently enlarged by a few Christian additions.

The Vision of the Twelve Apostles

In the course of organizing His Church, Jesus "went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

"And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles."¹ They were called from the ordinary paths of life.

Peter was the first called, and the Lord said to him, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou

shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”² This same sacred authority is inherent in the ordination of every Apostle.

Paul taught that the apostles and prophets were called “for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,” and he declared that these offices would endure “till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God.”³

The Apostles in time were gone and, with them, the keys. Paul had prophesied of men being “carried about with every wind of doctrine.”⁴

And so it was; instead of unity of faith, there came division and disunity.

It was in this circumstance that young Joseph Smith prayed to know which of all the churches was true and which he should join.

Joseph’s vision of the Father and the Son opened this dispensation. Then came the Restoration of the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ with the same organization that existed in the primitive Church, built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets.⁵

Some suppose that the organization was handed to the Prophet Joseph Smith like a set of plans and specifications for a building, with all of the details known at the beginning. But it did not come that way. Rather, it came a piece at a time as the Brethren were ready and as they inquired of God.

The Melchizedek Priesthood, the consummate authority given to man from God, was restored under the hands of Peter, James, and John. By them, the Lord said, “I have ordained you and confirmed you to be apostles, and especial witnesses of my name, and bear the keys of your ministry and of the same things which I revealed unto them;

“Unto whom I have committed the keys of my kingdom, and a dispensation of the gospel for the last times.”⁶

The First Presidency was in place by 1833; then two years later, in February of 1835, came the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. And that is as it should be. The First Presidency came first in sequence and stands first in authority. And, true to the pattern, it was made of men called from the ordinary pursuits of life.

With the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve in place, with the offices of the Seventy and the Presiding Bishopric revealed, the proper order of things prevails. But there is a difference.

Perhaps President J. Reuben Clark said it best: “Some of the General Authorities [the Apostles] have had assigned to them a special calling; they possess a special gift; they are sustained as prophets, seers, and revelators, which gives them a special spiritual endowment in connection with their teaching of the people. They have the right, the power, and authority to declare the mind and will of God to his people, subject to the over-all power and authority of the President of the Church. Others of the General Authorities are not given this special spiritual endowment.” The resulting limitation “applies to every other officer and member of the Church, for none of them is spiritually endowed as a prophet, seer, and revelator.”⁷

Furthermore, President Clark said that among those of the Twelve and the Presidency, “only the President of the Church, the Presiding High Priest, is sustained as Prophet, Seer, and Revelator for

the Church, and he alone has the right to receive revelations for the Church, either new or amendatory, or to give authoritative interpretations of scriptures that shall be binding on the Church, or change in any way the existing doctrines of the Church.”⁸

It took a generation of asking and receiving before the order of things as we know it today was firmly in place. Each move to perfect that order has come about in response to a need and in answer to prayer. And that process continues in our day.

“The Twelve are a Traveling Presiding High Council, to officiate in the name of the Lord, under the direction of the Presidency of the Church, agreeable to the institution of heaven; to build up the church, and regulate all the affairs of the same in all nations.”⁹

Where the First Presidency cannot go, the Twelve are sent “to unlock the door of the kingdom in all places.”¹⁰ They are commissioned to go to all the world, for the word *Apostle* means “one [who is] sent forth.”¹¹

“Wherefore,” the Lord said, “in whatsoever place ye shall proclaim my name an effectual door shall be opened unto you, that they may receive my word.”¹² And He promised, “Be thou humble; and the Lord thy God shall lead thee by the hand, and give thee answer to thy prayers.”¹³

The Twelve Apostles “are called to be ... special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world.”¹⁴ Each carries that certain witness that Jesus is the Christ. President Joseph Fielding Smith taught that “every member of the Church should have the impressions on his soul made by the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Son of God indelibly pictured so that they cannot be forgotten.”¹⁵

From Nephi we know that “angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost.”¹⁶ Mormon told us that “the office of their ministry is to call men unto repentance, and to fulfil and to do the work of the covenants of the Father, which he hath made unto the children of men, to prepare the way among the children of men.” Mormon further explained that angels accomplish their ministry “by declaring the word of Christ unto the chosen vessels of the Lord, that they may bear testimony of him.

“And by so doing, the Lord God prepareth the way that the residue of men may have faith in Christ, that the Holy Ghost may have place in their hearts, according to the power thereof; and after this manner bringeth to pass the Father, the covenants which he hath made unto the children of men.”¹⁷

There is a power of discernment granted “unto such as God shall appoint ... to watch over [His] church.”¹⁸ To discern means “to see.”

President Harold B. Lee told me once of a conversation he had with Elder Charles A. Callis of the Quorum of the Twelve. Brother Callis had remarked that the gift of discernment was an awesome burden to carry. To see clearly what is ahead and yet find members slow to respond or resistant to counsel or even rejecting the witness of the apostles and prophets brings deep sorrow.

Nevertheless, “the responsibility of leading this church” must rest upon us until “you shall appoint others to succeed you.”¹⁹

He warned us of those few in the Church “who have professed to know my name and have not known me, and have blasphemed against me in the midst of my house.”²⁰

"Thy voice," the Lord commanded the Twelve, "shall be a rebuke unto the transgressor; and at thy rebuke let the tongue of the slanderer cease its perverseness."²¹

Some few within the Church, openly or perhaps far worse, in the darkness of anonymity, reproach their leaders in the wards and stakes and in the Church, seeking to make them "an offender for a word,"²² as Isaiah said. To them the Lord said: "Cursed are all those that shall lift up the heel against mine anointed, saith the Lord, and cry they have sinned when they have not sinned ... but have done that which was meet in mine eyes, and which I commanded them.

"But those who cry transgression do it because they are the servants of sin, and are the children of disobedience themselves. ...

"... Because they have offended my little ones they shall be severed from the ordinances of mine house.

"Their basket shall not be full, their houses and their barns shall perish, and they themselves shall be despised by those that flattered them.

"They shall not have right to the priesthood, nor their posterity after them from generation to generation."²³

That terrible penalty will not apply to those who try as best they can to live the gospel and sustain their leaders. Nor need it apply to those who in the past have been guilty of indifference or even opposition if they will repent, confess their transgressions, and forsake them.²⁴

Recently President Hinckley reminded the Brethren that, while we are men called from the ordinary pursuits of life, there rests upon us a sacred ministry. And we take comfort in what the Lord said to the original Twelve: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you."²⁵

While each feels his own limitation, there is strength in unity. Never in the history of the Church have the Brethren of the Presidency and the Twelve been more united.

Each week we meet together in the temple. We open the meeting by kneeling in prayer, and we close with prayer. Every prayer is offered in the spirit of submission and obedience to Him who called us and whose servants and witnesses we are.

The Lord requires that "every decision made by either of these quorums must be by the unanimous voice of the same" and that "the decisions of these quorums ... are to be made in all righteousness, in holiness, and lowliness of heart, meekness and long suffering, and in faith, and virtue, and knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity."²⁶ This we earnestly strive to do.

We know that we hold the power of the priesthood "in connection with all those who have received a dispensation at any time from the beginning of the creation."²⁷ We think of those who have preceded us in these sacred offices, and at times we feel their presence.

We are overcome with what the Lord said of those who hold these sacred callings: "Whatsoever they shall speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost shall be scripture, shall be the will of the Lord, shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation."²⁸

During a very difficult time, the Lord gave the sternest warning that I know of in all scripture. It had to do with the building of the Nauvoo Temple. The Saints knew from experience that to proceed to build a temple would bring terrible persecution, so they delayed. The Lord extended the time and said, "If you do not these things at the end of the appointment ye shall be rejected as a church, with your dead, saith the Lord your God."²⁹

Often overlooked in that revelation is a marvelous promise: "If my people will hearken unto my voice, and unto the voice of my servants whom I have appointed to lead my people, behold, verily I say unto you, they shall not be moved out of their place."³⁰

Remember this promise; hold onto it. It should be a great comfort to those struggling to keep a family together in a society increasingly indifferent to, and even hostile toward, those standards which are essential to a happy family.

The promise is a restatement of what the Lord told the multitude: "Blessed are ye if ye shall give heed unto the words of these twelve whom I have chosen from among you to minister unto you, and to be your servants."³¹

I repeat the promise that those who hearken to the voice of these men whom the Lord has raised up "shall not be moved out of their place."³²

But the promise was followed with this caution: "But if they will not hearken to my voice, nor unto the voice of these men whom I have appointed, they shall not be blest."³³

The most precious thing we have to give is our witness of the Lord, our testimony of Jesus Christ.

I certify to you that the 14 men with whom I share the ordination are indeed Apostles. In declaring this, I say no more than the Lord has taught, no more than may be revealed to anyone who seeks with a sincere heart and real intent for an individual witness of the Spirit.

These men are true servants of the Lord; give heed to their counsel. So, too, with the Seventy, who as especial witnesses carry an apostolic responsibility, and the Bishopric, worthy men of God. So, too, with the brethren and sisters across the world who are called to lead, who have earned that knowledge precious above all else.

There are limits to what the Spirit permits us to say.³⁴ And so I close with my witness, my special witness, that Jesus is the Christ, that through a prophet-president He presides over this, "the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth."³⁵ In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The Ethiopian Book of Prophecies

This writing of Enoch has always been authoritatively recognized by Apostolic Tradition of God since before the writing of the Torah. At the Council of Carthage, it was absent for consideration since, mysteriously lost since the era of Hezekiah Restoration post-Exile. However, Moishe and other prophets and Apostles cited it as Scripture throughout Holy Spirit Inspired, Canonical Scripture. Furthermore, at the ancient Ethiopian Library, unbeknownst to others, complete Ethiopian translations existed. In lieu of above, therefore, it has been canonized within Ethiopian Orthodox

Canons since as a precedent left by God Almighty. Also, Hebrew copies facilitating complete, corroborative recovery were discovered amongst Dead Sea Scrolls during the Twentieth Century leading to these Last Days by His Providence according to His Divine Will.

The Lord has revealed to myself the following: 1. He has sovereignly chosen to spare His flock non-priority and accumulative during The Age of the Gentiles (or known as The Church Age, but I'm not sure why this is specific) for edifying concentration irrelevant to said Age; 2. Contemporary history is now transitioning (by relation to Church History) into the Last Age of Daniel's Seventieth Week most certainly. Jesus communicated, in His Olivet Discourse, that His Body and others would discern the signs as the seasons! So, do not prejudice the assertion biasedly. Already, by a long time ago, The Great Apostasy has incrementally accumulated by a Mystery of Iniquity prophesied. It has effected (during said transition constituting events, with facts, over a historical continuity actual and factually) that the institutions of His Visible Church have actually exhausted by deteriorating into the time prophesied (by The Twelve in the Didache) that "the sheep will be turned into wolves" necessitating non-conformity and separations! This knowing is of Establishment of Judeo-Christian Faith (Actually) and must not be prejudiced either, and especially since proven beyond all doubt ACTUALLY -- and thus I have certainly experienced during these later days by a multiple of Incidents proving certainly to myself. And, I am not the Cause, but the Innocent messenger if offended! Otherwise, you Despise Prophecies against the Holy Spirit.

For example, the World Council of Churches of the U.N. is prima-facie para-church, heretical and apostate fomenting said accumulation organizing to corrupt all open institutions of Christianity so-naming themselves -- they have become useless Non-churches misrepresenting. Association has become, actually, non-christian regrettably. But this is the Truth, or I would not wish to communicate it. Furthermore, I do not associate with any schismatics, but live solitudinally as active recluse. So, it is maliciously to have ever attempted to false-associate myself, forensically, with YOUR fabricated False-Stereotype Profile groups as the wandering Ampol Nomad Cult in Conspiracy to false-incriminate. I never keep this company ever.

As Enoch walked with God, as recorded in this writing of Tradition, he became harassed and overzealously spectated and surveilled by the spirit world. During this matter, he needed, according to the will of God, to pronounce a verdict against angels temporarily fallen (hence becoming demons) due to acts of forbidden immorality with the female population since being beguiled with this immature desire.[That's really weird and despicable... you have to be disgusted with them. It is so cheap and crazy!] As pronounced, the Verdict is about to be Sentenced by The Lord Jesus Christ. They have spawned freaks upon the earth. For so many other reasons also, they really deserve it. This is germane to a third beast mentioned (entailing the body of these later fallen, to be bound to the Pit until three and a half, Hebrew years into the Apocalyptic Age (according to Revelation, in chapter 18 I think, which, during recent events of the matter-at-hand, I have termed (per intelligence analysis and its language referring these contemporary facts not covered by the scriptural summarization of actual occurrences transpiring over time) I have termed "the Looptank Beast" and their consequential "Looptank Beast Punishment" who actually, deluded by escapist denial that they have fallen, still believe they are Godly, Holy and superior to Satan contesting with him to replace God in arrogance that they know better. Of course, they are mistaken, and are under Satan in his hierarchy weirdly in denial that it is so.

The Prayers of Saint Takla Haymanot

St. Takla Haymanot was a blessed person always full of joy. He was blessed not with riches, not with mightiness and strength, not with worldly influence but with being poor in spirit. St. Takla's joy was found in his total dependence upon the Lord Jesus Christ.

The great saint, Takla Haymanot has a very prominent position in the Coptic Orthodox Church. The church celebrates an annual feast to commemorate the greatness of this seventh century saint.

His father was an Ethiopian priest who loved Archangel Michael and his mother was a rich and righteous woman who also loved Archangel Michael. Together, they always celebrated the archangels' feast on the twelfth of each month. After many years of prayer and supplications a son, "Feseha Zion" (the joy of Zion) was born into this family, for St. Takla's mother was barren until his birth.

The tidings of Archangel Michael were fulfilled when he said to Tsega Ze-Ab, Feseha Zion's father, "You will be the father of a child who will be an apostle in Ethiopia." His parents were overjoyed with his birth and celebrated by holding a feast for the poor. Three days after his birth, the Holy Spirit descended upon Fesha Zion and the infant opened his mouth and said, "One is the Holy Father. One is the Holy Son. One is the Holy Spirit."

Since childhood, Feseha Zion performed many miracles. One such famous miracle occurred at the age of eighteen months. A famine had spread throughout the land of his family. As a result of the famine, Tsega Ze-Ab and his wife had nothing to celebrate the feast of their beloved Archangel Michael.

One day while Fesha Zion was being nursed he pointed to the flour basket, which was completely empty. His devout mother brought it to him and immediately when he touched the basket it became filled with flour. Basket after basket was placed before him until twelve baskets overflowed with flour. She then decided to bring the oil jar to him. Fesha Zion placed his hand inside the jar and made the sign of the cross. Oil began to fill the jar. From this jar the mother poured oil into other jars until there was plenty for their monthly agape for the needy in honor of Archangel Michael.

When he was fifteen years old his reverent father took him to Bishop Kyrollos of Amhara, who saw a vision from God to ordain Feseha Zion a deacon. As a deacon he continued to perform miracles and began to heal the sick. Many hailed him as a god, but he admonished them that only the One True God is worthy of honor, praise and worship.

One day while hunting with friends, Archangel Michael appeared unto deacon Feseha Zion and told him to dedicate the rest of his life to saving people's souls. The Archangel further told him that God would bestow upon him the ability to cure many illnesses, raise the dead, and cast out evil spirits in His Holy Name. It was then that Archangel Michael changed his name to Takla Haymanot, which means, "Paradise of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit".

St. Takla returned home and distributed all his money among the poor. Soon thereafter, Bishop Cyril ordained him the priest of Shewa. St. Takla focused his attention on the spiritual welfare of those around him. He preached the Holy Gospel of repentance and forgiveness of sins. He continually

cured the sick and performed many miracles. As a result of the holiness of this man many were converted to Christianity.

He drove out evil spirits, cast out demons, he converted kings. St. Takla was bestowed with many gifts from the Lord. He raised the dead and could foretell events and quietly tell true prophecies. He labored among the hardest of tasks in the monasteries he dwelt with thanksgiving. He escaped from all praise. He continually led a life of devoutness-fasting, praying, chanting and kneeling before the Lord Jesus Christ.

One of the most famous of stories related to this saint is of his abiding in the Monastery of Abba Aragawi at the top of a very high, steep mountain. After living some time at this remote monastery, an angel of the Lord appeared to St. Takla and told him to go down to the base of the mountain and dwell in a cave to be found there. He bid the abbot of the monastery and the monks' farewell, requesting their prayers and began his descent from the top of the towering mountain. As was the custom, the monks tied the saint with a rope to aid in his descent from the peak of the mountaintop. The rope broke suddenly and the monks feared the worst. Instantly and miraculously, six wings appeared from the saint and flew him safely and swiftly to the base of the mountain. Due to this miracle St. Takla's icon features him with six beautiful white wings like the Cherubim.

The Lord Jesus Christ was always glorified in this great saint's weakness and spiritual poorness. Spiritual poorness does not mean material poverty. The spiritually poor recognize their complete dependence on the Lord Jesus Christ. They have discovered their spiritual sufficiency in Him. *"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God"* (II Corinthians 3:5).

St. Takla's life joy and satisfaction was in finding favor with the Lord. He was humble in spirit and thought himself nothing without the Lord. For indeed his was the Kingdom of Heaven.

"Hail to the man in flesh and the spiritual angel.

Hail to him who became the father of the Ethiopian monks as Anba Macarius.

Hail to him who exemplified our father St. Peter the Apostle in raising the dead, nullifying magic, and healing the spiritual and physical sickness.

Hail to the one who is like St. John the Baptist, the priest and son of a priest, and also the son of a barren.

Hail to this sweet and blessed name, which is the righteous father and chosen vessel, the honored St. Takla Haymanot.

Hail to the one who completed his pure strife with all the virtues of the Holy Spirit.

Hail to the one who rejected the world, with all its vainglory, traded his talents and gained.

Hail to the one whose Master found him faithful in the little, put him in charge of the much and told him to enter the eternal joy of His Master in the land of the living.

Ask the Lord on our behalf, O our righteous father, St. Takla Haymanot the Ethiopian, that he may forgive us our sins."

The Miracles of Saint Lalibela

The rock-cut church of Saint George, located in Lalibela Ethiopia, is one the most amazing structures in the history of architecture. Carved directly out of the rock that surrounds it, this sanctuary astounds the imagination.

Still in liturgical use, Saint George is a pilgrimage destination for both tourists and devout believers. Visitors reach the church through channels cut into the rock and emerge at the entrance-level of the church.

Saint George was commissioned by the Ethiopian King Lalibela, who ruled between around 1181 and 1221. Today, the entire region is called Lalibela, after the celebrated king. King Lalibela is the most famous Ethiopian ruler from the Zagwe dynasty. In fact, he has officially been made a saint in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Saint George is King Lalibela's enduring legacy.

How this structure was carved out of the living rock still remains a mystery. Some Ethiopian Orthodox believers credit the creation of this church to supernatural intervention. According to tradition, when the human workers put down their tools at the end of the day, angels picked up the tools and carved through the night.

To create this church, workers, either human or angelic, cut directly into volcanic material. As they were excavating down toward what would be the church's so-called ground level, carvers cut in doors and windows. And they hollowed out the interior of this monolith. The church emerged, seemingly by miracle, from the rock.





Image by A. Davey. Source: [Flickr](#)

Image by Rod Waddington. Source: [Flickr](#)

For some modern sceptics, the suggestion that this implausible structure was miraculously carved by a team of angels might have the same charming incredulity as the fairy tale about the old shoemaker who received the magical aid of elves. However, we should not be too quick to dismiss the value that this creation narrative has for helping us understand what this church meant to King Lalibela and to countless Ethiopian Orthodox believers. If we consider the church of Saint George from a perspective of faith, from a perspective of belief in the presence and power of miracles, then perhaps this creation narrative is more than just a myth.

Saint George is a house of God that emerges from the rock, a material that had been present there since the Genesis creation. Standing outside of human time, this structure of faith appears to have been miraculously created.

If the design and carving of this sacred sanctuary is ascribed to the supernatural, this rock-cut church might be perceived as an architectural parallel to the icons of the Orthodox church, which are also believed to be sacred in origin. The belief in miraculously created icons, icons not made by human hands, has been central to the liturgical tradition of the Orthodox Church.

Even without ascribing the creation of Saint George to the participation of angels, conceptualizing this rock-cut church, in the spiritual context of miraculous icons, answers many of the questions concerning both its purpose as well as the highly unusual process that gave it form.

If King Lalibela's faith proceeded from a liturgical practice that venerated sacred icons, then the church in which he worshiped also needed to be supernatural in design. By crediting the creation of this church to angelic labor, the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian proclaims it to be a sacred sanctuary, fit to be the residence of the divine. A God who cannot be constrained by human achievements has ordained his own creation, the rock itself, as his residence.

Perhaps the belief that the Church of Saint George was miraculously created consecrated the structure, in the spiritual imagination of the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian, for its liturgical purpose. The narrative that this structure was extracted from the living rock by angels unites its design and creation with its identity as the dwelling place of the uncreated God.

Even for those who might not fully embrace this creation narrative, standing before or within this magnificent structure the beholder has a sense of being in the presence not of any human architect but of the divine creator of the rock itself.

The Glory of the Archangels

Archangels are the second-lowest rank of angel in the Christian hierarchy of angels, put forward by Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite in the 5th or 6th century in his book *De Coelesti Hierarchia* (*On the Celestial Hierarchy*).^{[1][2][3]} However, they are the highest rank to interact directly with humans, seraphim and the like remaining close to God.

The Bible itself uses the term only two times, with no mention in the Old Testament, and does not mention a hierarchy of angels in any detail. The word is usually associated with the Abrahamic religions. Similar beings exist in several other religions.

Archangel is derived from Greek *archángelos* (ἀρχάγγελος), with the Greek prefix *arch-* meaning 'chief'. A common misconception is that archangels constitute the highest rank of angel in Christianity; this likely stems from the etymology of their name, as well as their presentation in John Milton's *Paradise Lost*.^[4]

In Judaism, the highest ranking angels such as Michael, Raphael, Gabriel and Uriel, who are usually referred to as archangels in English, are given the title of *śārīm* (Hebrew: שָׂרִים 'princes'; sing. שָׂר *śār*), to show their superior rank and status.^[5] Two examples of this can be seen in Daniel 10:13 and 12:1, where Michael, Chief of the Heavenly Host, is referred to as *'aḥaḍ haśśārīm hārišōnīm* (אֶחָד הַשָּׂרִים הַרִשׁוֹנִים).

שְׁנֵי הַרָאִשִּׁים 'one of the chief princes') in the former, and *haśśar haggādōl* (הַשָּׂר הַגָּדוֹל 'the great prince') in the latter.^{[6][7][8][9]}

Description



The four archangels, mosaics at St John's Church, Warminster

Michael and Gabriel are recognized as archangels in Judaism and Islam, and by most Christians. Raphael—mentioned in the deuterocanonical/apocryphal Book of Tobit—is also recognized as a chief angel in the Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican and Eastern Orthodox churches.^{[A][12]} Gabriel, Michael, and Raphael are venerated in the Roman Catholic Church and Lutheran Churches with a feast on September 29 (between 1921 and 1969, March 24 for Gabriel and October 24 for Raphael), and in the Eastern Orthodox Church on November 8 (if the Julian calendar is used, this corresponds to November 21 in the Gregorian).^[12] The named archangels in Islam are Jibra'il, Mika'il, Israfil, and 'Azra'il. Jewish literature, such as the Book of Enoch, also mentions Metatron as an archangel, called the "highest of the angels", though the acceptance of this angel is not canonical in all branches of the faith.

Some branches of the faiths mentioned have identified a group of seven to eight archangels, but the named angels vary, depending on the source.^[13] Gabriel, Michael, and Raphael are always mentioned; the other archangels vary, but most commonly include Uriel and Jerahmeel, both of whom are mentioned in 2 Esdras.^[8] As well as Michael, Gabriel, Raphael and Uriel, the Book of Enoch, regarded as canonical by the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church (Oriental Orthodox), mentions in chapter 20: Raguel, Sariel, and Jerahmeel (Remiel).^[14]

Zoroastrianism

See also: Amesha Spenta and Zoroastrianism

An increasing number of experts in anthropology, theology and philosophy believe that Zoroastrianism contains the earliest distillation of prehistoric belief in angels.^[15]

The Amesha Spentas (Avestan: Aməša Spənta, meaning "beneficent immortals")^[16] of Zoroastrianism are likened to archangels. They individually inhabit immortal bodies that operate in the physical world to protect, guide, and inspire humanity and the spirit world. The Avesta explains the origin and nature of archangels or Amesha Spentas.^[15]

To maintain equilibrium, Ahura Mazda engaged in the first act of creation, distinguishing his Holy Spirit Spenta Mainyu, the Archangel of righteousness. Ahura Mazda also distinguished from himself six more Amesha Spentas, who, along with Spenta Mainyu, aided in the creation of the physical universe. Then he oversaw the development of sixteen lands, each imbued with a unique cultural catalyst calculated to encourage the formation of distinct human populations. The Amesha Spentas were charged with protecting these holy lands and through their emanation, also believed to align each respective population in service to God.^[17]

The Amesha Spentas as attributes of God are:

1. Spenta Mainyu (Pahlavi:^[18] Spenamino): lit. "Bountiful Spirit"
2. Asha Vahishta (Phl. Ardwhisht): lit. "Highest Truth"
3. Vohu Mano (Phl. Vohuman): lit. "Righteous Mind"
4. Khshathra Vairya (Phl. Shahrewar): lit. "Desirable Dominion"
5. Spenta Armaiti (Phl. Spandarmad): lit. "Holy Devotion"
6. Haurvatat (Phl. Hordad): lit. "Perfection or Health"
7. Ameretat (Phl. Amurdad): lit. "Immortality"

Judaism



Jacob Wrestling with the Angel by Gustave Doré, 1885

The Hebrew Bible uses the term מלאכי אלהים (*malakhey Elohim*; Angels of God),^[19] The Hebrew word for angel is "malakh", which means messenger, for the angels מלאכי יי (*malakhey Adonai*; Angels of the Lord) are God's messengers to perform various missions - e.g. 'angel of death';^[20] בני אלהים

(*b'nei elohim*; sons of God) and הקדושים (*ha-q'doshim*; the holy ones) to refer to beings traditionally interpreted as *angelic messengers*. Other terms are used in later texts, such as העליונים (*ha-elyonim*, *the upper ones*, or *the supreme ones*). References to angels are uncommon in Jewish literature except in later works such as the Book of Daniel, though they are mentioned briefly in the stories of Jacob (who according to one interpretation wrestled with an angel) and Lot (who was warned by angels of the impending destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah). Daniel is the first biblical figure to refer to individual angels by name.^[21] It is therefore widely speculated that Jewish interest in angels developed during the Babylonian captivity.^[22] According to Rabbi Simeon ben Lakish of Tiberias (230–270 A.D.), specific names for the angels were brought back by the Jews from Babylon.

There are no explicit references to archangels in the canonical texts of the Hebrew Bible. In post-Biblical Judaism, certain angels came to take on a particular significance and developed unique personalities and roles. Though these archangels were believed to have ranked amongst the heavenly host, no systematic hierarchy ever developed. Metatron is considered one of the highest of the angels in Merkavah and Kabbalist mysticism and often serves as a scribe. He is briefly mentioned in the Talmud,^[23] and figures prominently in Merkavah mystical texts. Michael, who serves as a warrior and advocate for Israel,^[24] is looked upon particularly fondly. Gabriel is mentioned in the Book of Daniel^[25] and briefly in the Talmud,^[26] as well as many Merkavah mystical texts. The earliest references to archangels are in the literature of the intertestamental periods (e.g., 4 Esdras 4:36).

In the Kabbalah there are traditionally twelve archangels, who are each assigned to a certain sephira: Shubael, Raziel, Cassiel, Zadkiel, Camael, Michael, Uriel C Haniel, Raphael C Jophiel, Gabriel, and Azrael. There are also a variety of other archangels who share similar associations spanning throughout this tradition.^[27] Chapter 20 of the Book of Enoch mentions seven holy angels who watch, that often are considered the seven archangels: Michael, Raphael, Gabriel, Uriel, Sariel, Raguel, and Remiel.^[28] The Life of Adam and Eve lists the archangels as well: Michael, Gabriel, Uriel, Raphael and Joel. Medieval Jewish philosopher Maimonides made a Jewish angelic hierarchy.

Christianity

The New Testament makes over a hundred references to angels, but uses the word "archangel" only twice, in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 ("For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first", KJV) and Jude 1:9 ("Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee", KJV).

Catholic

In Catholicism, three are mentioned by name:

- Gabriel
- Michael

- Raphael

These three are commemorated together liturgically on September 29. Each formerly had his own feast.

The latter of these identifies himself in Tobit 12:15^(NAB) thus: "I am Raphael, one of the seven angels who stand and serve before the Glory of the Lord."

The Fourth Book of Esdras, which mentions the angel Uriel (and also the "archangel" Jeremiel), was popular in the West and was frequently quoted by Church Fathers, especially Ambrose, but was never considered part of the Catholic biblical canon.^[29]

The Catholic Church gives no official recognition to the names given in some apocryphal sources, such as Raguel, Saraqael and Remiel (in the Book of Enoch) or Izidkiel, Hanael, and Kepharel (in other such sources).^[30]



Michele Tosini, Archangels Raphael, Michael and Gabriel, showing their attributes in Catholic art

In 1851 Pope Pius IX approved the Chaplet of Saint Michael, based on the 1751 apparition of the Archangel Michael experienced by the Carmelite nun Antonia d'Astonac, which includes prayers with specific invocations to the Archangels and each of the nine Choirs of Angels.^{[31][32]}

Of the three major archangels in the Catholic hierarchy of angels, all normally with large wings, Archangel Michael is easy to recognize, in armour with a weapon (sword or spear), often standing on a winged man or a dragon representing Satan, and he may carry a pair of scales to represent his role in the Last Judgement.^[33] Gabriel carries a stem of lilies, traditionally part of the iconography of the Annunciation, his most significant work as the messenger of God.^[34] The iconography of Archangel Raphael derives from the story from the Book of Tobit of Tobias and the Angel. Especially in the Renaissance, Tobias, his dog and the fish he carries may all appear, otherwise Raphael holds a walker's staff, may wear sandals, and may carry a small container (for the healing organs from the giant fish Tobias caught).^[35]

Eastern Orthodox



Angelic Council, Orthodox icon of the seven archangels, left to right: Jegudiel, Gabriel, Selaphiel, Michael, Uriel, Raphael, Barachiel. Beneath the mandorla of Christ-Immanuel (God is with us) are representations of Cherubim (blue) and Seraphim (red). Eastern Orthodox Tradition mentions "thousands of archangels".^[36] Only Seven Archangels are venerated by name.^{[13][37]} Three are the same as mentioned in Catholicism; namely Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael. Uriel is included. The other three or four are most often named Selaphiel, Jegudiel, Barachiel and (sometimes) Jeremiel.^[38] The Orthodox Church celebrates the Synaxis of the Archangel Michael and the Other Bodiless Powers on November 8 of the Eastern Orthodox liturgical calendar (for those churches which follow the Julian Calendar, November 8 falls on November 21 of the modern Gregorian Calendar). Other feast days of the Archangels include the Synaxis of the Archangel Gabriel on March 26 (April 8) and July 13 (July 26), and the Miracle of the Archangel Michael at Colossae on September 6 (September 19). In addition, every Monday throughout the year is dedicated to the Angels, with special mention being made in the church hymns of Michael and Gabriel. In Orthodox iconography, each angel has a symbolic representation:^[38]

- *Michael* in the Hebrew language means "Who is like God?" or "Who is equal to God?" Michael has been depicted from earliest Christian times as a commander, who holds in his right hand a spear with which he attacks Lucifer/Satan, and in his left hand a green palm branch. At the top of the spear, there is a linen ribbon with a red cross. The Archangel Michael is especially considered to be the Guardian of the Orthodox Faith and a fighter against heresies.
- *Gabriel* in Hebrew means "God is my strength" or "Might of God". He is the herald of the mysteries of God, especially the Incarnation of God and all other mysteries related to it. He is depicted as follows: In his right hand, he holds a lantern with a lighted taper inside, and in his left hand, a mirror of green jasper. The mirror signifies the wisdom of God as a hidden mystery.
- *Raphael* is a Hebrew name which means "It is God who heals" or "God Heals".^[39] Raphael is depicted leading Tobias (who is carrying a fish caught in the Tigris) with his right hand and holding a physician's alabaster jar in his left hand.

- *Uriel* in the Hebrew language means "God is my light", or "Light of God" (II Esdras 4:1, 5:20). He is depicted holding a sword in his right hand, and a flame in his left.
- *Sealtiel* means "Intercessor of God". He is depicted with his face and eyes lowered, holding his hands on his bosom in prayer.
- *Jegudiel* means "Glorifier of God". He is depicted bearing a golden wreath in his right hand and a triple-thonged whip in his left hand.
- *Barachiel* means "Blessed by God". He is depicted holding a white rose in his hand against his breast.
- *Jerahmeel* means "God's exaltation". He is venerated as an inspirer and awakener of exalted thoughts that raise a person toward God (2 Esdras 4:36). As an *eighth*, he is sometimes included as an archangel.

Coptic Orthodox



Coptic icon of the Archangel Michael. Among all the archangels, the Copts pay special attention to St Michael.

In addition to Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, the Coptic Orthodox Church recognises four more archangels by name:^[40]

- *Suriel* means "Prince of God"
- *Sadakiel* means "Grace of God"
- *Sarathiel* (Unknown)
- *Ananiel* means "Rain of God"

Ethiopian Orthodox



Ethiopian icon of an angel, possibly St Michael

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church venerates the four archangels Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel, as well as:^{[41][42]}

- *Phanuel*, meaning "Face of God"
- *Raguel*, meaning "Friend of God"
- *Remiel*,^[42] meaning "Thunder of God"

In the canon of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, 1 Enoch describes Saraqael as one of the angels who watch over "the spirits that sin in the spirit" (Enoch 20:7–8).

Protestant

The Protestant Bible provides names for two angels, "Michael the archangel" (Jude 1:9), the angel Gabriel, who is called "the man Gabriel" in Daniel 9:21, which are considered part of the standard New Testament canon and Old Testament canon respectively. It omits Raphael, who is mentioned in Tobit 12:15, which falls in the Apocrypha section of the Catholic Bible, and it omits Uriel (2 Esdras 4:1 and 2 Esdras 5:20) and Jerahmeel (2 Esdras 4:36), which are contained in 2 Esdras, neither are included in the Protestant Bible. Among Protestant communities, the Anglican traditions recognize three to five angels as archangels: Michael the Archangel and Gabriel the Archangel, as well as Raphael the Archangel, Uriel the Archangel and Jerahmeel the Archangel.^{[43][12][44]} Lutherans only recognise Michael, Gabriel, and sometimes Raphael (not Uriel or Jerahmeel, because Esdras books are not included in the Lutheran apocrypha). Statuary of these angels can be found in Lutheran churches,^[44] and a depiction of seven archangels in stained-glass windows can be found in some Anglican churches. In this case, in addition to the aforementioned angels, Chamuel, Jophiel and Zadkiel are variously depicted. They are commemorated on 29 September, "Michaelmas", in the church kalendar of the Lutheran and Anglican churches (cf. *Calendar of saints (Lutheran)* and *Calendar of saints (Anglican)*).^{[45][12]}

In the view of the Baptist evangelist Billy Graham, Sacred Scripture explicitly described one being as an archangel—Michael—in Jude 1:9.^{[46][47]}

Seventh-day Adventists hold that the titles "Michael" and "archangel" are references to Jesus. In the Adventist view, they only signify his role as chief of angels and make no reference to his divine nature. Adventists credit nonconformist minister Matthew Henry as supporting this view.^[48]



Seven archangels depicted in the stained-glass window at St Michael's Church, Brighton; from left: Michael, Gabriel, Uriel, Chamuel (Camael), Raphael, Jophiel, and Zadkiel



The Annunciation by Henry Ossawa Tanner



The Archangel Jeremiael holding a book, depicted in a stained-glass window at St Michael and All Angels Church, Haghenden

Restorationist

Jehovah's Witnesses, citing a reference to "the voice of the archangel" at 1 Thessalonians 4:16, also believe that "Michael" is another name for Jesus in heaven. They believe Jesus is an archangel in the true sense of the word—the supreme leader of angels.^[49]

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church) interprets the term "archangel" as meaning "Chief Angel",^[50] Michael is the only individual so designated in the Latter Day Saints

canon.^[51] It is believed that he is the head of all of the angels.^[50] LDS Church doctrine also states that the archangel Michael was the first man, Adam.^[52] Though no other being is identified as an "archangel", Joseph Smith taught that the angel Gabriel was known in mortality as Noah^[53] and the angel Raphael is a being of significant standing, even though he has never been identified with any mortal prophet.^[54]

The Legend of the Queen of Sheba (Extended)

Do you notice that the Queen of Sheba is not given a name in the Bible, only her title? And interestingly enough, any direct archaeological evidence of the legendary queen of Sheba is not found in any other historical sources, besides that of the Bible and Josephus. Her legend, though, abounds because of her unquenchable search for wisdom, her political savvy as trade negotiator for the Incense Road, her contributory gifts to King Solomon (a tradition paralleled through the Magi's gifts to Baby Jesus of gold, spice and stones), her personal conversion to Judaism, and the claimed lineage of Divine kingship rulers as her direct descendants in modern-day Ethiopia.

The Queen of Sheba ruled over Sabaea, a region that modern scholars pin to the area of southern Arabia and quite possibly modern -day Yemen or Ethiopia. The Sabeans may have been descendants of Abraham through his second wife, Keturah. Queen Sheba ruled a fabulously wealthy nation and was, like her contemporary Solomon, a highly esteemed intellectual. She was born into an Ethiopian dynasty, sometime in the 10th century B.C., when her father and grandfather being the last two rulers of the dynasty appointed her as their successor. She carved out for herself a position of great power and influence despite being ruled in a male-dominated society. Although not specifically mentioned, she was probably very dark-skinned – a trait rarely seen in the Jewish nation, and was thus rather striking. Her idolatrous country worshiped various gods, chief of which was Attar. Rich, smart, powerful, beautiful, and leader of her country, the Queen of Sheba was independent and brilliant in her own right.

So, why would the Queen of Sheba then choose to travel a journey of seven years (though she made it in three) to Jerusalem when she had everything she needed in her own country? According to the Bible, she wanted to determine firsthand if the wisdom of Solomon was true. But knowing her strong appetite for knowledge, was she hungry enough to travel great distances to find her intellectual soulmate? Or was it merely to set her eyes upon his rumored magnificent wealth? Maybe it allowed her to pay tribute to one of the great Kings of the world, and through her gifts express submission to his authority in the land. As a the economic leader of a wealthy nation, she perhaps needed to negotiate key commercial trade routes that King Solomon was encroaching upon and risking her country's financial future. Some scholars believe she was summoned by King Solomon, hoping to convert her nation in a non-militaristic manner to Judaism since her country was one of the few not worshipping the God of Abraham.

Or, was Queen Sheba the one ultimately searching out the wisdom of the one true God? Was she a restless spirit searching for more than material wealth and meaningless gods, and was she seeking for Solomon to provide her with this Truth? Did she inherently know that, through the quiet whisperings of God's Spirit in her soul, that this Truth lay beyond possessions, power and the trappings of false gods?

Her story begins as King Solomon has completed the magnificent Temple of Jerusalem in approximately 957 B.C and was living his own palace known as the Forest of Lebanon. The Queen leaves Sabaea and begins the arduous 1,200 mile journey to Jerusalem through Moab and the Arabian desert with an impressive entourage of servants, dozens of camels, four and a half tons of gold (worth \$3,500,000 in today's currency, giving an idea to how much she had to have been worth to afford such an extravagant gift). She also brought expensive spices, jewels, and interestingly the root of a balsam tree. This tree, now widely found in Israel, only grew in Sabaea at the time and was considered a rare treasure. Since the Queen of Sheba brings it to Judea, she is purposefully presenting King Solomon with a unique, priceless gift, thus acknowledging her high esteem for his intellectual abilities and regard for his splendor. It is also because of her gift that Israel has, in abundance today, the wood from the balsam tree.

When she reaches King Solomon, she immediately tests him with hard questions before she even presents him with gifts. Obviously her quest for knowledge supercedes that of political correctness. Queen Sheba had the utter confidence and boldness of a true monarch as to dare approach him as an equal. The Bible does not state what these questions are, but in Jewish tradition the riddles can be found in detail in the Midrash proverbs:

- 1) The Queen riddles: "Seven depart, nine enter, two pour, one drinks." Solomon's perceptive answer: 'Seven days of a woman's uncleanness, nine months of pregnancy, two breasts of the mother, at which the one child is nourished.' Note that the seven days of uncleanness refers directly to the Jewish tradition that a woman does not engage in intercourse during this period, and that anyone touching her by extension would also be considered unclean. At the end of the seven days, she is commanded to ritually cleanse herself before resuming sexual relations.
- 2) The Queen riddles: "A woman says to her son, 'Your father is my father, your grandfather is my husband, you are my son and I am your sister.'" Solomon correctly answers: 'This mother is one of the daughters of Lot, who were with child by their father.' Because the queen is a descendant of Abraham and Ketara, she would presumably have full knowledge of the stories of Abraham and his nephew Lot through the oral traditions handed down through the years.
- 3) She brings before King Solomon prepubescent children, all in the same attire, and asks him to distinguish between the males and females. Solomon made a sign to his eunuchs, who brought him nuts and roasted ears of corn, which they scattered before the children. The males, who were not bashful, collected them and tied them within the hems of their garments. The girls, however, were bashful (since their bodies would be revealed if they were to tie their undergarments) and therefore tied them within their outer garments. Solomon told the queen: "These are the males, and these are the females." Notice that Solomon wisely uses the mannerisms of young girls to find the answer, as opposed to trying to find any anatomical clues.
- 4) The Queen of Sheba brought a number of people before Solomon, some circumcised and others uncircumcised. She asked of him: "Distinguish between the circumcised and the uncircumcised." Solomon immediately made a sign to the High Priest to open the Ark of the Covenant. Those who were circumcised stood or bowed their bodies to half their height, while their countenances were filled with the radiance of the Shekhinah. The uncircumcised, however, fell on

their faces. Solomon immediately told the Queen of Sheba: "These are the uncircumcised, and these are the circumcised." She asked him: "How did you know?" He explained to her: "From Balaam the uncircumcised, of whom it is said: 'who beholds visions from the Almighty, prostrate, but with eyes unveiled' [Num. 24:4]. If he did not prostrate himself, he would see nothing. I also learned from Job, for when the three friends of Job came to console him, he told them [Job 12:3]: 'I am not less than you' [literally, I do not fall from you]—I do not fall like you, for you are uncircumcised, while I am circumcised."

Take into account that in each of these riddles, the queen of Sheba had to have some knowledge of Jewish tradition, culture, and the Torah. How is this possible if her country was an idolatrous nation and was never taught or integrated with the Jews? Perhaps she had already been doing some self-seeking of Judaism before her arrival to Israel, attempting to satisfy her thirst for knowledge. As an adept leader and noble stateswoman, she would impress Solomon with her knowledge of Jewish traditions. She quite likely came up with these riddles herself, and demonstrates her own intellectual capabilities. It's also possible that within her deep introspection, she recognized the futility and worthlessness of her own life (much like Solomon's book of Ecclesiastes). But instead of her impressing him, he turns the tables and fills her with of admiration and awe of the knowledge God has given him. One wonders if their conversations together revolved around the meaninglessness of their wealth, and centered on God. Did she provide some inspiration to his writings in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes?

As mentioned in the Bible, the magnificence of Solomon's wealth, the splendor of his architecture, his efficiency in running his country like a well-oiled machine, his finely dressed servants, his delectable gourmet food, and his astounding wisdom left the queen of Sheba utterly speechless and awestruck. Before she arrived, Queen Sheba had a sneaking suspicion that the rumors about his kingdom were nothing more than an exaggeration (since she couldn't always trust secondhand reports), and yet they proved to be a vast understatement compared to the reality she was seeing with her own eyes. Because of her superlative wisdom, she does not trust the rumors brought to her by underlings. Obviously Solomon's annual income of at least \$20,000,000 proved quite extensively larger than her own. But the Queen Sheba was not only drawn to his wealth and wisdom, but more importantly, she desired to know the Spirit of his God. Take special notice of the fact that her gifts of adulation – gold, spices, and jewels – to the ancestor of Jesus are a similar precursor to the three gifts given by the Magi to the actual Baby Jesus.

It is also noteworthy that the establishment of trade routes between their two countries was an outcome of their meeting. The Incense Road, which was established in 1000 B.C.E., began in Southern Arabia and ended in Israel. Its continuation across to Egypt, Syria and Ethiopia relied upon King Solomon's concession. The Queen's massive gifts of spices were indicative of her intentions to ratify the trade route with the King, and her negotiations proved successful. A ninth-century B.C. stamp with a southern Arabic script, made of a reddish-brown clay indigenous to Yemen corroborates this theory. The queen needed these commercial trade routes to cement her country's financial future, thus proving that she was an adept negotiator as well.

Queen Sheba's zeal for acquiring knowledge, especially knowledge about the one true God, was insatiable. She took any and all lengths to learn about Him, and went directly the most reliable source on earth – King Solomon. Understandably, this is why Jesus spoke specifically about the

Queen of the South, widely believed to be the Queen of Sheba, as she came from the ends of the earth to gain his wisdom. Jesus parallels her actions with those of the believing Jews who, without ceasing, ravenously seek out the spirit of Jesus during his ministry, and speaks judgment on those who refuse to believe. The greatest treasure she took back with her was the spiritual and moral wisdom God had put into the heart of Solomon.

Many scholars believe that though Queen of Sheba was attracted to Solomon's mind, no sexual relationship between the two monarchs took place for months due to her chastity (akin to that of the Virgin [Mary](#)). She offered him the gifts and talents brought during her journey to Jerusalem, and showered him with unabashed admiration, but she did not offer herself. Her virtue remained intact until, purportedly (not relayed in the Bible), the fateful evening of her last night in Solomon's palace before the long journey back to Sabaea.

Keep in mind that according to the Bible, Solomon has now offered Queen Sheba anything her heart desired. Since she already had wealth, wisdom and power, her final request could be construed as wanting an heir, which is especially important in Biblical times in order to ensure a woman's survival. Since Queen Sheba was not thought to have had a husband, the survival of herself and her monarchy was in peril. Delicious rumors are rampant about the night she was tricked into losing her chastity in the palace.

Legend has it that, during her final evening in Jerusalem, the two monarchs agreed not to take anything else from each other unless they were given expressed permission. He would not take advantage of her purity, and she in return would not take any of his possessions. But Solomon, a reputed womanizer who had hundreds of wives and concubines, wanted Queen Sheba for himself. He had his kitchen staff prepare an extra salty meal full of hot spices, yet left no water in her room. Late that night, his plan worked beautifully as Sheba became incredibly thirsty. Finding no water, she hastily grabbed the water from Solomon's cup. Caught in the act, Solomon called her on the carpet about the broken agreement, and held her to its terms. They both enjoyed this one night of lovemaking, whether by trickery or mutual consent, until the sun rose the next morning.

The Queen of Sheba leaves the following day, and according to both Jewish and Ethiopian anecdotes, with a baby son growing in her belly. Upon her departure, Solomon entrusts her with his ring engraved with the Lion of Judah, signifying Israel, which she holds as heirloom for her newborn son and proof of his parentage. Menelik (meaning "Son of the Wise"), allegedly born of Solomon and Sheba, becomes the heir of Sabaea and the future king of Ethiopia. The queen of Sheba is ultimately responsible for converting her entire country into the true religion and ridding them of false idols.

Her son Menelik reportedly returns to King Solomon in Israel until he is 18 years old, and under Solomon's tutelage becomes immersed in Judaism. When he returns back to his homeland, Menelik also, according to legend, brings back with him the treasured Ark of the Covenant as a gift from his father, King Solomon. Whether this exchange actually took place is debated, and whether the transfer of the true Ark of the Covenant, or a mere replica, is also circumspect.

Menelik thus becomes the first in an unbroken line of 225 emperors in Ethiopia from the Davidic lineage of Jesus. While there is no way to prove for certain that Menelik is the son of Solomon and Sheba, recent genetic studies (according to the Christian Science Monitor) have found that some

Ethiopians have 40-50 percent of their genomes that match more closely with populations outside of Africa, and that this genetic mixture occurred 3,000 years ago. Some Ethiopians share up to 40% of their DNA with populations in Syria and Israel.

The Ethiopian Martyrdom of Saint George

The holy and honored, the great star of the East, Saint George, the fighter, became a martyr on May one. The name of the father of this Holy man was Anastasius and he was from the country of Cappadocia. His mother's name was Theobesta from the country of Palestine.

When George was twenty years old his father died and after he grew up, went to the Emperor Dodyanos so that he might receive the appointment which his father had held. He found the emperor setting up idols worshipping them and compelling all men to do as same. George divided all the goods, which were his among the poor, the needy and set free his slaves. Then, he stood up before the emperor and confessed our Lord Jesus Christ. The emperor tried to persuade him [to reject Christ] and promised him many great [honors]. But he would not turn [to idolatry] and he would not submit to him. The emperor tortured him lots, but God strengthened him and healed his wounds. He told him that he should die three times for His holy Name, and that each time He would raise him up, but that when he died for the fourth time he should received the crown of martyrdom. He promised him he should inherit great and well-known fame in all the ends of the world, informed him that he should continue to be tortured for seven years and that He would send His angels to minister unto him. Now the emperor was exceedingly sad and sorry because of all the many tortures which he was inflicting upon Saint George; Because the saint would not submit to him.

After this the emperor brought to him a great and powerful magician whose name was Athanasius. He concocted a cup full of poison, gave it to that saint to drink, and he thought that he would die as soon as he had drunk it. When Saint George had drunk the cup, which was full of poison, he received no injury whatsoever. The magician believed on our Lord Jesus Christ and became a martyr. The emperor had an instrument brought wherein were teeth like a saw. He commanded his soldiers to saw the saint in it and when they had sawn him, he delivered up his soul. But our Lord Jesus Christ raised him up, and the Saint returned to the city. Whilst the people saw this, many of them believed on our Lord Jesus Christ, and they received crowns of martyrdom. They were in number thirty thousand and seven hundred souls. When Saint George stood before the Emperor Dodyanos, in the place where the kings assembled, now the kings were sitting upon seventy thrones, the emperor said unto him, "We wish thee to make these thrones whereon we are now sitting to put forth leaves, and bear fruit." Saint George prayed to God concerning these thrones and they put forth leaves and bore fruit straightway.

After this they took Saint George, and boiled him in a brass cauldron and then threw him out into the desert. But God restored his soul to his body and raised him up again; The Saint returned to the kings, preached the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ openly. They all marveled and said to him, "If you will raise the dead we shall know that thy God is God indeed and we will believe." Saint George prayed to God and he raised up for them from a cave very many dead people, both men and women and young people. These preached the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, told the people about Gahanam, and the Judgment. (or, punishment) After this they returned to their graves and died.

When those infidels who were contending against him and resisting him, saw this they said, "These creatures which you have raised up are unclean spirits. They are satanic spirits and not men." Because of their great sadness and sorrow for Saint George and the tortures which he was condemned by them to suffer and in order that he might submit to them, they committed him to the care of a poor beggar woman. When the poor woman went out to beg for bread the angel of the Lord brought him a table whereon there were all kinds of good food.

There was in the house of that woman a piece of dry wood and whilst Saint George prayed to God that wood germinated, put forth leaves, became a tall tree with long branches and much foliage. When the poor widow came, saw that great miracle, how that tree had shot up and the table, she marveled, and brought her son who was blind, deaf, a dumb, a paralytic, and asked the Saint to heal him for her. He told her the way to God and she believed on our Lord Jesus Christ. The Saint made the sign of the Cross over the face of the child and he saw straightway. Saint George said to her, "I will that the next time he may be able to hear, to walk and to speak." The emperor passed through the city, saw that tree, and he marveled, asked questions concerning it. They told him, saying, "This tree is in the house of the widow wherein Saint George dwell."

The emperor having remembered Saint George had him brought to him and he commanded his soldiers to beat him with very many stripes. They beat him and crushed his feet. He died for the third time and they cast [his body] outside the city. But God raised him up and he returned to the kings. When the Emperor saw him, he marveled and was frightened, because of all the tortures to which he had subjected the Saint and he began to speak him fair. He promised to give him his daughter in marriage and to make him the second in the kingdom [if he would deny Christ]. Then the Saint made a mock of him and promised him, untruthfully, that he would offer incense to his gods. The emperor rejoiced and thought that the saint would do so actually. He ran to him, kissed his head and brought him into the royal palace. The Saint rose up and prayed repeating a psalm of David, and the empress, the wife of the emperor, kissed him and asked him to explain to her what he had read. He began to make her to know and to understand the matter from the time when God created the world, to the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ; His words entered her heart and she believed on our Lord Jesus Christ.

On the following day a herald went round calling upon all the men of the city to gather together in order to see Saint George make an offering of incense to the gods. When the widow heard this, she was exceedingly sorry and she went out with the multitude to see Saint George make an offering of incense to the idols. When the Saint saw her he rejoiced and said to her son, "Go to Apollo, and command him to come. Hither to me in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ"; the widow's son was healed straightway, and he walked and talked, He went to the idol, and told him what Saint George had said. He drove out the Satan that foul spirit, which dwelt in the idol, and brought it to Saint George. The idol confessed before all the people, saying, "I am not God, but a creature that lead men into error." The saint commanded the earth to swallow him up, and straightway the earth swallowed that deceiver. When the emperor saw this, he and all those who were with him were ashamed. Being filled with fury and wrath against Saint George, he came to the empress his wife and she said to him, "Did I not tell thee not to oppose the Galilean? Their God is strong and mighty." The emperor was exceedingly wroth with her, for he knew that Saint George had brought her into the True Faith. He commanded his soldiers to drag her outside the city, and to cut up her body with a saw, [and they did so,] and she received the crown of martyrdom in the kingdom of the heavens.

Then straightway the kings were afraid because of Saint George and they advised the Emperor Dodyanos to write the order for the soldiers to cut off his head with the sword, so that he might have rest from Saint George, the mighty one, the conqueror, rejoiced exceedingly. He entreated our Lord Jesus Christ to bring down fire from heaven and destroy the seventy kings, so that they might cease from inflicting tribulation upon the Church. Forthwith fire came down from heaven, and burnt up the seventy kings and all their soldiers. Then our Lord Jesus Christ appeared to Saint George and made many covenants with him. He said to him, "Whosoever shall commemorate thee upon earth I will destroy all his sins. Whosoever is in tribulation, whether by sea or on land, or is sick, and entreat Me in your name, I will deliver him quickly from his tribulation"; having said this He went up into heaven.

After this the Saint bowed his neck, cut off his holy head with the sword and he received three everlasting crowns of martyrdom in the kingdom of the heavens. Four of his believing slaves took the body of Saint George, wrapped it up in his apparel, took it into the city of Leda, built a beautiful church, laid his body therein, and countless miracles were wrought there.

Salutation to thee, O George, the root of thousands of martyrs. Salutation to the ninety men and thirty-seven women who, when they saw the hidden glory of the heavens revealed at the martyrdom of Saint George, became martyrs.

The Thunder, Perfect Mind

I was sent forth from the power,
and I have come to those who reflect upon me,
and I have been found among those who seek after me.
Look upon me, you who reflect upon me,
and you hearers, hear me.
You who are waiting for me, take me to yourselves.
And do not banish me from your sight.
And do not make your voice hate me, nor your hearing.
Do not be ignorant of me anywhere or any time. Be on your guard!
Do not be ignorant of me.

For I am the first and the last.
I am the honored one and the scorned one.
I am the whore and the holy one.
I am the wife and the virgin.

I am <the mother> and the daughter.
I am the members of my mother.
I am the barren one
and many are her sons.
I am she whose wedding is great,
and I have not taken a husband.
I am the midwife and she who does not bear.
I am the solace of my labor pains.
I am the bride and the bridegroom,
and it is my husband who begot me.
I am the mother of my father
and the sister of my husband
and he is my offspring.
I am the slave of him who prepared me.
I am the ruler of my offspring.
But he is the one who begot me before the time on a birthday.
And he is my offspring in (due) time,
and my power is from him.
I am the staff of his power in his youth,
and he is the rod of my old age.
And whatever he wills happens to me.
I am the silence that is incomprehensible
and the idea whose remembrance is frequent.
I am the voice whose sound is manifold
and the word whose appearance is multiple.
I am the utterance of my name.

Why, you who hate me, do you love me,
and hate those who love me?

You who deny me, confess me,
and you who confess me, deny me.
You who tell the truth about me, lie about me,
and you who have lied about me, tell the truth about me.
You who know me, be ignorant of me,
and those who have not known me, let them know me.

For I am knowledge and ignorance.
I am shame and boldness.
I am shameless; I am ashamed.
I am strength and I am fear.
I am war and peace.
Give heed to me.

I am the one who is disgraced and the great one.
Give heed to my poverty and my wealth.
Do not be arrogant to me when I am cast out upon the earth,
and you will find me in those that are to come.
And do not look upon me on the dung-heap
nor go and leave me cast out,
and you will find me in the kingdoms.
And do not look upon me when I am cast out among those who
are disgraced and in the least places,
nor laugh at me.
And do not cast me out among those who are slain in violence.

But I, I am compassionate and I am cruel.
Be on your guard!

Do not hate my obedience

and do not love my self-control.

In my weakness, do not forsake me,

and do not be afraid of my power.

For why do you despise my fear

and curse my pride?

But I am she who exists in all fears

and strength in trembling.

I am she who is weak,

and I am well in a pleasant place.

I am senseless and I am wise.

Why have you hated me in your counsels?

For I shall be silent among those who are silent,

and I shall appear and speak,

Why then have you hated me, you Greeks?

Because I am a barbarian among the barbarians?

For I am the wisdom of the Greeks

and the knowledge of the barbarians.

I am the judgement of the Greeks and of the barbarians.

I am the one whose image is great in Egypt

and the one who has no image among the barbarians.

I am the one who has been hated everywhere

and who has been loved everywhere.

I am the one whom they call Life,

and you have called Death.

I am the one whom they call Law,

and you have called Lawlessness.

I am the one whom you have pursued,

and I am the one whom you have seized.
I am the one whom you have scattered,
and you have gathered me together.
I am the one before whom you have been ashamed,
and you have been shameless to me.
I am she who does not keep festival,
and I am she whose festivals are many.

I, I am godless,
and I am the one whose God is great.
I am the one whom you have reflected upon,
and you have scorned me.
I am unlearned,
and they learn from me.
I am the one that you have despised,
and you reflect upon me.
I am the one whom you have hidden from,
and you appear to me.
But whenever you hide yourselves,
I myself will appear.
For whenever you appear,
I myself will hide from you.

Those who have [...] to it [...] senselessly [...].
Take me [... understanding] from grief.
and take me to yourselves from understanding and grief.
And take me to yourselves from places that are ugly and in ruin,
and rob from those which are good even though in ugliness.
Out of shame, take me to yourselves shamelessly;

and out of shamelessness and shame,
upbraid my members in yourselves.
And come forward to me, you who know me
and you who know my members,
and establish the great ones among the small first creatures.
Come forward to childhood,
and do not despise it because it is small and it is little.
And do not turn away greatnesses in some parts from the smallnesses,
for the smallnesses are known from the greatnesses.

Why do you curse me and honor me?
You have wounded and you have had mercy.
Do not separate me from the first ones whom you have known.
And do not cast anyone out nor turn anyone away
[...] turn you away and [...] know him not.
[...].

What is mine [...].
I know the first ones and those after them know me.
But I am the mind of [...] and the rest of [...].
I am the knowledge of my inquiry,
and the finding of those who seek after me,
and the command of those who ask of me,
and the power of the powers in my knowledge
of the angels, who have been sent at my word,
and of gods in their seasons by my counsel,
and of spirits of every man who exists with me,
and of women who dwell within me.
I am the one who is honored, and who is praised,
and who is despised scornfully.

I am peace,
and war has come because of me.
And I am an alien and a citizen.

I am the substance and the one who has no substance.
Those who are without association with me are ignorant of me,
and those who are in my substance are the ones who know me.
Those who are close to me have been ignorant of me,
and those who are far away from me are the ones who have known me.
On the day when I am close to you, you are far away from me,
and on the day when I am far away from you, I am close to you.

[I am ...] within.
[I am ...] of the natures.
I am [...] of the creation of the spirits.
[...] request of the souls.
I am control and the uncontrollable.
I am the union and the dissolution.
I am the abiding and I am the dissolution.
I am the one below,
and they come up to me.
I am the judgment and the acquittal.
I, I am sinless,
and the root of sin derives from me.
I am lust in (outward) appearance,
and interior self-control exists within me.
I am the hearing which is attainable to everyone
and the speech which cannot be grasped.
I am a mute who does not speak,

and great is my multitude of words.

Hear me in gentleness, and learn of me in roughness.

I am she who cries out,

and I am cast forth upon the face of the earth.

I prepare the bread and my mind within.

I am the knowledge of my name.

I am the one who cries out,

and I listen.

I appear and [...] walk in [...] seal of my [...].

I am [...] the defense [...].

I am the one who is called Truth

and iniquity [...].

You honor me [...] and you whisper against me.

You who are vanquished, judge them (who vanquish you)

before they give judgment against you,

because the judge and partiality exist in you.

If you are condemned by this one, who will acquit you?

Or, if you are acquitted by him, who will be able to detain you?

For what is inside of you is what is outside of you,

and the one who fashions you on the outside

is the one who shaped the inside of you.

And what you see outside of you, you see inside of you;

it is visible and it is your garment.

Hear me, you hearers

and learn of my words, you who know me.

I am the hearing that is attainable to everything;

I am the speech that cannot be grasped.

I am the name of the sound

and the sound of the name.

I am the sign of the letter

and the designation of the division.

And I [...].

(3 lines missing)

[...] light [...].

[...] hearers [...] to you

[...] the great power.

And [...] will not move the name.

[...] to the one who created me.

And I will speak his name.

Look then at his words

and all the writings which have been completed.

Give heed then, you hearers

and you also, the angels and those who have been sent,

and you spirits who have arisen from the dead.

For I am the one who alone exists,

and I have no one who will judge me.

For many are the pleasant forms which exist in numerous sins,

and incontinencies,

and disgraceful passions,

and fleeting pleasures,

which (men) embrace until they become sober

and go up to their resting place.

And they will find me there,

and they will live,

and they will not die again.

The Book of Thomas the Contender

The secret words that the savior spoke to Judas Thomas which I, even I, Mathaias, wrote down, while I was walking, listening to them speak with one another.

The savior said, "Brother Thomas while you have time in the world, listen to me, and I will reveal to you the things you have pondered in your mind.

"Now, since it has been said that you are my twin and true companion, examine yourself, and learn who you are, in what way you exist, and how you will come to be. Since you will be called my brother, it is not fitting that you be ignorant of yourself. And I know that you have understood, because you had already understood that I am the knowledge of the truth. So while you accompany me, although you are uncomprehending, you have (in fact) already come to know, and you will be called 'the one who knows himself'. For he who has not known himself has known nothing, but he who has known himself has at the same time already achieved knowledge about the depth of the all. So then, you, my brother Thomas, have beheld what is obscure to men, that is, what they ignorantly stumble against."

Now Thomas said to the lord, "Therefore I beg you to tell me what I ask you before your ascension, and when I hear from you about the hidden things, then I can speak about them. And it is obvious to me that the truth is difficult to perform before men."

The savior answered, saying, "If the things that are visible to you are obscure to you, how can you hear about the things that are not visible? If the deeds of the truth that are visible in the world are difficult for you to perform, how indeed, then, shall you perform those that pertain to the exalted height and to the pleroma which are not visible? And how shall you be called 'laborers'? In this respect you are apprentices, and have not yet received the height of perfection."

Now Thomas answered and said to the savior, "Tell us about these things that you say are not visible, but are hidden from us."

The savior said, "All bodies [...] the beasts are begotten [...] it is evident like [...] this, too, those that are above [...] things that are visible, but they are visible in their own root, and it is their fruit that nourishes them. But these visible bodies survive by devouring creatures similar to them with the result that the bodies change. Now that which changes will decay and perish, and has no hope of life from then on, since that body is bestial. So just as the body of the beasts perishes, so also will these formations perish. Do they not derive from intercourse like that of the beasts? If it, too derives from intercourse, how will it beget anything different from beasts? So, therefore, you are babes until you become perfect."

And Thomas answered, "Therefore I say to you, lord, that those who speak about things that are invisible and difficult to explain are like those who shoot their arrows at a target at night. To be sure, they shoot their arrows as anyone would - since they shoot at the target - but it is not visible. Yet when the light comes forth and hides the darkness, then the work of each will appear. And you, our light, enlighten, O lord."

Jesus said, "It is in light that light exists."

Thomas, spoke, saying, "Lord, why does this visible light that shines on behalf of men rise and set?"

The savior said, "O blessed Thomas, of course this visible light shines on your behalf - not in order that you remain here, but rather that you might come forth - and whenever all the elect abandon bestiality, then this light will withdraw up to its essence, and its essence will welcome it, since it is a good servant."

Then the savior continued and said, "O unsearchable love of the light! O bitterness of the fire that blazes in the bodies of men and in their marrow, kindling in them night and day, and burning the limbs of men and making their minds become drunk and their souls become deranged [...] them within males and females [...] night and moving them, [...] secretly and visibly. For the males move [...] upon the females and the females upon the males. Therefore it is said, "Everyone who seeks the truth from true wisdom will make himself wings so as to fly, fleeing the lust that scorches the spirits of men." And he will make himself wings to flee every visible spirit."

And Thomas answered, saying, "Lord, this is exactly what I am asking you about, since I have understood that you are the one who is beneficial to us, as you say."

Again the savior answered and said, "Therefore it is necessary for us to speak to you, since this is the doctrine of the perfect. If, now, you desire to become perfect, you shall observe these things; if not, your name is 'Ignorant', since it is impossible for an intelligent man to dwell with a fool, for the intelligent man is perfect in all wisdom. To the fool, however, the good and bad are the same - indeed the wise man will be nourished by the truth and (Ps. 1:3) "will be like a tree growing by the meandering stream" - seeing that there are some who, although having wings, rush upon the visible things, things that are far from the truth. For that which guides them, the fire, will give them an illusion of truth, and will shine on them with a perishable beauty, and it will imprison them in a dark sweetness and captivate them with fragrant pleasure. And it will blind them with insatiable lust and burn their souls and become for them like a stake stuck in their heart which they can never dislodge. And like a bit in the mouth, it leads them according to its own desire. And it has fettered them with its chains and bound all their limbs with the bitterness of the bondage of lust for those visible things that will decay and change and swerve by impulse. They have always been attracted downwards; as they are killed, they are assimilated to all the beasts of the perishable realm."

Thomas answered and said, "It is obvious and has been said, 'Many are [...] those who do not know [...] soul.'"

And the savior answered, saying, "Blessed is the wise man who sought after the truth, and when he found it, he rested upon it forever and was unafraid of those who wanted to disturb him."

Thomas answered and said, "It is beneficial for us, lord, to rest among our own?"

The savior said, "Yes, it is useful. And it is good for you, since things visible among men will dissolve - for the vessel of their flesh will dissolve, and when it is brought to naught it will come to be among visible things, among things that are seen. And then the fire which they see gives them pain on account of love for the faith they formerly possessed. They will be gathered back to that which is visible. Moreover, those who have sight among things that are not visible, without the first love they will perish in the concern for this life and the scorching of the fire. Only a little while longer, and that which is visible will dissolve; then shapeless shades will emerge, and in the midst of tombs they will forever dwell upon the corpses in pain and corruption of soul."

Thomas answered and said, "What have we to say in the face of these things? What shall we say to blind men? What doctrine should we express to these miserable mortals who say, "We came to do good and not curse," and yet claim, "Had we not been begotten in the flesh, we would not have known iniquity"?"

The savior said, "Truly, as for those, do not esteem them as men, but regard them as beasts, for just as beasts devour one another, so also men of this sort devour one another. On the contrary, they are deprived of the kingdom since they love the sweetness of the fire and are servants of death and rush to the works of corruption. They fulfill the lust of their fathers. They will be thrown down to the abyss and be afflicted by the torment of the bitterness of their evil nature. For they will be scourged so as to make them rush backwards, whither they do not know, and they will recede from their limbs not patiently, but with despair. And they rejoice over [...] madness and derangement [...] They pursue this derangement without realizing their madness, thinking that they are wise. They [...] their body [...] Their mind is directed to their own selves, for their thought is occupied with their deeds. But it is the fire that will burn them."

And Thomas answered and said, "Lord, what will the one thrown down to them do? For I am most anxious about them; many are those who fight them."

The savior answered and said, "What is your own opinion?"

Judas - the one called Thomas - said, "It is you, lord, whom it befits to speak, and me to listen."

The savior replied, "Listen to what I am going to tell you and believe in the truth. That which sows and that which is sown will dissolve in the fire - within the fire and the water - and they will hide in tombs of darkness. And after a long time they shall show forth the fruit of the evil trees, being punished, being slain in the mouth of beasts and men at the instigation of the rains and winds and air and the light that shines above."

Thomas replied, "You have certainly persuaded us, lord. We realize in our heart, and it is obvious, that this is so, and that your word is sufficient. But these words that you speak to us are ridiculous and contemptible to the world since they are misunderstood. So how can we go preach them, since we are not esteemed in the world?"

The savior answered and said, "Truly I tell you that he who will listen to your word and turn away his face or sneer at it or smirk at these things, truly I tell you that he will be handed over to the ruler above who rules over all the powers as their king, and he will turn that one around and cast him from heaven down to the abyss, and he will be imprisoned in a narrow dark place. Moreover, he can neither turn nor move on account of the great depth of Tartaros and the heavy bitterness of Hades that is steadfast [...] them to it [...] they will not forgive [...] pursue you. They will hand [...] over to [...] angel Tartarouchos [...] fire pursuing them [...] fiery scourges that cast a shower of sparks into the face of the one who is pursued. If he flees westward, he finds the fire. If he turns southward, he finds it there as well. If he turns northward, the threat of seething fire meets him again. Nor does he find the way to the east so as to flee there and be saved, for he did not find it in the day he was in the body, so that he might find it in the day of judgment."

Then the savior continued, saying, "Woe to you, godless ones, who have no hope, who rely on things that will not happen!

"Woe to you who hope in the flesh and in the prison that will perish! How long will you be oblivious? And how long will you suppose that the imperishables will perish too? Your hope is set upon the world, and your god is this life! You are corrupting your souls!

"Woe to you within the fire that burns in you, for it is insatiable!

"Woe to you because of the wheel that turns in your minds!

"Woe to you within the grip of the burning that is in you, for it will devour your flesh openly and rend your souls secretly, and prepare you for your companions!

"Woe to you, captives, for you are bound in caverns! You laugh! In mad laughter you rejoice! You neither realize your perdition, nor do you reflect on your circumstances, nor have you understood that you dwell in darkness and death! On the contrary, you are drunk with the fire and full of bitterness. Your mind is deranged on account of the burning that is in you, and sweet to you are the poison and the blows of your enemies! And the darkness rose for you like the light, for you surrendered your freedom for servitude! You darkened your hearts and surrendered your thoughts to folly, and you filled your thoughts with the smoke of the fire that is in you! And your light has hidden in the cloud of [...] and the garment that is put upon you, you [...]. And you were seized by the hope that does not exist. And whom is it you have believed? Do you not know that you all dwell among those who that [...] you as though you [...]. You baptized your souls in the water of darkness ! You walked by your own whims!

"Woe to you who dwell in error, heedless that the light of the sun which judges and looks down upon the all will circle around all things so as to enslave the enemies. You do not even notice the moon, how by night and day it looks down, looking at the bodies of your slaughters!

"Woe to you who love intimacy with womankind and polluted intercourse with them! Woe to you in the grip of the powers of your body, for they will afflict you! Woe to you in the grip of the forces of the evil demons! Woe to you who beguile your limbs with fire! Who is it that will rain a refreshing dew on you to extinguish the mass of fire from you along with your burning? Who is it that will cause the sun to shine upon you to disperse the darkness in you and hide the darkness and polluted water?

"The sun and the moon will give a fragrance to you together with the air and the spirit and the earth and the water. For if the sun does not shine upon these bodies, they will wither and perish just like weeds or grass. If the sun shines on them, they prevail and choke the grapevine; but if the grapevine prevails and shades those weeds and all the other brush growing alongside, and spreads and flourishes, it alone inherits the land in which it grows; and every place it has shaded it dominates. And when it grows up, it dominates all the land and is bountiful for its master, and it pleases him even more, for he would have suffered great pains on account of these plants until he uprooted them. But the grapevine alone removed them and choked them, and they died and became like the soil."

Then Jesus continued and said to them, "Woe to you, for you did not receive the doctrine, and those who are [...] will labor at preaching [...]. And you are rushing into [...] will send them down [...] you kill them daily in order that they might rise from death.

"Blessed are you who have prior knowledge of the stumbling blocks and who flee alien things.

"Blessed are you who are reviled and not esteemed on account of the love their lord has for them.

"Blessed are you who weep and are oppressed by those without hope, for you will be released from every bondage.

"Watch and pray that you not come to be in the flesh, but rather that you come forth from the bondage of the bitterness of this life. And as you pray, you will find rest, for you have left behind the suffering and the disgrace. For when you come forth from the sufferings and passions of the body, you will receive rest from the good one, and you will reign with the king, you joined with him and he with you, from now on, for ever and ever, Amen."

The Sophia of Jesus Christ

After he rose from the dead, his twelve disciples and seven women continued to be his followers, and went to Galilee onto the mountain called "Divination and Joy". When they gathered together and were perplexed about the underlying reality of the universe and the plan, and the holy providence, and the power of the authorities, and about everything the Savior is doing with them in the secret of the holy plan, the Savior appeared - not in his previous form, but in the invisible spirit. And his likeness resembles a great angel of light. But his resemblance I must not describe. No mortal flesh could endure it, but only pure, perfect flesh, like that which he taught us about on the mountain called "Of the Olives" in Galilee.

And he said: "Peace be to you, My peace I give you!" And they all marveled and were afraid. The Savior laughed and said to them: "What are you thinking about? Are you perplexed? What are you searching for?"

Philip said: "For the underlying reality of the universe and the plan."

The Savior said to them: "I want you to know that all men are born on earth from the foundation of the world until now, being dust, while they have inquired about God, who he is and what he is like, have not found him. Now the wisest among them have speculated from the ordering of the world and (its) movement. But their speculation has not reached the truth. For it is said that the ordering is directed in three ways, by all the philosophers, (and) hence they do not agree. For some of them say about the world that it is directed by itself. Others, that it is providence (that directs it). Others, that it is fate. But it is none of these. Again, of the three voices I have just mentioned, none is close to the truth, and (they are) from man. But I, who came from Infinite Light, I am here - for I know him (Light) - that I might speak to you about the precise nature of the truth. For whatever is from itself is a polluted life; it is self-made. Providence has no wisdom in it. And fate does not discern. But to you it is given to know; and whoever is worthy of knowledge will receive (it), whoever has not been begotten by the sowing of unclean rubbing but by First Who Was Sent, for he is an immortal in the midst of mortal men."

Matthew said to him: "Lord, no one can find the truth except through you. Therefore teach us the truth."

The Savior said: "He Who Is is ineffable. No principle knew him, no authority, no subjection, nor any creature from the foundation of the world until now, except he alone, and anyone to whom he wants to make revelation through him who is from First Light. From now on, I am the Great Savior. For he is immortal and eternal. Now he is eternal, having no birth; for everyone who has birth will perish. He is unbegotten, having no beginning; for everyone who has a beginning has an end. Since no one rules over him, he has no name; for whoever has a name is the creation of another."

(BG 84, 13-17 adds: He is unnameable. He has no human form; for whoever has human form is the creation of another).

"And he has a semblance of his own - not like what you have seen and received, but a strange semblance that surpasses all things and is better than the universe. It looks to every side and sees itself from itself. Since it is infinite, he is ever incomprehensible. He is imperishable and has no likeness (to anything). He is unchanging good. He is faultless. He is eternal. He is blessed. While he is not known, he ever knows himself. He is immeasurable. He is untraceable. He is perfect, having no defect. He is imperishability blessed. He is called 'Father of the Universe'".

Philip said: "Lord, how, then, did he appear to the perfect ones?"

The perfect Savior said to him: "Before anything is visible of those that are visible, the majesty and the authority are in him, since he embraces the whole of the totalities, while nothing embraces him. For he is all mind. And he is thought and considering and reflecting and rationality and power. They all are equal powers. They are the sources of the totalities. And their whole race from first to last was in his foreknowledge, (that of) the infinite, unbegotten Father."

Thomas said to him: "Lord, Savior, why did these come to be, and why were these revealed?"

The perfect Savior said: "I came from the Infinite that I might tell you all things. Spirit-Who-Is was the begetter, who had the power <of> a begetter and a form-giver`s nature, that the great wealth that was hidden in him might be revealed. Because of his mercy and his love, he wished to bring forth fruit by himself, that he might not <enjoy> his goodness alone, but (that) other spirits of the Unwavering Generation might bring forth body and fruit, glory and honor, in imperishableness and his infinite grace, that his treasure might be revealed by Self-begotten God, the father of every imperishableness and those that came to be afterward. But they had not yet come to visibility. Now a great difference exists among the imperishables."

He called out, saying: "Whoever has ears to hear about the infinities, let him hear!"; and "I have addressed those who are awake." Still he continued and said: "Everything that came from the perishable will perish, since it came from the perishable. But whatever came from imperishableness does not perish but becomes imperishable. So, many men went astray because they had not known this difference and they died."

Mary said to him: "Lord, then how will we know that?"

The perfect Savior said: "Come (you) from invisible things to the end of those that are visible, and the very emanation of Thought will reveal to you how faith in those things that are not visible was found in those that are visible, those that belong to Unbegotten Father. Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear!

"The Lord of the Universe is not called 'Father', but 'Forefather', the beginning of those that will appear, but he (the Lord) is the beginningless Forefather. Seeing himself within himself in a mirror, he appeared resembling himself, but his likeness appeared as Divine Self-Father, and <as> Confronter over the Confronted ones, First Existent Unbegotten Father. He is indeed of equal age <with> the Light that is before him, but he is not equal to him in power.

"And afterward was revealed a whole multitude of confronting, self-begotten ones, equal in age and power, being in glory (and) without number, whose race is called 'The Generation over Whom There Is No Kingdom' from the one in whom you yourselves have appeared from these men. And that whole multitude over which there is no kingdom is called 'Sons of Unbegotten Father, God, Savior, Son of God,' whose likeness is with you. Now he is the unknowable, who is full of ever-imperishable glory and ineffable joy. They all are at rest in him, ever rejoicing in ineffable joy in his unchanging glory and measureless jubilation; this was never heard or known among all the aeons and their worlds until now."

Matthew said to him: "Lord, Savior, how was Man revealed?"

The perfect Savior said: "I want you to know that he who appeared before the universe in infinity, Self-grown, Self-constructed Father, being full of shining light and ineffable, in the beginning, when he decided to have his likeness become a great power, immediately the principle (or beginning) of that Light appeared as Immortal Androgynous Man, that through that Immortal Androgynous Man they might attain their salvation and awake from forgetfulness through the interpreter who was sent, who is with you until the end of the poverty of the robbers.

"And his consort is the Great Sophia, who from the first was destined in him for union by Self-begotten Father, from Immortal Man, who appeared as First and divinity and kingdom, for the Father, who is called 'Man, Self-Father', revealed this. And he created a great aeon, whose name is 'Ogdoad', for his own majesty.

"He was given great authority, and he ruled over the creation of poverty. He created gods and angels, <and> archangels, myriads without number for retinue, from that Light and the tri-male Spirit, which is that of Sophia, his consort. For from this, God originated divinity and kingdom. Therefore he was called 'God of gods' and 'King of kings'.

"First Man has his unique mind, within, and thought - just as he is it (thought) - (and) considering, reflecting, rationality, power. All the attributes that exist are perfect and immortal. In respect to imperishableness, they are indeed equal. (But) in respect to power, they are different, like the difference between father and son <, and son> and thought, and the thought and the remainder. As I said earlier, among the things that were created, the monad is first.

"And after everything, all that was revealed appeared from his power. And from what was created, all that was fashioned appeared; from what was fashioned appeared what was formed; from what was formed, what was named. Thus came the difference among the unbegotten ones from beginning to end."

Then Bartholomew said to him: "How (is it that) <he> was designated in the Gospel 'Man' and 'Son of Man'? To which of them, then, is this Son related?"

The Holy One said to him: "I want you to know that First Man is called 'Begetter, Self-perfected Mind'. He reflected with Great Sophia, his consort, and revealed his first-begotten, androgynous son. His male name is designated 'First Begetter, Son of God', his female name, 'First Begettress Sophia, Mother of the Universe'. Some call her 'Love'. Now First-begotten is called 'Christ'. Since he has authority from his father, he created a multitude of angels without number for retinue from Spirit and Light."

His disciples said to him: "Lord, reveal to us about the one called 'Man', that we also may know his glory exactly."

The perfect Savior said: "Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear. First Begetter Father is called 'Adam, Eye of Light,' because he came from shining Light, and his holy angels, who are ineffable (and) shadowless, ever rejoice with joy in their reflecting, which they received from their Father. The whole Kingdom of Son of Man, who is called 'Son of God,' is full of ineffable and shadowless joy, and unchanging jubilation, (they) rejoicing over his imperishable glory, which has never been heard until now, nor has it been revealed in the aeons that came afterward, and their worlds. I came from Self-begotten and First Infinite Light, that I might reveal everything to you."

Again, his disciples said: "Tell us clearly how they came down from the invisibilities, from the immortal to the world that dies?"

The perfect Savior said: "Son of Man consented with Sophia, his consort, and revealed a great androgynous light. His male name is designated 'Savior, Begetter of All Things'. His female name is designated 'All-Begettress Sophia'. Some call her 'Pistis'.

"All who come into the world, like a drop from the Light, are sent by him to the world of Almighty, that they might be guarded by him. And the bond of his forgetfulness bound him by the will of Sophia, that the matter might be <revealed> through it to the whole world in poverty, concerning his (Almighty's) arrogance and blindness and the ignorance that he was named. But I came from the places above by the will of the great Light, (I) who escaped from that bond; I have cut off the work of the robbers; I have awakened that drop that was sent from Sophia, that it might bear much fruit through me, and be perfected and not again be defective, but be <joined> through me, the Great Savior, that his glory might be revealed, so that Sophia might also be justified in regard to that defect, that her sons might not again become defective but might attain honor and glory and go up to their Father, and know the words of the masculine Light. And you were sent by the Son, who was sent that you might receive Light, and remove yourselves from the forgetfulness of the authorities, and that it might not again come to appearance because of you, namely, the unclean rubbing that is from the fearful fire that came from their fleshly part. Tread upon their malicious intent."

Then Thomas said to him: "Lord, Savior, how many are the aeons of those who surpass the heavens?"

The perfect Savior said: "I praise you (pl.) because you ask about the great aeons, for your roots are in the infinities. Now when those whom I have discussed earlier were revealed, he provided

[pages 10S and 110 are missing in NHC III, replaced here by the corresponding section in the Berlin Gnostic Codex, the beginning of which is somewhat different from the final partial sentence of NHC III 108 (the broken off sentence)]

[BG 107]: "Now when those whom I have discussed earlier were revealed, Self-begetter Father very soon created twelve aeons for retinue for the twelve angels. All these are perfect and good. Thus the defect in the female appeared."

And <he> said to him: "How many are the aeons of the immortals, starting from the infinities?"

The perfect Savior said: "Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear. The first aeon is that of Son of Man, who is called 'First Begetter', who is called 'Savior', who has appeared. The second aeon (is) that of Man, who is called 'Adam, Eye of Light'. That which embraces these is the aeon over which there is no kingdom, (the aeon) of the Eternal Infinite God, the Self-begotten aeon of the aeons that are in it, (the aeon) of the immortals, whom I described earlier, (the aeon) above the Seventh, that appeared from Sophia, which is the first aeon.

"Now Immortal Man revealed aeons and powers and kingdoms, and gave authority to all who appear in him, that they might exercise their desires until the last things that are above chaos. For these consented with each other and revealed every magnificence, even from spirit, multitudinous lights that are glorious and without number. These were called in the beginning, that is, the first aeon and <the second> and <the third>. The first <is> called 'Unity and Rest'. Each one has its (own) name; for the <third> aeon was designated 'Assembly' from the great multitude that appeared: in one, a multitude revealed themselves. Now because the multitudes gather and come to a unity we call them 'Assembly of the Eighth.' It appeared as androgynous and was named partly as male and partly as female. The male is called 'Assembly', while the female is called 'Life', that it might be shown that from a female came the life for all the aeons. And every name was received, starting from the beginning.

"For from his concurrence with his thought, the powers very soon appeared who were called 'gods'; and the gods of the gods from their wisdom revealed gods; <and the gods> from their wisdom revealed lords; and the lords of the lords from their thinkings revealed lords; and the lords from their power revealed archangels; the archangels from their words revealed angels; from them, semblances appeared, with structure and form and name for all the aeons and their worlds.

"And the immortals, whom I have just described, all have authority from Immortal Man, who is called 'Silence', because by reflecting without speech all her own majesty was perfected. For since the imperishabilities had the authority, each created a great kingdom in the Eighth, (and) also thrones and temples (and) firmaments for their own majesties. For these all came by the will of the Mother of the Universe."

Then the Holy Apostles said to him: "Lord, Savior, tell us about those who are in the aeons, since it is necessary for us to ask about them."

The perfect Savior said: "If you ask about anything, I will tell you. They created hosts of angels, myriads without number, for retinue and their glory. They created virgin spirits, the ineffable and unchangeable lights. For they have no sickness nor weakness, but it is will. [BG 115, 14 adds here: And they came to be in an instant.]

"Thus the aeons were completed quickly in the heavens and the firmaments in the glory of Immortal Man and Sophia, his consort: the area from which every aeon and the world and those that came afterward took (their) pattern for their creation of likenesses in the heavens of chaos and

their worlds. And all natures, starting from the revelation of chaos, are in the Light that shines without shadow, and joy that cannot be described, and unutterable jubilation. They ever delight themselves on account of their unchanging glory and the immeasurable rest, which cannot be described among all the aeons that came to be afterward, and all their powers. Now all that I have just said to you, I said that you might shine in Light more than these."

Mary said to him: "Holy Lord, where did your disciples come from, and where are they going, and (what) should they do here?"

The Perfect Savior said to them: "I want you to know that Sophia, the Mother of the Universe and the consort, desired by herself to bring these to existence without her male (consort). But by the will of the Father of the Universe, that his unimaginable goodness might be revealed, he created that curtain between the immortals and those that came afterward, that the consequence might follow ... [BG 118:] ... every aeon and chaos - that the defect of the female might <appear>, and it might come about that Error would contend with her. And these became the curtain of spirit. From <the> aeons above the emanations of Light, as I have said already, a drop from Light and Spirit came down to the lower regions of Almighty in chaos, that their molded forms might appear from that drop, for it is a judgment on him, Arch-Begetter, who is called 'Yaldabaoth'. That drop revealed their molded forms through the breath, as a living soul. It was withered and it slumbered in the ignorance of the soul. When it became hot from the breath of the Great Light of the Male, and it took thought, (then) names were received by all who are in the world of chaos, and all things that are in it through that Immortal One, when the breath blew into him. But when this came about by the will of Mother Sophia - so that Immortal Man might piece together the garments there for a judgment on the robbers - <he> then welcomed the blowing of that breath; but since he was soul-like, he was not able to take that power for himself until the number of chaos should be complete, (that is,) when the time determined by the great angel is complete.

"Now I have taught you about Immortal Man and have loosed the bonds of the robbers from him. I have broken the gates of the pitiless ones in their presence. I have humiliated their malicious intent, and they all have been shamed and have risen from their ignorance. Because of this, then, I came here, that they might be joined with that Spirit and Breath, [NHC III continues:] and might from two become one, just as from the first, that you might yield much fruit and go up to Him Who Is from the Beginning, in ineffable joy and glory and honor and grace of the Father of the Universe.

"Whoever, then, knows the Father in pure knowledge will depart to the Father and repose in Unbegotten Father. But whoever knows him defectively will depart to the defect and the rest of the Eighth. Now whoever knows Immortal Spirit of Light in silence, through reflecting and consent in the truth, let him bring me signs of the Invisible One, and he will become a light in the Spirit of Silence. Whoever knows Son of Man in knowledge and love, let him bring me a sign of Son of Man, that he might depart to the dwelling-places with those in the Eighth.

"Behold, I have revealed to you the name of the Perfect One, the whole will of the Mother of the Holy Angels, that the masculine multitude may be completed here, that there might appear in the aeons, the infinities and those that came to be in the untraceable wealth of the Great Invisible Spirit, that they all might take from his goodness, even the wealth of their rest that has no kingdom over it. I came from First Who Was Sent, that I might reveal to you Him Who Is from the Beginning, because of the arrogance of Arch-Begetter and his angels, since they say about themselves that they are

gods. And I came to remove them from their blindness, that I might tell everyone about the God who is above the universe. Therefore, tread upon their graves, humiliate their malicious intent, and break their yoke and arouse my own. I have given you authority over all things as Sons of Light, that you might tread upon their power with your feet."

These are the things the blessed Savior said, and he disappeared from them. Then all the disciples were in great, ineffable joy in the spirit from that day on. And his disciples began to preach the Gospel of God, the eternal, imperishable Spirit. Amen.

The Apocalypse of Peter (Short Fragments)

Introduction

We have not a pure and complete text of this book, which ranked next in popularity and probably also in date to the Canonical Apocalypse of St. John.

We have, first, certain quotations made by writers of the first four centuries.

Next, a fragment in Greek, called the Akhmim fragment, found with the Passion-fragment of the Gospel of Peter in a manuscript known as the Gizeh MS. (discovered in a tomb) now at Cairo. This is undoubtedly drawn from the Apocalypse of Peter: but my present belief is that, like the Passion fragment (see p. 90), it is part of the Gospel of Peter, which was a slightly later book than the Apocalypse and quoted it almost in extenso. There is also in the Bodleian Library a mutilated leaf of a very tiny Greek MS. of the fifth century which supplies a few lines of what I take to be the original Greek text.

Thirdly, an Ethiopic version contained in one of the numerous forms of the books of Clement, a writing current in Arabic and Ethiopic purporting to contain revelations of the history of the world from the Creation, of the last times, and of guidance for the churches -dictated by Peter to Clement. The version of the Apocalypse contained in this has some extraneous matter at the beginning and the end; but, as I have tried to show in a series of articles in the *Journal of Theological Studies* (1910-11) and the *Church Quarterly Review* (1915), it affords the best general idea of the contents of the whole book which we have. The second book of the Sibylline Oracles contains (in Greek hexameters) a paraphrase of a great part of the Apocalypse: and its influence can be traced in many early writings -the Acts of Thomas (55-57), the Martyrdom of Perpetua, the so-called Second Epistle of Clement, and, as I think, the Shepherd of Hermas: as well as in the Apocalypse of Paul and many later visions.

The length of the book is given in the Stichometry of Nicephorus as 300 lines and in that of the Codex Claromontanus (D of the Epistle) as 270: the latter is a Latin list of the Biblical books; already cited for the Acts of Paul.

There is no mention of it in the Gelasian Decree, which is curious. At one time it was popular in Rome for the Muratorian Canon mentions it (late in the second century?) along with the Apocalypse of John though it adds, that 'some will not have it read in the church.' The fifth-century church historian Sozomen (vii. 19) says that to his knowledge it was still read annually in some churches in Palestine on Good Friday.

A translation of the ancient quotations shall be given first.

Texts of the Apocalypse of Peter

A.

1. From Clement of Alexandria's so-called Prophetical Extracts, a series of detached sentences excerpted from some larger work, generally supposed to be his Hypotyposes or Outlines:

a. (41.1) The Scripture saith that the children which have been exposed (by their parents) are delivered to a care-taking angel by whom they are educated, and made to grow up, and they shall be, it saith, as the faithful of an hundred years old are here (in this life). b. (41. 2) Wherefore also Peter in the Apocalypse saith: And a flash (lightning) of fire leaping from those children and smiting the eyes of the women.

2. Ibid. (48 . 1) The providence of God doth not light upon them only that are in the flesh. For example, Peter in the Apocalypse saith that the children born out of due time (abortively) that would have been of the better part (i. e. would have been saved if they had lived) -these are delivered to a care-taking angel, that they may partake of knowledge and obtain the better abode, having suffered what they would have suffered had they been in the body. But the others (i.e. those who would not have been saved, had they lived) shall only obtain salvation, as beings that have been injured and had mercy shown to them, and shall continue without torment, receiving that as a reward.

But the milk of the mothers, flowing from their breasts and congealing, saith Peter in the Apocalypse, shall engender small beasts (snakes) devouring the flesh, and these running upon them devour them: teaching that the torments come to pass because of the sins (correspond to the sins).

3. From the Symposium (ii.6) of Methodius of Olympus (third century). He does not name his source. Whence also we have received in inspired writings that children born untimely -even if they be the offspring of adultery- are delivered to care-taking angels. For if they had come into being contrary to the will and ordinance of that blessed nature of God, how could they have been delivered to angels to be nourished up in all repose and tranquillity? And how could they have confidently summoned their parents before the judgement seat of Christ to accuse them? saying: Thou, O Lord, didst not begrudge us this light that is common to all, but these exposed us to death, contemning thy commandment.

The word rendered care-taking in these passages is a very rare one- [temelouchos, Gr.]: so rare that it was mistaken by later readers for the proper name of an angel, and we find an angel Temeluchus in Paul, John, and elsewhere. A similar case is that of the word Tartaruchus, keeper of hell, which is applied to angels in our Apocalypse, and is also taken in the Ethiopic version, in Paul, and in other writings, to be a proper name.

4. From the Apocritica of Macarius Magnes (fourth century) of whom we know little. His book consists of extracts from a heathen opponent's attack on Christianity (Porphyry and Hierocles are named as possible authors of it) and his own answers. The heathen writer says (iv. 6, 7):

And by way of superfluity let this also be cited which is said in the Apocalypse of Peter. He introduces the Heaven, to be judged along with the earth, thus: The earth, he says, shall present all

men to God to be judged in the day of judgement being itself also to be judged along with the heaven that encompasseth it.

5. Ibid. And this again he says, which is a statement full of impiety: And every power of heaven shall be melted, and the heaven shall be rolled up like a book, and all the stars shall fall like leaves from the vine, and as the leaves from the fig-tree.

This very nearly coincides with Isa. xxxiv.4, and does not occur in our other texts of the Apocalypse.

6. In an old Latin homily on the Ten Virgins found and published by Dom Wilmart (*Bulletin d'anc. litt. et d'arche'ol. chre't.*) is this sentence:

The closed door is the river of fire by which the ungodly shall be kept out of the kingdom of God, as is written in Daniel and in Peter, in his Apocalypse That company of the foolish also shall arise and find the door shut, that is, the fiery river set against them.

The equivalent of all the above quotations is found in the Ethiopic text, with one exception, no. 5. The Akhmim text only contains Something like no. 1 b: one indication out of many that it is a shortened and, I would say, secondary text.

B.

THE AKHMIM FRAGMENT

I should prefer to call this Fragment II of the Gospel of Peter. It begins abruptly in a discourse of our Lord.

1 Many of them shall be false prophets, and shall teach ways and diverse doctrines of perdition. 2 And they shall become sons of perdition. 3 And then shall God come unto my faithful ones that hunger and thirst and are afflicted and prove their souls in this life, and shall judge the sons of iniquity.

4 And the Lord added and said: Let us go unto the mountain (and) pray. 5 And going with him, we the twelve disciples besought him that he would show us one of our righteous brethren that had departed out of the world, that we might see what manner of men they are in their form, and take courage, and encourage also the men that should hear us.

6 And as we prayed, suddenly there appeared two men standing before the Lord (perhaps add, to the east) upon whom we were not able to look. 7 For there issued from their countenance a ray as of the sun, and their raiment was shining so as the eye of man never saw the like: for no mouth is able to declare nor heart to conceive the glory wherewith they were clad and the beauty of their countenance. 8 Whom when we saw we were astonished, for their bodies were whiter than any snow and redder than any rose. 9 And the redness of them was mingled with the whiteness, and, in a word, I am not able to declare their beauty. 10 For their hair was curling and flourishing (flowery), and fell comely about their countenance and their shoulders like a garland woven of nard and various flowers, or like a rainbow in the air: such was their comeliness.

11 We, then, seeing the beauty of them were astonished at them, for they appeared suddenly. 12 And I drew near to the Lord and said: Who are these? 13 He saith to me: These are your (our) righteous brethren whose appearance ye did desire to see. 14 And I said unto him: And where are all the righteous? or of what sort is the world wherein they are, and possess this glory? 15 And the Lord showed me a very great region outside this world exceeding bright with light, and the air of that place illuminated with the beams of the sun, and the earth of itself flowering with blossoms that fade not, and full of spices and plants, fair-flowering and incorruptible, and bearing blessed fruit. 16 And so great was the blossom that the odour thereof was borne thence even unto us.

17 And the dwellers in that place were clad with the raiment of shining angels, and their raiment was like unto their land.

18 And angels ran round about them there. 19 And the glory of them that dwelt there was all equal, and with one voice they praised the Lord God, rejoicing in that place.

20 The Lord saith unto us: This is the place of your leaders (or, high priests), the righteous men.

21 And I saw also another place over against that one, very squalid; and it was a place of punishment, and they that were punished and the angels that punished them had their raiment dark, according to the air of the place. 22 And some there were there hanging by their tongues; and these were they that blasphemed the way of righteousness, and under them was laid fire flaming and tormenting them.

23 And there was a great lake full of flaming mire, wherein were certain men that turned away from righteousness; and angels, tormentors, were set over them.

24 And there were also others, women, hanged by their hair above that mire which boiled up; and these were they that adorned themselves for adultery.

And the men that were joined with them in the defilement of adultery were hanging by their feet, and had their heads hidden in the mire, and said: We believed not that we should come unto this place.

25 And I saw the murderers and them that were consenting to them cast into a strait place full of evil, creeping things, and smitten by those beasts, and so turning themselves about in that torment. And upon them were set worms like clouds of darkness. And the souls of them that were murdered stood and looked upon the torment of those murderers and said: O God, righteous is thy judgement.

26 And hard by that place I saw another strait place wherein the discharge and the stench of them that were in torment ran down, and there was as it were a lake there. And there sat women up to their necks in that liquor, and over against them many children which were born out of due time sat crying: and from them went forth rays of fire and smote the women in the eyes: and these were they that conceived out of wedlock (?) and caused abortion.

27 And other men and women were being burned up to their middle and cast down in a dark place and scourged by evil spirits, and having their entrails devoured by worms that rested not. And these were they that had persecuted the righteous and delivered them up.

28 And near to them again were women and men gnawing their lips and in torment, and having iron heated in the fire set against their eyes. And these were they that did blaspheme and speak evil of the way of righteousness.

29 And over against these were yet others, men and women, gnawing their tongues and having flaming fire in their mouths. And these were the false witnesses.

30 And in another place were gravel-stones sharper than swords or any spit, heated with fire, and men and women clad in filthy rags rolled upon them in torment. [This is suggested by the LXX of two passages in Job: xli. 30, his bed is of sharp spits; viii. 17, on an heap of stones doth he rest, and shall live in the midst of gravel-stones.] And these were they that were rich and trusted in their riches, and had no pity upon orphans and widows but neglected the commandments of God.

31 And in another great lake full of foul matter (pus) and blood and boiling mire stood men and women up to their knees And these were they that lent money and demanded usury upon usury.

32 And other men and women being cast down from a great rock (precipice) fell (came) to the bottom, and again were driven by them that were set over them, to go up upon the rock, and thence were cast down to the bottom and had no rest from this torment. And these were they that did defile their bodies behaving as women: and the women that were with them were they that lay with one another as a man with a woman.

33 And beside that rock was a place full of much fire, and there stood men which with their own hands had made images for themselves instead of God, [And beside them other men and women] having rods of fire and smiting one another and never resting from this manner of torment....

34 And yet others near unto them, men and women, burning and turning themselves about and roasted as in a pan. And these were they that forsook the way of God.

THE BODLEIAN LEAF

It measures but 2 3/4 by 2 inches and has 13 lines of 8 to 10 letters on each side (Madan's Summary Catalogue, No. 31810). The verso (second page) is difficult to read.

Recto=Gr. 33, 34: women holding chains and scourging themselves before those idols of deceit. And they shall unceasingly have this torment. And near

Verso: them shall be other men and women burning in the burning of them that were mad after idols. And these are they which forsook the way of God wholly (?) and . . .

THE ETHIOPIC TEXT

First published by the Abbe Sylvain Grebaut in *Revue de l'Orient Chretien*, 1910: a fresh translation from his Ethiopic text by H. Duensing appeared in *Zeitschr. f. ntl. Wiss.*, 1913.

The Second Coming of Christ and Resurrection of the Dead (which Christ revealed unto Peter) who died because of their sins, for that they kept not the commandment of God their creator.

And he (Peter) pondered thereon, that he might perceive the mystery of the Son of God, the merciful and lover of mercy.

And when the Lord was seated upon the Mount of Olives, his disciples came unto him.

And we besought and entreated him severally and prayed him, saying unto him: Declare unto us what are the signs of thy coming and of the end of the world, that we may perceive and mark the time of thy coming and instruct them that come after us, unto whom we preach the word of thy gospel, and whom we set over (in) thy church, that they when they hear it may take heed to themselves and mark the time of thy coming.

And our Lord answered us, saying: Take heed that no man deceive you, and that ye be not doubters and serve other gods. Many shall come in my name, saying: I am the Christ. Believe them not, neither draw near unto them. For the coming of the Son of God shall not be plain (i.e. foreseen); but as the lightning that shineth from the east unto the west, so will I come upon the clouds of heaven with a great host in my majesty; with my cross going before my face will I come in my majesty, shining sevenfold more than the sun will I come in my majesty with all my saints, mine angels (mine holy angels). And my Father shall set a crown upon mine head, that I may judge the quick and the dead and recompense every man according to his works.

And ye, take ye the likeness thereof (learn a parable) from the fig-tree: so soon as the shoot thereof is come forth and the twigs grown, the end of the world shall come.

And I, Peter, answered and said unto him: Interpret unto me concerning the fig-tree, whereby we shall perceive it; for throughout all its days doth the fig-tree send forth shoots, and every year it bringeth forth its fruit for its master. What then meaneth the parable of the fig-tree? We know it not.

And the Master (Lord) answered and said unto me: Understandest thou not that the fig-tree is the house of Israel? Even as a man that planted a fig-tree in his garden, and it brought forth no fruit. And he sought the fruit thereof many years and when he found it not, he said to the keeper of his garden: Root up this fig-tree that it make not our ground to be unfruitful. And the gardener said unto God: (Suffer us) to rid it of weeds and dig the ground round about it and water it. If then it bear not fruit, we will straightway remove its roots out of the garden and plant another in place of it. Hast thou not undErstood that the fig-tree is the house of Israel? Verily I say unto thee, when the twigs thereof have sprouted forth in the last days, then shall feigned Christs come and awake expectation saying: I am the Christ, that am now come into the world. And when they (Israel) shall perceive the wickedness of their deeds they shall turn away after them and deny him [whom our fathers did praise], even the first Christ whom they crucified and therein sinned a great sin. But this deceiver is not the Christ. [something is wrong here: the sense required is that Israel perceives the wickedness of antichrist and does not follow him.] And when they reject him he shall slay with the sword, and there shall be many martyrs. Then shall the twigs of the fig-tree, that is, the house of Israel, shoot forth: many shall become martyrs at his hand. Enoch and Elias shall be sent to teach them that this is the deceiver which must come into the world and do signs and wonders to deceive. And therefore shall they that die by his hand be martyrs, and shall be reckoned among the good and righteous martyrs who have pleased God in their life. [Hermas, Vision III.i.9, speaks of 'those that have already been well-pleasing unto God and have suffered for the Name's sake'.]

And he showed me in his right hand the souls of all men, And on the palm of his right hand the image of that which shall be accomplished at the last day: and how the righteous and the sinners shall be separated, and how they do that are upright in heart, and how the evil-doers shall be rooted

out unto all eternity. We beheld how the sinners wept (weep) in great affliction and sorrow, until all that saw it with their eyes wept, whether righteous or angels, and he himself also.

And I asked him and said unto him: Lord, suffer me to speak thy word concerning the sinners: It were better for them if they had not been created. And the Saviour answered and said unto me: Peter, wherefore speakest thou thus, that not to have been created were better for them? Thou resistest God. Thou wouldest not have more compassion than he for his image: for he hath created them and brought them forth out of not being. Now because thou hast seen the lamentation which shall come upon the sinners in the last days, therefore is thine heart troubled; but I will show thee their works, whereby they have sinned against the Most High.

Behold now what shall come upon them in the last days, when the day of God and the day of the decision of the judgement of God cometh. From the east unto the west shall all the children of men be gathered together before my Father that liveth for ever. And he shall command hell to open its bars of adamant and give up all that is therein.

And the wild beasts and the fowls shall he command to restore all the flesh that they have devoured, because he willeth that men should appear; for nothing perisheth before God, and nothing is impossible with him, because all things are his.

For all things come to pass on the day of decision, on the day of judgement, at the word of God: and as all things were done when he created the world and commanded all that is therein and it was done -even so shall it be in the last days; for all things are possible with God. And therefore saith he in the scripture: [Ezek. xxxvii.] Son of man, prophesy upon the several bones and say unto the bones: bone unto bone in joints, sinew. nerves, flesh and skin and hair thereon [and soul and spirit].

And soul and spirit shall the great Uriel give them at the commandment of God; for him hath God set over the rising again of the dead at the day of judgement.

Behold and consider the corns of wheat that are sown in the earth. As things dry and without soul do men sow them in the earth: and they live again and bear fruit, and the earth restoreth them as a pledge entrusted unto it.

[And this that dieth, that is sown as seed in the earth, and shall become alive and be restored unto life, is man. Probably a gloss.]

How much more shall God raise up on the day of decision them that believe in him and are chosen of him, for whose sake he made the world? And all things shall the earth restore on the day of decision, for it also shall be judged with them, and the heaven with it.

And this shall come at the day of judgement upon them that have fallen away from faith in God and that have committed sin: Floods (cataracts) of fire shall be let loose; and darkness and obscurity shall come up and clothe and veil the whole world and the waters shall be changed and turned into coals of fire and all that is in them shall burn, and the sea shall become fire. Under the heaven shall be a sharp fire that cannot be quenched and floweth to fulfil the judgement of wrath. And the stars shall fly in pieces by flames of fire, as if they had not been created and the powers (firmaments) of the heaven shall pass away for lack of water and shall be as though they had not been. And the lightnings of heaven shall be no more, and by their enchantment they shall affright the world

(probably: The heaven shall turn to lightning and the lightnings thereof shall affright the world. The spirits also of the dead bodies shall be like unto them (the lightnings?) and shall become fire at the commandment of God.

And so soon as the whole creation dissolveth, the men that are in the east shall flee unto the west, unto the east; they that are in the south shall flee to the north, and they that are in the north. And in all places shall the wrath of a fearful fire overtake them and an unquenchable flame driving them shall bring them unto the judgement of wrath, unto the stream of unquenchable fire that floweth, flaming with fire, and when the waves thereof part themselves one from another, burning, there shall be a great gnashing of teeth among the children of men.

Then shall they all behold me coming upon an eternal cloud of brightness: and the angels of God that are with me shall sit (prob. And I shall sit) upon the throne of my glory at the right hand of my Heavenly Father; and he shall set a crown upon mine head. And when the nations behold it, they shall weep, every nation apart.

Then shall he command them to enter into the river of fire while the works of every one of them shall stand before them (something is wanting) to every man according to his deeds. As for the elect that have done good, they shall come unto me and not see death by the devouring fire. But the unrighteous the sinners, and the hypocrites shall stand in the depths of darkness that shall not pass away, and their chastisement is the fire, and angels bring forward their sins and prepare for them a place wherein they shall be punished for ever (every one according to his transgression).

Uriel (Urael) the angel of God shall bring forth the souls of those sinners (every one according to his transgression: perhaps this clause should end the preceding paragraph: so Grebaut takes it) who perished in the flood, and of all that dwelt in all idols, in every molten image, in every (object of) love, and in pictures, and of those that dwelt on all hills and in stones and by the wayside, whom men called gods: they shall burn them with them (the objects in which they dwelt, or their worshippers?) in everlasting fire; and after that all of them with their dwelling places are destroyed, they shall be punished eternally.

(Here begins the description of torments which we have, in another text, in the Akhmim fragment.)

Then shall men and women come unto the place prepared for them. By their tongues wherewith they have blasphemed the way of righteousness shall they be hanged up. There is spread under them unquenchable fire, that they escape it not.

Behold, another place: therein is a pit, great and full (of . . .) In it are they that have denied righteousness: and angels of punishment chastise them and there do they kindle upon them the fire of their torment.

And again behold [two: corrupt] women: they hang them up by their neck and by their hair; they shall cast them into the pit. These are they which plaited their hair, not for good (or, not to make them beautiful) but to turn them to fornication, that they might ensnare the souls of men unto perdition. And the men that lay with them in fornication shall be hung by their loins in that place of fire; and they shall say one to another: We knew not that we should come unto everlasting punishment.

And the murderers and them that have made common cause with them shall they cast into the fire, in a place full of venomous beasts, and they shall be tormented without rest, feeling their pains; and their worms shall be as many in number as a dark cloud. And the angel Ezrael shall bring forth the souls of them that have been slain, and they shall behold the torment of them that slew them, and say one to another: Righteousness and justice is the judgement of God. For we heard, but we believed not, that we should come into this place of eternal judgement.

And near by this flame shall be a pit, great and very deep, and into it floweth from above all manner of torment, foulness, and issue. And women are swallowed up therein up to their necks and tormented with great pain. These are they that have caused their children to be born untimely, and have corrupted the work of God that created them. Over against them shall be another place where sit their children [both] alive, and they cry unto God. And flashes (lightnings) go forth from those children and pierce the eyes of them that for fornication's sake have caused their destruction.

Other men and women shall stand above them, naked; and their children stand over against them in a place of delight, and sigh and cry unto God because of their parents, saying: These are they that have despised and cursed and transgressed thy commandments and delivered us unto death: they have cursed the angel that formed us, and have hanged us up, and withheld from us (or, begrudged us) the light which thou hast given unto all creatures. And the milk of their mothers flowing from their breasts shall congeal, and from it shall come beasts devouring flesh, which shall come forth and turn and torment them for ever with their husbands, because they forsook the commandments of God and slew their children. As for their children, they shall be delivered unto the angel Temlakos (i.e. a care-taking angel: see above, in the Fragments). And they that slew them shall be tormented eternally, for God willeth it so.

Ezrael the angel of wrath shall bring men and women, the half of their bodies burning, and cast them into a place of darkness, even the hell of men; and a spirit of wrath shall chastise them with all manner of torment, and a worm that sleepeth not shall devour their entrails: and these are the persecutors and betrayers of my righteous ones.

And beside them that are there, shall be other men and women, gnawing their tongues; and they shall torment them with red-hot iron and burn their eyes. These are they that slander and doubt of my righteousness. Other men and women whose works were done in deceitfulness shall have their lips cut off, and fire entereth into their mouth and their entrails. These are the false witnesses (al. these are they that caused the martyrs to die by their lying).

And beside them, in a place near at hand, upon the stone shall be a pillar of fire, and the pillar is sharper than swords. And there shall be men and women clad in rags and filthy garments, and they shall be cast thereon, to suffer the judgement of a torment that ceaseth not: these are they that trusted in their riches and despised the widows and the woman with fatherless children . . . before God.

And into another place hard by, full of filth, do they cast men and women up to the knees. These are they that lent money and took usury.

And other men and women cast themselves down from an high place and return again and run, and devils drive them. [These are the worshippers of idols] and they put them to the end of their witst

(drive them up to the top of the height) and they cast themselves down. And thus do they continually, and are tormented for ever. These are they which have cut their flesh as [apostles] of a man: and the women that were with them . . . and these are the men that defiled themselves together as women. (This is very corrupt: but the sense is clear in the (Greek).)

And beside them (shall be a brazier ?) . . . and beneath them shall the angel Ezrael prepare a place of much fire: and all the idols of gold and silver, all idols, the work of men's hands, and the semblances of images of cats and lions, of creeping things and wild beasts, and the men and women that have prepared the images thereof, shall be in chains of fire and shall be chastised because of their error before the idols, and this is their judgement for ever. (In the Greek they beat each other with rods of fire: and this is better.)

And beside them shall be other men and women, burning in the fire of the judgement, and their torment is everlasting. These are they that have forsaken the commandment of God and followed the (persuasions ?) of devils.

(Parts of these two sections are in the Bodleian Fragment. At this point the Akhmim fragment ends. The Ethiopic continues :)

And there shall be another place, very high (corrupt sentences follow. Duensing omits them: Grebaut renders doubtfully: There shall be a furnace and a brazier wherein shall burn fire. The fire that shall burn shall come from one end of the brazier). The men and women whose feet slip, shall go rolling down into a place where is fear. And again while the fire that is prepared floweth, they mount up and fall down again and continue to roll down. (This suggests a narrow bridge over a stream of fire which they keep trying to cross.) Thus shall they be tormented for ever. These are they that honoured not their father and mother and of their own accord withheld (withdrew) themselves from them. Therefore shall they be chastised eternally.

Furthermore the angel Ezrael shall bring children and maidens to show them those that are tormented. They shall be chastised with pains, with hanging up (?) and with a multitude of wounds which flesh-devouring birds shall inflict upon them. These are they that boast themselves (trust) in their sins, and obey not their parents and follow not the instruction of their fathers, and honour not them that are more aged than they.

Beside them shall be girls clad in darkness for a garment and they shall be sore chastised and their flesh shall be torn in pieces. These are they that kept not their virginity until they were given in marriage, and with these torments shall they be punished, and shall feel them.

And again, other men and women, gnawing their tongues without ceasing, and being tormented with everlasting fire. These are the servants (slaves) which were not obedient unto their masters; and this then is their judgement for ever.

And hard by this place of torment shall be men and women dumb and blind, whose raiment is white. They shall crowd one upon another, and fall upon coals of unquenchable fire. These are they that give alms and say: We are righteous before God: whereas they have not sought after righteousness.

Ezrael the angel of God shall bring them forth out of this fire and establish a judgement of decision. This then is their judgement. A river of fire shall flow and all judgement (they that are judged) shall be drawn down into the middle of the river. And Uriel shall set them there.

And there are wheels of fire and men and women hung thereon by the strength of the whirling thereof. And they that are in the pit shall burn: now these are the sorcerers and sorceresses. Those wheels shall be in a]l decision (judgement, punishment) by fire without number.

Thereafter shall the angels bring mine elect and righteous which are perfect in all uprightness, and bear them in their hands, and clothe them with the raiment of the life that is above. They shall see their desire on them that hated them, when he punisheth them, and the torment of every one shall be for ever according to his works.

And all they that are in torment shall say with one voice: have mercy upon us, for now know we the judgement of God, which he declared unto us aforetime, and we believed not. And the angel Tatirokos (Tartaruchus, keeper of hell: a word corresponding in formation to Temeluchus) shall come and chastise them with yet greater torment, and say unto them: Now do ye repent, when it is no longer the time for repentance, and nought of life remaineth. And they shall say: Righteous is the judgement of God, for we have heard and perceived that his judgement is good; for we are recompensed according to our deeds.

Then will I give unto mine elect and righteous the washing (baptism) and the salvation for which they have besought me, in the field of Akrosja (Acherousia, a lake in other writings, e.g. Apocalypse of Moses -where the soul of Adam is washed in it: see also Paul 22, 23) which is called Aneslasleja (Elysium). They shall adorn with flowers the portion of the righteous, and I shall go . . . I shall rejoice with them. I will cause the peoples to enter in to mine everlasting kingdom, and show them that eternal thing (life ?) whereon I have made them to set their hope, even I and my Father which is in heaven.

I have spoken this unto thee, Peter, and declared it unto thee. Go forth therefore and go unto the land (or city) of the west. (Duensing omits the next sentences as unintelligible; Grebaut and N. McLean render thus: and enter into the vineyard which I shall tell thee of, in order that by the sickness (sufferings) of the Son who is without sin the deeds of corruption may be sanctified. As for thee, thou art chosen according to the promise which I have given thee. Spread thou therefore my gospel throughout all the world in peace. Verily men shall rejoice: my words shall be the source of hope and of life, and suddenly shall the world be ravished.)

(We now have the section descriptive of paradise, which in the Akhmim text precedes that about hell.)

And my Lord Jesus Christ our King said unto me: Let us go unto the holy mountain. And his disciples went with him, praying. And behold there were two men there, and we could not look upon their faces, for a light came from them, shining more than the sun, and their raiment also was shining, and cannot be described, and nothing is sufficient to be compared unto them in this world. And the sweetness of them . . . that no mouth is able to utter the beauty of their appearance (or, the mouth hath not sweetness to express, Cc.), for their aspect was astonishing and wonderful. And the other, great, I say (probably: and, in a word, I cannot describe it), shineth in his (sic) aspect above crystal.

Like the flower of roses is the appearance of the colour of his aspect and of his body . . . his head (al. their head was a marvel). And upon his (their) shoulders (evidently something about their hair has dropped out) and on their foreheads was a crown of nard woven of fair flowers. As the rainbow in the water, [Probably: in the time of rain. From the LXX of Ezek.i.28.] so was their hair. And such was the comeliness of their countenance, adorned with all manner of ornament. And when we saw them on a sudden, we marvelled. And I drew near unto the Lord (God) Jesus Christ and said unto him: O my Lord, who are these? And he said unto me: They are Moses and Elias. And I said unto him: Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and the rest of the righteous fathers? And he showed us a great garden, open, full of fair trees and blessed fruits, and of the odour of perfumes. The fragrance thereof was pleasant and came even unto us. And thereof (al. of that tree) . . . saw I much fruit. And my Lord and God Jesus Christ said unto me: Hast thou seen the companies of the fathers?

As is their rest, such also is the honour and the glory of them that are persecuted for my righteousness' sake. And I rejoiced and believed [and believed] and understood that which is written in the book of my Lord Jesus Christ. And I said unto him: O my Lord, wilt thou that I make here three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias? And he said unto me in wrath: Satan maketh war against thee, and hath veiled thine understanding; and the good things of this world prevail against thee. Thine eyes therefore must be opened and thine ears unstopped that a tabernacle, not made with men's hands, which my heavenly Father hath made for me and for the elect. And we beheld it and were full of gladness.

And behold, suddenly there came a voice from heaven, saying: This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased: my commandments. And then came a great and exceeding white cloud over our heads and bare away our Lord and Moses and Elias. And I trembled and was afraid: and we looked up and the heaven opened and we beheld men in the flesh, and they came and greeted our Lord and Moses and Elias and went into another heaven. And the word of the scripture was fulfilled: This is the generation that seeketh him and seeketh the face of the God of Jacob. And great fear and commotion was there in heaven and the angels pressed one upon another that the word of the scripture might be fulfilled which saith: Open the gates, ye princes.

Thereafter was the heaven shut, that had been open.

And we prayed and went down from the mountain, glorifying God, which hath written the names of the righteous in heaven in the book of life.

There is a great deal more of the Ethiopic text, but it is very evidently of later date; the next words are:

'Peter opened his mouth and said to me: Hearken, my son Clement, God created all things for his glory,' and this proposition is dwelt upon. The glory of those who duly praise God is described in terms borrowed from the Apocalypse: 'The Son at his coming will raise the dead . . . and will make my righteous ones shine seven times more than the sun, and will make their crowns shine like crystal and like the rainbow in the time of rain (crowns) which are perfumed with nard and cannot be contemplated (adorned) with rubies, with the colour of emeralds shining brightly, with topazes, gems, and yellow pearls that shine like the stars of heaven, and like the rays of the sun, sparkling which cannot be gazed upon.' Again, of the angels: ' Their faces shine more than the sun; their crowns are as the rainbow in the time of rain. (They are perfumed) with nard. Their eyes shine like

the morning star. The beauty of their appearance cannot be expressed Their raiment is not woven, but white as that of the fuller, according as I saw on the mountain where Moses and Elias were. Our Lord showed at the transfiguration the apparel of the last days, of the day of resurrection, unto Peter, James and John the sons of Zebedee, and a bright cloud overshadowed us, and we heard the voice of the Father saying unto us: This is my Son whom I love and in whom I am well pleased: hear him. And being afraid we forgot all the things of this life and of the flesh, and knew not what we said because of the greatness of the wonder of that day, and of the mountain whereon he showed us the second coming in the kingdom that passeth not away.'

Next: 'The Father hath committed all judgement unto the Son.' The destiny of sinners -their eternal doom- is more than Peter can endure: he appeals to Christ to have pity on them.

And my Lord answered me and said to me: 'Hast thou understood that which I said unto thee before? It is permitted unto thee to know that concerning which thou askest: but thou must not tell that which thou hearest unto the sinners lest they transgress the more, and sin.' Peter weeps many hours, and is at last consoled by an answer which, though exceedingly diffuse and vague does seem to promise ultimate pardon for all: 'My Father will give unto them all the life, the glory, and the kingdom that passeth not away,' 'It is because of them that have believed in me that I am come. It is also because of them that have believed in me, that, at their word, I shall have pity on men.' The doctrine that sinners will be saved at last by the prayers of the righteous is, rather obscurely, enunciated in the Second Book of the Sibylline Oracles (a paraphrase, in this part, of the Apocalypse), and in the (Coptic) Apocalypse of Elias (see post).

Ultimately Peter orders Clement to hide this revelation in a box, that foolish men may not see it. The passage in the Second Book of the Sibylline Oracles which seems to point to the ultimate salvation of all sinners will be found in the last lines of the translation given below.

The passage in the Coptic Apocalypse of Elias is guarded and obscure in expression, but significant. It begins with a sentence which has a parallel in Peter.

The righteous will behold the sinners in their punishment, and those who have persecuted them and delivered them up. Then will the sinners on their part behold the place of the righteous and be partakers of grace. In that day will that for which the (righteous) shall often pray, be granted to them.

That is, as I take it, the salvation of sinners will be granted at the prayer of the righteous.

Compare also the Epistle of the Apostles, 40: 'the righteous are sorry for the sinners, and pray for them..... And I will hearken unto the prayer of the righteous which they make for them.'

I would add that the author of the Acts of Paul, who (in the Third Epistle to the Corinthians and elsewhere) betrays a knowledge of the Apocalypse of Peter, makes Falconilla, the deceased daughter of Tryphaena, speak of Thecla's praying for her that she may be translated unto the place of the righteous (Thecla episode, 28).

My impression is that the maker of the Ethiopic version (or of its Arabic parent, or of another ancestor) has designedly omitted or slurred over some clauses in the passage beginning: 'Then will I give unto mine elect', and that in his very diffuse and obscure appendix to the Apocalypse, he has tried to break the dangerous doctrine of the ultimate salvation of sinners gently to his readers. But

when the Arabic version of the Apocalypse is before us in the promised edition of MM. Griveau and Grebaut, we shall have better means of deciding.

E.

APPENDIX

SECOND BOOK OF THE SIBYLLINE ORACLES, 1G0-338

It seems worth while to append here a translation of that portion of the Second Book which is most evidently taken from the Apocalypse of Peter. It may be remarked that Books I and II of the oracles really form but one composition, which is Christian and may be assigned to some time not early in the second century, or to the third. Many lines are borrowed from the older books, especially III and VIII.

After saying (1.187) that Elias will descend on earth and do three great signs, it proceeds:

190 Woe unto all them that are found great with child in that day, and to them that give suck to infant children, and to them that dwell by the sea (the waves). Woe to them that shall behold that day. For a dark mist shall cover the boundless world, of the east and west, the south and north. And then shall a great river of flaming fire flow from heaven and consume all places, the earth and the great ocean and the grey sea, lakes and rivers and fountains, and merciless

200 Hades and the pole of heaven: but the lights of heaven shall melt together in one and into a void (desolate) shape (?). For the stars shall all fall from heaven into the sea (?), and all souls of men shall gnash their teeth as they burn in the river of brimstone and the rush of the fire in the blazing plain, and ashes shall cover all things. And then shall all the elements of the world be laid waste, air, earth, sea, light poles, days and nights, and no more shall the multitudes of birds fly in the air nor swimming creatures any more swim the sea no ship shall sail with its cargo over the waves;

210 no straight-going oxen shall plough the tilled land; there shall be no more sound of swift winds, but he shall fuse all things together into one, and purge them clean.

214 Now when the immortal angels of the undying God Barakiel, Ramiel, Uriel, Samiel, and Azael, [These names are from Enoch.] knowing all the evil deeds that any hath wrought aforetime -then out of the misty darkness they shall bring all the souls of men to judgement, unto the seat of God the immortal, the great.

220 For he only is incorruptible, himself the Almighty, who shall be the judge of mortal men. And then unto them of the underworld shall the heavenly one give their souls and spirit and speech, and their bones joined together, with all the joints, and the flesh and sinews and veins, and skin also over the flesh, and hair as before, and the bodies of the dwellers upon earth shall be moved and arise in one day, joined together in immortal fashion and breathing.

Then shall the great angel Uriel break the monstrous bars framed of unyielding and unbroken adamant, of the brazen

230 gates of Hades, and cast them down straightway, and bring forth to judgement all the sorrowful forms, yea, of the ghosts of the ancient Titans, and of the giants, and all whom the flood overtook. And all whom the wave of the sea hath destroyed in the waters, and all whom beasts and creeping

things and fowls have feasted on: all these shall he bring to the judgement seat; and again those whom flesh-devouring fire hath consumed in the flames, them also shall he gather and set before God's seat.

And when he shall overcome Fate and raise the dead, then shall Adonai Sabaoth the high thunderer sit on his heavenly

240 throne, and set up the great pillar, and Christ himself, the undying unto the undying, shall come in the clouds in glory with the pure angels, and shall sit on the seat on the right of the Great One, judging the life of the godly and the walk of ungodly men.

And Moses also the great, the friend of the Most High shall come, clad in flesh, and the great Abraham himself shall come, and Isaac and Jacob, Jesus, Daniel, Elias, Ambacum (Habakkuk), and Jonas, and they whom the Hebrews slew: and all the Hebrews that were with (after ?) Jeremias shall be judged at the judgement seat, and he shall destroy them, that they may receive a due reward and expiate all that they did in their mortal life.

And then shall all men pass through a blazing river and unquenchable flame, and the righteous shall be saved whole all of them, but the ungodly shall perish therein unto all ages, even as many as wrought evil aforetime, and committed murders, and all that were privy thereto, liars, thieves, deceivers, cruel destroyers of houses, gluttons, marriers by stealth, shedders of evil rumours, sorely insolent lawless, idolaters: and all that forsook the great immortal God and became blasphemers and harmers of the godly, breakers of faith and destroyers of righteous men. And all that look with guileful and shameless double faces -reverend priests and deacons- and judge unjustly, dealing perversely, obeying false rumours . . . more deadly than leopards and wolves, and very evil: and all that are high-minded, and usurers that heap up in their houses usury out of usury and injure orphans and widows continually: and they that give alms of unjust gain unto widows and orphans, and they that when they give alms of their own toil, reproach them; and they that have forsaken their parents in their old age and not repaid them at all, nor recompensed them for their nurture; yea, and they that have disobeyed and spoken hard words against their parents: they also that have received pledges and denied them, and servants that have turned against their masters; and again they which have defiled their flesh in lasciviousness, and have loosed the girdle of virginity in secret union, and they that make the child in the womb miscarry, and that cast out their offspring against right: sorcerers also and sorceresses with these shall the wrath of the heavenly and immortal God bring near unto the pillar, all round about which the untiring river of fire shall flow. And all of them shall the undying angels of the immortal everlasting God chastise terribly with flaming scourges, and shall bind them fast from above in fiery chains, bonds unbreakable. And then shall they cast them down in the darkness of night into Gehenna among the beasts of hell, many and frightful, where is darkness without measure.

And when they have dealt out many torments unto all whose heart was evil, thereafter out of the great river shall a wheel of fire encompass them, because they devised wicked works. And then shall they lament apart every one from another in miserable fate, fathers and infant children, mothers and sucklings weeping, nor shall they be sated with tears nor shall the voice of them that mourn piteously apart be heard (?); but far under dark and squalid Tartarus shall they cry in torment, and in no holy place shall they abide and expiate threefold every evil deed that they have done, burning in a great flame; and shall gnash their teeth, all of them worn out with fierce thirst

and hunger (al. force violence), and shall call death lovely and it shall flee from them: for no more shall death nor night give them rest, and oft-times shall they beseech in vain the Almighty God, and then shall he openly turn away his face from them. For he hath granted the limit of seven ages for repentance unto men that err, by the hand of a pure virgin.

But the residue which have cared for justice and good deeds, yea, and godliness and righteous thoughts, shall angels bear up and carry through the flaming river unto light, and life without care, where is the immortal path of the great God; and three fountains, of wine and honey and milk. And the earth, common to all, not parted out with walls or fences, shall then bring forth of her own accord much fruit, and life and wealth shall be common and undistributed. For there shall be no poor man, nor rich, nor tyrant, nor slave, none great nor small any longer, no kings, no princes; but all men shall be together in common. And no more shall any man say 'night is come', nor 'the morrow', nor 'it was yesterday'. He maketh no more of days, nor of spring, nor winter, nor summer, nor autumn, neither marriage, nor death, nor selling, nor buying, nor set of sun, nor rising. For God shall make one long day.

And unto them, the godly, shall the almighty and immortal God grant another boon, when they shall ask it of him. He shall grant them to save men out of the fierce fire and the eternal gnashing of teeth: and this will he do, for he will gather them again out of the everlasting flame and remove them else whither, sending them for the sake of his people unto another life eternal and immortal, in the Elysian plain where are the long waves of the Acherusian lake exhaustless and deep bosomed;

Some artless iambic lines of uncertain date are appended here, which show what was thought of the doctrine:

'Plainly false: for the fire will never cease to torment the damned. I indeed could pray that it might be so, who am branded with the deepest scars of transgressions which stand in need of utmost mercy. But let Origen be ashamed of his lying words, who saith that there is a term set to the torments.'

The Homily on Patience by Cyprian of Carthage

St Cyprian was born in Carthage (present day Tunis in North Africa) around the year 200, and became its bishop. He was a staunch defender of the faith and ecclesiastical discipline.

In developing the theme of his famous work "The Good of Patience," St Cyprian follows his usual scheme: quotation from Scripture, commentary on it, and application of the lesson to the present circumstances.

He suffered martyrdom during the persecution of Emperor Valerian in the year 254.

Patience, a Critical Weapon for the Struggle

1 In speaking of patience, beloved brethren, and in preaching on its benefits, I begin by requesting your patience. Patience is necessary for you to be able to listen to me now; you could

not listen and learn without this virtue. The word of God, the way of salvation, is effectively learned only if one listens with patience to what is being said.

We Christians must be subject to the precepts of the Lord with an obedient zeal and personal commitment. The Lord wants us to be consistent with our faith and hope; thus, we should struggle throughout our lives to make these virtues a reality.

Thus, among all the weapons available for the struggle, I do not find any other more preferable, more useful for life, or more vital for attaining glory, than patience.

Christian Patience and Pagan Patience

St Cyprian establishes the difference between the pagan concept of patience and the Christian view of it. For a Christian, patience has its origin in God.

2 Pagan scholars declare that they also pursue this virtue, but their patience is as false as their wisdom. For how can anyone be wise and patient unless he knows that wisdom and patience come from God?

God himself warns us against those who think that they are wise in this world: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the prudence of the prudent I will reject" (1 Cor 1:19).

The blessed Apostle Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, was sent to call and form the Gentiles in the faith. He declares: "Make sure that no one traps you and deprives you of your freedom by some secondhand, empty, rational philosophy based on the principles of this world instead of on Christ. For in Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead" (Col 2:8-9). And he says in another place: "Let no one deceive himself. If anyone thinks he is wise, let him become foolish in the eyes of this world so that he may become wise; for the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight. It is written, 'The Lord knows wise men's thoughts; he knows how useless they are;' and again, 'God knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are foolish'" (1 Cor 3:18-19). If their wisdom is false, their patience is also false.

A humble and meek person is also patient. We see that the pagan scholars are not humble or meek, but very indulgent with themselves; they displease God by the very fact that they please themselves. It is evident that patience cannot be found together with the arrogant boldness of a false freedom, or the shameless boasting of a proud scholar.

The Source of Patience

3 We, however, beloved brethren, are wise not in words but in deeds. We show our wisdom not by academic gown, but by truth. We know about virtues by practicing them, not by boasting of them. We do not merely speak of great things, but, rather, live them.

As servants and worshippers of God, we owe him this tribute: To show in our conduct the

patience we learn from his teachings. Yes, we have this virtue in common with God. Patience has its beginnings in God; he is absolutely patient. God plants patience in our soul, increases it, and makes it gain splendor and dignity. God is its source and author.

Man should love a quality so dear to God. The Divine Majesty recommends us this good which he loves. If God is our Master and our Father, let us imitate his patience; a servant must be obedient to his master, and a son must be worthy of his father.

How Patient Is God?

4 How immense and remarkable is the patience of God! He patiently endures the pagan temples, earthly idols, and idolatrous rites that have been set up by men; these are an insult to God's majesty and honor.

God makes the day to rise, and the sun to shine equally over the good and the evil. When he waters the earth with showers, no one is excluded from his benefits; he bestows his rains without distinction on the just and the unjust.

We see that God uses an equal patience toward the guilty and the innocent, the religious and the materialistic, the grateful and the ungrateful. At God's Will, the seasons obey and the elements serve, the winds blow, the fountains flow, the fields offer grain in abundance, the fruits of the vines ripen, the trees are laden with fruit, the groves become green, and the meadows burst into flower.

Although God is provoked by frequent—yes—even continual offenses, he tempers his anger and patiently waits for the day of reckoning, which he has long scheduled. Although immediate vengeance is in his power, he prefers to be long-suffering and compassionate. He waits for man to stop his long course of malice, if it is at all possible. However deeply one is infected with the diseases of error and crime, God waits for man to change, at some time, and be converted to Him, even at a late hour.

"I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign Lord. Repent and live!" (Ez 18:32). And again: "Return to the Lord your God, for he is all tenderness and compassion, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity" (Joel 2:13).

The blessed apostle Paul calls back the sinner to penance by reminding him: "Are you abusing his abundant goodness, patience and tolerance, not realizing that this goodness of God is meant to lead you to repentance? Your stubborn refusal to repent is only adding to the anger God will have towards you on that day of anger, when his just judgments will be made known. He will repay each one as his works deserve" (Rom 2:4-6).

He says that the judgment of God is just, because it is delayed; it is postponed for a long time, so that care and thought may be taken for man's eternal life by the long enduring patience of

God. Punishment is finally paid by the unfaithful and the sinner when there is no longer possibility of repentance of the sin.

Attain Our Goal by Initiating God's Patience

5 By revealing the divine wisdom, and by giving salutary precepts, the Lord instructed his disciples to live a holy life. He placed patience among the attributes of God, and proclaimed that whoever is gentle, patient, and meek imitates God the Father. Thus, patience was noted as necessary to reach perfection.

To illuminate this more fully, beloved brethren, the Lord made this pronouncement: "You have heard that it was said: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor and shalt hate thy enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you so that you may be the children of your Father in heaven, who makes the sun to rise on the good and evil and sends rain on the just and the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward shall you have? Do not even the Gentiles do that? You, therefore, must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt 5:43-48).

He said it. If the patience of God the Father abides in us, if this aspect of divine likeness which Adam lost by his sin shines in our actions, we, the children of God, are made perfect. By patience we are restored to life—a heavenly birth; and by patience we will attain our goal.

It is glorious to become like God. It is wonderful and delightful to possess virtues similar to the divine attributes.

Jesus' Patience

After explaining the origin of Christian patience, Cyprian shows how Christ and the saints lived this virtue.

6 Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, said that he came down to do the Will of his Father (cf. Jn 6:38); he gave proof of his divine nature and filiation by showing his abundance of majesty, power, and virtue. Among these virtues, Jesus embodied and exemplified his Father's patience by his habitual self-control. He did not teach patience by words only; he taught it also by deeds.

From the outset of his coming from the sublimity of heaven to the earth, Jesus' every act was marked by an accompanying patience:

- Though he was the Son of God, Jesus did not disdain to put on man's flesh; though he was not a sinner, he bore the sins of others (1 Pet 2:24);
- Having put aside his immortality for a time, he became mortal to be slain for the salvation of the guilty, though he was innocent (cf. Mt 1:21);
- Though destined to grant the remission of sins, the Lord was baptized by his servant, and

had his own body cleansed with the water of regeneration (Mt 3:13);

- He, who feeds us all, fasted for forty days; he who felt hunger, fills with the Bread of heaven those hungry for the word of God and grace;

- The Lord was engaged in conflict with the devil, who tempted him, but, having vanquished so formidable an enemy, he did not carry the fight beyond words (Mt 4:1);

- Jesus did not rule over his disciples as a master rules over his slaves, but, being kind and gentle, he loved them as a brother;

- Being such a Master to his servants, he even deigned to wash the feet of his apostles; thus, he taught them what attitude a servant should have toward his companions (Jn 13:1 ff);

- We should not wonder, then, how he tolerated Judas, even to the end, with enduring patience. Our Lord knew who was the foe within the household, but ate with him, and did not expose him (Jn 13:2); he did not even refuse the kiss of his betrayer (Mt 26:48);

- Our Lord showed a marvelous equanimity in bearing with the Jews, and an amazing patience in persuading the unbelieving to accept the faith;

- Jesus won the ungrateful by kindness, responded gently to those who contradicted him, endured the proud with patience, yielded with humility to persecutors, wished to win over the murderers of the prophets, and those persistently rebellious against God even up to the very hour of his passion and Cross.

7 In the hour of his passion and Cross, before his jailers came to the cruel act of his slaughter and the shedding of his blood, our Lord listened to their violent abuses with patience and endured their shameful insults.

- The Lord was even covered with spittle by his torturers (Mt 26:67), though, shortly before, he had cured the eyes of the blind man with his own spittle (Mk 8:23);

- He suffered the lash, though, in his name, his servants now scourge the devil and the damned angels (Jn 19:1);

- He was crowned with thorns, though he now crowns the martyrs with eternal laurels (Mt 27:29);

- He was beaten in the face with hostile palms, though he now gives true palms to the victors (Mt 26:67);

- He was stripped of his garments, though he clothes all others with the garment of immortality (Jn 19:23);

- He was fed with gall, though he now gives us the food of heaven (Mt 27:34);
- He was given vinegar to drink, though he now offers us the cup of salvation (Lk 23:36);
- He was counted among criminals, though he is the innocent, the just, nay, Innocence Itself and Justice Itself (Mt 27:38);
- He was accused by false witnesses, though he is Truth.

He who is to judge was judged, and the Word of God, silent, was led to the Cross. The stars were confounded at the crucifixion of the Lord, the elements were disturbed, the earth trembled, night blotted out the day (Mt 27:45), the sun withdrew its rays and eyes lest it be forced to gaze upon the crime of the Jews, yet Jesus did not speak, move, or proclaim his majesty, even during the suffering itself. He endured all things even to the end with constant perseverance; a full and perfect patience found in him its realization.

8 After such sufferings, Jesus still receives sinners—his murderers—if they are converted and come to him. With the same patience he used to redeem man, this kind Master offers salvation to all; he closes his Church to no one. He receives those adversaries, those blasphemers, those persistent enemies of his name, provided they do penance for their offense, provided they acknowledge the crime committed. He does not only receive and pardon, but admits them to the reward of the kingdom of heaven.

Who can be more patient, who more kind? Even those who caused the blood of Christ to flow are given life by the blood of Christ. Such is the wonderful patience of Christ.

And look at the results; because of Christ's patience with sinners and persecutors, the Church now has Paul as a great Apostle.

A Christian Must Live as Jesus Did

If Christ is the model of patience, every Christian must imitate this aspect of the Master.

9 Beloved brethren, let us follow in the footsteps of Christ. If we are in Christ, if we put him on, if we are identified with him, if he himself is our way of salvation, let us be consistent and live as he did. John the Apostle teaches so: "Whoever claims to live in him, must walk as Jesus did" (1 Jn 2:6). Likewise Peter, on whom the Lord founded his Church, writes in his letter: "Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. 'He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.' He was insulted, and did not retaliate with insults; when he was tortured, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to Him who judges justly" (1 Peter 2:21-23).

The Saints Were Patient in Their Sufferings

10 The patriarchs, the prophets, and all those who imitated Christ, kept their patience with a strong and stable serenity.

So Abel, the first holy man who suffered martyrdom, did not resist or struggle against his brother; with humble and gentle patience, he allowed himself to be killed (Gen 4).

Abraham, trusting God and being the first to establish the root of faith, was tested; he was given to choose between God's Will and his own. He did not hesitate or delay but obeyed the command of God with full and devoted patience. Prefiguring our Lord as the victim, Isaac was patient when he was placed on the altar by his father to be sacrificed (cf Gen 22).

When Jacob was driven away from his own land by Esau, his brother, he departed patiently. Afterward, with greater patience, he humbly requested peace by means of gifts; he restored the harmony with his impious brother and persecutor (Gen 28 and 33).

Joseph, sold by his brothers and banished, not only patiently forgave but even generously and kindly gave them free grain when they came to him (Gen 37 and 45).

Moses was often scorned by an ungrateful people and almost stoned, and yet with mildness and patience he prayed to the Lord in their behalf (Nm 14 and 9).

A great example of Christian patience is found in David, from whom Christ descended according to the flesh. David many times had the opportunity to kill King Saul, his persecutor, who was eager to destroy him. Yet, when Saul was in his hands, David preferred to spare his life; he did not retaliate upon his enemy; on the contrary, he avenged him when Saul was killed in battle (2 Sam 1).

Many prophets have been killed, many martyrs have been honored with glorious deaths, and all have attained their heavenly crowns through patience. A crown for suffering is obtained only when there is patience in that suffering.

All Men Must Be Patient

11 At the beginning of the world and of the human race, Adam was unmindful of God's command and he violated it (Gen 3:17). Beloved brethren, we are also born to struggle here under trials and conflicts; let us now consider the judgment of God upon Adam, to see how necessary patience is, and how patient we must be in this world.

"To Adam, God said: 'Because you have listened to your wife and ate from the tree of which I had forbidden you to eat.

'Accursed be the soil because of you.

With suffering shall you get your food from it

every day of your life.

It shall yield you brambles and thistles,

and you shall eat wild plants.

With sweat on your brow

shall you eat your bread,

until you return to the soil,

as you were taken from it.

For dust you are

and to dust you shall return[^] (Gen 3:17-19).

We are all fastened by the bond of this sentence until we leave this world. With suffering and toil we must work every day of our life. And we must earn our bread with sweat and labor.

A Christian Must Be Patient

Patience is necessary in the life of a Christian, at all times, in physical, moral, and spiritual issues. St Cyprian urges us to practice this virtue with sweetness, gentleness, strength, and persuasiveness. These are also the marks of true patience.

12 When a man is born and enters this world, he begins with tears. Inexperienced and ignorant of all things, he can do nothing else at his birth except weep. With natural foresight, he anticipates the anxieties of this mortal life; by weeping, his young soul testifies to the trials he is going to encounter. For he will toil and labor as long as he lives here. And nothing else can relieve those who labor and toil more than the consolation derived from patience.

Patience is necessary for everyone in this world, but even more for us, who want to follow Christ closely. We need more patience for the following reasons:

- We are more harassed by the onslaughts of the devil;
- Fighting daily on battlefield, we are wearied by our struggle against an old and well-trained enemy;
- In addition to the constant attacks of personal temptations, we suffer persecution, and,

often, have to relinquish our wealth;

- We frequently have to bear chains and endure prison;

- We often have to undergo the sword, wild beasts, fire, the cross, all kinds of tortures and punishments, and finally give up our lives.

Thus, we need to rely on our faith and on the virtue of patience; the Lord himself teaches: "These things I have spoken to you so that in me you may have peace. In the world, you will have affliction. But take courage, I have overcome the world" (Jn 16:33).

We have renounced the devil and the world; thus, we will suffer the attacks of the devil and the world more frequently and more violently. In this struggle, we absolutely need to maintain patience as our helper and companion, to endure all afflictions.

Persevere until the End

13 It is a precept from our Lord and Master: "He who has persevered until the end will be saved" (Mt 10:22). And again: "If you abide in my word, you are my disciples indeed, and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn 8:31-32). Having been given hope and a foretaste of truth and liberty, we must be patient and persevere, beloved brethren, until we finally attain the full Truth and Freedom in God.

The very fact that we are Christians is a source of faith and hope; we are in the way of salvation. But patience is needed for faith and hope to reach maturity and bear fruit. We do not strive for a present glory, but for a future one. As Paul the Apostle teaches: "Through hope we are saved. But a hope that is seen is not hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it with patience" (Rom 8:24-25).

Patient waiting is necessary to accomplish, with God's help, what we have begun; to obtain what we hope for and believe.

The same Apostle teaches us to do good works and store for ourselves treasures in heaven, but to be patient also. He says: "While we have the chance, we must do good for all, but especially for our brothers in the faith. We must never be tired of doing good, for if we persevere in the struggle we shall reap our harvest at the proper time" (Gal 6:10.9).

He does not want anyone to tire of doing good works through a lack of patience; he does not want anyone, overcome by temptations, to stop in the middle of the race toward heaven. Past merits would be lost for such a man, and whatever good he has begun would become imperfect. As it is written: "The integrity of an upright man will not save him once he has chosen to sin" (Ez 33:12). And again: "Hold firmly to what you already have, and let nobody take your crown away from you" (Apoc 3:11). These words urge patient and resolute perseverance. We fight for a crown, and our victory is already near; we will be crowned if we suffer with patience.

Patience, a Defense against Temptations

14 Patience, beloved brethren, makes us preserve what is good in us, and repel what is evil. A patient man maintains a constant dialogue with the Holy Spirit and chooses always what is pleasing to God. When his soul is stormed, he struggles, using his virtues as a shield, against the temptations of the mind and the flesh.

Chief among these temptations are, impurity, dishonesty, and homicide; the rest may be deduced. These actions are mortal sins.

When our patience is strong and deeply rooted in our soul, our body, a temple of God, becomes holy and we are not corrupted by impurity; with child-like love for justice, we are not infected by dishonesty; and our hands, which have held the Eucharist, are not soiled by the blood-stained sword of violence.

Patience and Charity

15 Charity is the bond of fraternity, and the foundation of peace; it gives steadfastness and firmness to the bond of unity among us. Charity is greater than faith and hope (cf. 1 Cor 13:13). Good works and sufferings done out of charity are more excellent than those done with faith but without charity. As an eternal virtue, charity will remain with us forever in the kingdom of heaven.

Our charity should be accompanied by patience. Take away patience, and thus abandoned, charity will not last. Take away charity, the substance of endurance and tolerance, and patience, having no roots or strength, will not last.

St Paul, speaking about charity, joined patience to it: "Charity is patient and kind, it does not envy; charity is not boastful or conceited; it is never rude or selfish; it does not take offense, and is not resentful. Charity is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes" (1 Cor 13:4,5,7). Thus, he showed that charity can last only when one has learned to endure all things.

And in another place he says: "Bear with one another charitably, in complete selflessness, gentleness, and patience. Do all you can to preserve the unity of the Spirit by the peace that binds you together" (Eph 4:2-3). He confirmed that one needs patience to grow in the virtue of charity, to preserve unity and peace with one's brothers, and to maintain the bond of fraternity.

Do Not Render Evil for Evil

16 We Christians are told not to swear or curse, not to seek again what has been taken away from us (cf. Lk 6:30); on receiving a blow to offer the other cheek also to our assailant (cf. Mt 5:39); to forgive a brother who offends us not only seventy times seven, but all his offenses without exception (cf. Mt 18:21,22); to love our enemies, and to pray for our persecutors (cf. Mt 18:21,22). We need a constant patience to endure these offenses.

We see what happened to Stephen, the first martyr among many who were to come. When the Jews were stoning him to death, he did not ask for vengeance but forgiveness for his murderers: "O Lord, do not hold this sin against them" (cf. Act 7:58-60). The first martyr for Christ was not only a preacher of the Lord's sufferings but also an imitator of Jesus' patient gentleness.

A Christian does not fall into anger, strife, or altercation. If he is patient, these evil passions do not enter his heart; or if they enter, they are quickly driven out. His heart continues to be peaceful, a temple where the God of peace is pleased to dwell.

Accordingly, the Apostle teaches us: "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, who has marked you with his seal for the day of redemption. Never have grudges against others, or lose your temper, or raise your voice to anybody, or call each other names, or slander anyone, or allow any form of malice" (Eph 4:30,31). A Christian is a person who has withdrawn from the fury and attacks of the flesh as from the storms of the sea, and has begun to be tranquil and gentle in the harbor of Christ; he should not admit into his heart anger or quarrel. It is wrong for a Christian to render evil for evil, or to hate.

How to Face Hardships

17 Everyone is often attacked by the devil with snares and oppressed by his flesh with unrelenting harassment; thus, patience is necessary to fight against these temptations of the flesh and the devil.

Ever since Adam disobeyed God's command, moral strength departed from us with the loss of immortality; weakness entered the body with the sentence of death. We will not regain our moral strength until we acquire immortality. Thus, we need to keep on struggling in this present state of bodily weakness; and this fight can not be sustained without the strength of patience.

Various kinds of hardships are imposed on us to test us; many forms of temptations are inflicted upon us to prove us. We may lose our property, our health, meet an accident, or suffer the death of dear ones. How should we react?

In adversity, the wicked man complains and blasphemes because of his impatience, while the man seeking sanctity is steeled by his patience; thus, it is written: "Whatever happens to you, accept it; in crushing misfortune, be patient; for gold is tested in fire, and chosen men in the crucible of humiliation" (Sirach 2:4-5). Nothing else distinguishes better the holy man from the wicked.

Job's Endurance

18 Job was tried, passed the test, and was raised to the pinnacle of praise because of his patience. How many weapons the devil hurled against him! How many torments he inflicted on him! A wealthy man and a father of a large family, Job suffered the loss of his property, and was left

without children. Festering wounds covered his body, and a scourge of worms devoured his decaying limbs. And to leave no torment untried, the devil even used an ancient device of his wickedness: He armed Job's wife against him, as if he could deceive and cheat every man through a woman, as he did in the beginning.

Nevertheless, Job was not broken by these continuous assaults; in spite of these trials and afflictions, he was praised by God for his victorious patience.

After his magnificent work of justice and mercy, Tobias was also tempted by the loss of his eyes; he endured his blindness with composure, and gained merit with God through his patience.

The Consequences of Impatience

19 Beloved brethren, consider how much evil impatience causes, so that the good of patience may shine forth in you more brightly.

Just as patience is a good of Christ, impatience is an evil of Satan. Just as the man in whom Christ lives is patient, the man full of the wickedness of the devil is impatient.

Consider the origins of impatience; the devil reacted with impatience against the announcement that man was made in the image of God. For this reason, he was the first to perish, and constantly causes others to perish.

In violation of the heavenly command, Adam did not resist the desire of the forbidden food, and fell into the death of sin; impatient, he did not preserve the grace received from God.

Cain was impatient of his brother's sacrifices, and killed him (cf. Gen 4:5). Impatient for the lentils, Esau put lower things before higher, and lost his birthright (cf. Gen 25:29-34).

Why were the Jewish people unfaithful and ungrateful toward the divine blessings? Was it not because of their impatience that they went away from God? When they could not bear the delay of Moses speaking with God in Mount Sinai, they demanded a man-made god; they proclaimed a golden calf, an earthly image, as the guide of their journey (cf. Ex 32). They never rid themselves of the fault of impatience; always impatient of the divine teaching and guidance, they killed all their prophets and just men; they hastened to the Cross and to the shedding of the Blood of the Lord.

Impatience also produces heretics in the Church, rebels against the peace and charity of Christ; it drives them to hostile acts and furious hates, after the manner of the Jews. In sum, while patience turns all our works and sufferings into glory, impatience reduces them to ruin.

Patience Permeates Every Aspect of a Christian's Struggle

Patience is the pith and marrow of St Cyprian's concept of Christianity.

20 Beloved brethren, we have seen the benefits of patience and the evils of impatience; let us, then, be patient; thus, we will abide in Christ and, with Christ, will come to God.

Patience, rich and manifold, should not be applied only to a narrow set of activities, or restricted to deeds of small extent; it should influence everything we do. Beginning as a single stream of grace, the virtue of patience spreads into rivers flowing through many glorious courses. No action of ours deserves the full amount of merit if it is not permeated by patience; if it is not watered and kept alive by one of these rivers.

Patience makes us acceptable to God and saves us for God. It tempers anger, bridles the tongue, governs the mind, guards the peace, imposes order and discipline in our lives, defeats the assaults of lust, suppresses the violence of pride, extinguishes the fire of conflict, restrains the abuse of power of the wealthy, and gives the poor fortitude to struggle through difficult circumstances.

Patience defends the blessed integrity of virgins, the exacting chastity of widows, and the indivisible love of husbands and wives. It makes men humble in prosperity, brave in adversity, meek in the face of insults.

Patience teaches us to pardon quickly those who offend us; it compels us to ask for pardon when we offend others. It helps us to defeat temptations, to withstand persecutions, to endure sufferings and martyrdom to the end. This same patience strongly strengthens the foundations of our faith, and promotes the growth of hope. It directs us to continue struggling along the way of Christ, God the Son, imitating His long-suffering patience; it ensures our perseverance as sons of God, while we imitate the patience of God the Father.

Wait until the Day of Future Deliverance

21 Beloved brethren, we find ourselves tossed about by the violent storms of a turbulent world; we are torn in the midst of persecutions of the Jews, the Gentiles, and the heretics. I know that many of us, suffering violence, are enraged against those who attack us; many of us, distressed by injustices, feel resentment toward the wrongdoers; and many wish to be quickly avenged. I must warn you, before I close, that we should patiently await the day of deliverance.

We should not rush to avenge our pain with an angry speed, since it is written: "Wait for me, says the Lord, for the day I will stand up to testify. I have decided to assemble the nations, to gather the kingdoms, and to pour out my wrath on them—all my fierce anger" (Zp 3:8).

The Lord commands us to wait and to endure with a strong patience the day of future deliverance. He says in the Apocalypse: "Do not keep the prophecies in this book a secret, because the time is near. Meanwhile let the sinner go on sinning, and the unclean continue to be unclean; let those who do good go on doing good, and those who are holy continue to be holy. Very soon now, I shall be with you again, bringing the reward to be given to every man according to what he has done" (Apoc 22:10-12).

Even as they cry out and are hustled off to the torture, the martyrs are still ordered to wait and to show patience in their suffering until the appointed time is fulfilled and the number of martyrs is completed. "When he broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of all the people who had been killed on account of the word of God, for witnessing to it. They shouted aloud, 'Lord, Holy and True, how much longer will you wait before you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?' Each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to be patient a little longer, until the number was complete and their fellow servants and brothers had been killed just as they had been" (Apoc 6:9-11).

22 Through the prophet Malachi, the Holy Spirit describes the day of the divine retribution for the blood of the just: "Behold the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be like stubble. The day that is coming is going to burn them up, says the Lord Almighty. Not a root or a branch will be left to them" (Mal 4:1).

Likewise, the psalms declare that the coming of God, the Judge, must be awaited with awe, because of the majesty of his judgment: "God our God comes, he keeps silence no longer. A fire burns before him, and around him a tempest rages. He summons the heavens above and the earth, to his people's trial: 'Assemble my faithful before me who sealed my covenant by sacrifice!' The heavens proclaim his justice, for he, God, is the judge" (Ps 50:3-6).

Isaiah describes the same judgment: "Lo, the Lord shall come in fire, his chariots like a whirlwind; he will bring down his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For in the fire of the Lord they will be judged and by his sword they will be wounded" (Is 66:15-16). And again: "The Lord will advance like a hero, his fury will be stirred like a warrior's. With a shout he will raise the battle cry and will triumph over his enemies. For a long time I have been quiet and held myself back; shall I be silent always?" (Is 42:13-14).

God Will Demand Retribution

23 Who is telling us that He had been silent, but will not be silent forever?

— The One who was led like a lamb to the slaughter and who, as a sheep silent before its shearers, did not open his mouth" (cf. Is 53:7);

- The One who did not shout and whose voice was not heard in the streets;

- The One who was not rebellious;

- The One who offered his back to those who scourged him, and his cheeks to those who plucked his beard; who did not cover his face against blows, insults, and spittle (cf. Is 42:2; 50:5-6);

- The One who, accused by the priests and the whole Sanhedrin, answered nothing in his defense (cf. Mt 26:63); the One who, to the amazement of Pilate, kept a most patient silence (cf. Mt

27:14).

Although silent in his Passion, he will not be silent in the day of reckoning. He is our God; the God not recognized by all but only by the faithful, who believe in him. Although he was hidden in humility in his first coming, he will manifest himself in power in his Second Coming. Then, he will not be silent.

24 This is the Judge and the Avenger, beloved brethren, whom we are to await. He will come to demand a heavy reckoning for his sufferings, for the sufferings of the people of his Church, and of all the just from the beginning of the world.

No one should hasten and hurry too much to demand his own revenge; Jesus, who alone will settle the accounts, has not yet avenged himself.

God the Father commanded that his Son should be adored. Mindful of the divine precept, the Apostle Paul declares: "God exalted him to the highest place, and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus all beings, in the heavens, on earth, and under the earth, should bend the knee" (Phil 2:9-10).

In the Apocalypse, when John wishes to adore the Angel, he resists him and remarks: "Don't do that; I am a servant, just like you and like your brothers the prophets, and like those who treasure what you have written in this book. Adore Jesus the Lord" (Apoc 22:9).

See how wonderful is Jesus, our Lord, and what great patience he has; he is adored in heaven, yet, he has not been avenged on earth.

Beloved brethren, in our persecutions and sufferings, let us think of Jesus' patience. Let us show a full submission to God's Will, an acceptance of trials consistent with our expectation of his coming.

Let us not be anxious to shorten the length of our sufferings; we need not defend ourselves before the Lord, like an unfaithful and shameless slave trying to lessen his work. Rather, let us persevere and work.

Let us guard the precepts of the Lord, be watchful with our heart, and be generous in our sacrifice, even to the total acceptance of God's Will. When the day of reckoning comes, we will not be punished together with the unfaithful and sinners, but be honored with the just and those who fear God.

226. The Letter of Clement to the Corinthians (Expanded)

Chapter 1. The Salutation. Praise of the Corinthians Before the Breaking Forth of Schism Among Them.

The church of God which sojourns at Rome, to the church of God sojourning at Corinth, to them that are called and sanctified by the will of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, from Almighty God through Jesus Christ, be multiplied.

Owing, dear brethren, to the sudden and successive calamitous events which have happened to ourselves, we feel that we have been somewhat tardy in turning our attention to the points respecting which you consulted us; and especially to that shameful and detestable sedition, utterly abhorrent to the elect of God, which a few rash and self-confident persons have kindled to such a pitch of frenzy, that your venerable and illustrious name, worthy to be universally loved, has suffered grievous injury. For who ever dwelt even for a short time among you, and did not find your faith to be as fruitful of virtue as it was firmly established? Who did not admire the sobriety and moderation of your godliness in Christ? Who did not proclaim the magnificence of your habitual hospitality? And who did not rejoice over your perfect and well-grounded knowledge? For you did all things without respect of persons, and walked in the commandments of God, being obedient to those who had the rule over you, and giving all fitting honour to the presbyters among you. You enjoined young men to be of a sober and serious mind, you instructed your wives to do all things with a blameless, becoming, and pure conscience, loving their husbands as in duty bound; and you taught them that, living in the rule of obedience, they should manage their household affairs becomingly, and be in every respect marked by discretion.

Chapter 2. Praise of the Corinthians Continued.

Moreover, you were all distinguished by humility, and were in no respect puffed up with pride, but yielded obedience rather than extorted it, and were more willing to give than to receive. Acts 20:35 Content with the provision which God had made for you, and carefully attending to His words, you were inwardly filled with His doctrine, and His sufferings were before your eyes. Thus a profound and abundant peace was given to you all, and you had an insatiable desire for doing good, while a full outpouring of the Holy Spirit was upon you all. Full of holy designs, you did, with true earnestness of mind and a godly confidence, stretch forth your hands to God Almighty, beseeching Him to be merciful unto you, if you had been guilty of any involuntary transgression. Day and night you were anxious for the whole brotherhood, 1 Peter 2:17 that the number of God's elect might be saved with mercy and a good conscience. You were sincere and uncorrupted, and forgetful of injuries between one another. Every kind of faction and schism was abominable in your sight. You mourned over the transgressions of your neighbours: their deficiencies you deemed your own. You never grudged any act of kindness, being ready to every good work. Titus 3:1 Adorned by a thoroughly virtuous and religious life, you did all things in the fear of God. The commandments and ordinances of the Lord were written upon the tablets of your hearts. Proverbs 7:3

Chapter 3. The Sad State of the Corinthian Church After Sedition Arose in It from Envy and Emulation.

Every kind of honour and happiness was bestowed upon you, and then was fulfilled that which is written, My beloved ate and drank, and was enlarged and became fat, and kicked. Deuteronomy 32:15 Hence flowed emulation and envy, strife and sedition, persecution and disorder, war and captivity. So the worthless rose up against the honoured, those of no reputation against such as were renowned, the foolish against the wise, the young against those advanced in years. For this reason righteousness and peace are now far departed from you,

inasmuch as every one abandons the fear of God, and has become blind in His faith, neither walks in the ordinances of His appointment, nor acts a part becoming a Christian, but walks after his own wicked lusts, resuming the practice of an unrighteous and ungodly envy, by which death itself entered into the world. Wisdom 2:24

Chapter 4. Many Evils Have Already Flowed from This Source in Ancient Times.

For thus it is written: And it came to pass after certain days, that Cain brought of the fruits of the earth a sacrifice unto God; and Abel also brought of the firstlings of his sheep, and of the fat thereof. And God had respect to Abel and to his offerings, but Cain and his sacrifices He did not regard. And Cain was deeply grieved, and his countenance fell. And God said to Cain, Why are you grieved, and why is your countenance fallen? If you offer rightly, but do not divide rightly, have you not sinned? Be at peace: your offering returns to yourself, and you shall again possess it. And Cain said to Abel his brother, Let us go into the field. And it came to pass, while they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. You see, brethren, how envy and jealousy led to the murder of a brother. Through envy, also, our father Jacob fled from the face of Esau his brother. Envy made Joseph be persecuted unto death, and to come into bondage. Genesis xxxvii Envy compelled Moses to flee from the face of Pharaoh king of Egypt, when he heard these words from his fellow-countryman, Who made you a judge or a ruler over us? Will you kill me, as you killed the Egyptian yesterday? Exodus 2:14 On account of envy, Aaron and Miriam had to make their abode without the camp. Numbers 12:14-15 Envy brought down Dathan and Abiram alive to Hades, through the sedition which they excited against God's servant Moses. Numbers 16:33 Through envy, David not only underwent the hatred of foreigners, but was also persecuted by Saul king of Israel.

Chapter 5. No Less Evils Have Arisen from the Same Source in the Most Recent Times. The Martyrdom of Peter and Paul.

But not to dwell upon ancient examples, let us come to the most recent spiritual heroes. Let us take the noble examples furnished in our own generation. Through envy and jealousy the greatest and most righteous pillars [of the church] have been persecuted and put to death. Let us set before our eyes the illustrious apostles. Peter, through unrighteous envy, endured not one or two, but numerous labours; and when he had at length suffered martyrdom, departed to the place of glory due to him. Owing to envy, Paul also obtained the reward of patient endurance, after being seven times thrown into captivity, compelled to flee, and stoned. After preaching both in the east and west, he gained the illustrious reputation due to his faith, having taught righteousness to the whole world, and come to the extreme limit of the west, and suffered martyrdom under the prefects. Thus was he removed from the world, and went into the holy place, having proved himself a striking example of patience.

Chapter 6. Continuation. Several Other Martyrs.

To these men who spent their lives in the practice of holiness, there is to be added a great multitude of the elect, who, having through envy endured many indignities and tortures, furnished us with a most excellent example. Through envy, those women, the Danaids and Dirce, being persecuted, after they had suffered terrible and unspeakable torments, finished the course of their faith with steadfastness, and though weak in body, received a noble reward. Envy has alienated wives from their husbands, and changed that saying of our father Adam, This is now bone of my bones, and

flesh of my flesh. Genesis 2:23 Envy and strife have overthrown great cities, and rooted up mighty nations.

Chapter 7. An Exhortation to Repentance.

These things, beloved, we write unto you, not merely to admonish you of your duty, but also to remind ourselves. For we are struggling on the same arena, and the same conflict is assigned to both of us. Wherefore let us give up vain and fruitless cares, and approach to the glorious and venerable rule of our holy calling. Let us attend to what is good, pleasing, and acceptable in the sight of Him who formed us. Let us look steadfastly to the blood of Christ, and see how precious that blood is to God which, having been shed for our salvation, has set the grace of repentance before the whole world. Let us turn to every age that has passed, and learn that, from generation to generation, the Lord has granted a place of repentance to all such as would be converted unto Him. Noah preached repentance, and as many as listened to him were saved. Jonah proclaimed destruction to the Ninevites; Jonah iii but they, repenting of their sins, propitiated God by prayer, and obtained salvation, although they were aliens [to the covenant] of God.

Chapter 8. Continuation Respecting Repentance.

The ministers of the grace of God have, by the Holy Spirit, spoken of repentance; and the Lord of all things has himself declared with an oath regarding it, As I live, says the Lord, I desire not the death of the sinner, but rather his repentance; Ezekiel 33:11 adding, moreover, this gracious declaration, Repent, O house of Israel, of your iniquity. Ezekiel 18:30 Say to the children of my people, Though your sins reach from earth to heaven, and though they be redder Isaiah 1:18 than scarlet, and blacker than sack-cloth, yet if you turn to me with your whole heart, and say, Father! I will listen to you, as to a holy people. And in another place He speaks thus: Wash you and become clean; put away the wickedness of your souls from before my eyes; cease from your evil ways, and learn to do well; seek out judgment, deliver the oppressed, judge the fatherless, and see that justice is done to the widow; and come, and let us reason together. He declares, Though your sins be like crimson, I will make them white as snow; though they be like scarlet, I will whiten them like wool. And if you be willing and obey me, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse, and will not hearken unto me, the sword shall devour you, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken these things. Isaiah 1:16-20 Desiring, therefore, that all His beloved should be partakers of repentance, He has, by His almighty will, established [these declarations].

Chapter 9. Examples of the Saints.

Wherefore, let us yield obedience to His excellent and glorious will; and imploring His mercy and loving-kindness, while we forsake all fruitless labours and strife, and envy, which leads to death, let us turn and have recourse to His compassions. Let us steadfastly contemplate those who have perfectly ministered to his excellent glory. Let us take (for instance) Enoch, who, being found righteous in obedience, was translated, and death was never known to happen to him. Noah, being found faithful, preached regeneration to the world through his ministry; and the Lord saved by him the animals which, with one accord, entered into the ark.

Chapter 10. Continuation of the Above.

Abraham, styled the friend, was found faithful, inasmuch as he rendered obedience to the words of God. He, in the exercise of obedience, went out from his own country, and from his kindred, and from his father's house, in order that, by forsaking a small territory, and a weak family, and an insignificant house, he might inherit the promises of God. For God said to him, Get you out from your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's house, into the land which I shall show you. And I will make you a great nation, and will bless you, and make your name great, and you shall be blessed. And I will bless them that bless you, and curse them that curse you; and in you shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Genesis 12:1-3 And again, on his departing from Lot, God said to him, Lift up your eyes, and look from the place where you now are, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see, to you will I give it, and to your seed forever. And I will make your seed as the dust of the earth, [so that] if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall your seed also be numbered. Genesis 13:14-16 And again [the Scripture] says, God brought forth Abram, and spoke unto him, Look up now to heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them; so shall your seed be. And Abram believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. On account of his faith and hospitality, a son was given him in his old age; and in the exercise of obedience, he offered him as a sacrifice to God on one of the mountains which He showed him.

Chapter 11. Continuation. Lot.

On account of his hospitality and godliness, Lot was saved out of Sodom when all the country round was punished by means of fire and brimstone, the Lord thus making it manifest that He does not forsake those that hope in Him, but gives up such as depart from Him to punishment and torture. Genesis xix; cf. 2 Peter 2:6-9 For Lot's wife, who went forth with him, being of a different mind from himself, and not continuing in agreement with him [as to the command which had been given them], was made an example of, so as to be a pillar of salt unto this day. This was done that all might know that those who are of a double mind, and who distrust the power of God, bring down judgment on themselves and become a sign to all succeeding generations.

Chapter 12. The Rewards of Faith and Hospitality. Rahab.

On account of her faith and hospitality, Rahab the harlot was saved. For when spies were sent by Joshua, the son of Nun, to Jericho, the king of the country ascertained that they had come to spy out their land, and sent men to seize them, in order that, when taken, they might be put to death. But the hospitable Rahab receiving them, concealed them on the roof of her house under some stalks of flax. And when the men sent by the king arrived and said, There came men unto you who are to spy out our land; bring them forth, for so the king commands, she answered them, The two men whom you seek came unto me, but quickly departed again and are gone, thus not discovering the spies to them. Then she said to the men, I know assuredly that the Lord your God has given you this city, for the fear and dread of you have fallen on its inhabitants. When therefore you shall have taken it, keep ye me and the house of my father in safety. And they said to her, It shall be as you have spoken to us. As soon, therefore, as you know that we are at hand, you shall gather all your family under your roof, and they shall be preserved, but all that are found outside of your dwelling shall perish. Moreover, they gave her a sign to this effect, that she should hang forth from her house a scarlet thread. And thus they made it manifest that redemption should flow through the

blood of the Lord to all them that believe and hope in God. You see, beloved, that there was not only faith, but prophecy, in this woman.

Chapter 13. An Exhortation to Humility.

Let us therefore, brethren, be of humble mind, laying aside all haughtiness, and pride, and foolishness, and angry feelings; and let us act according to that which is written (for the Holy Spirit says, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, neither let the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glories glory in the Lord, in diligently seeking Him, and doing judgment and righteousness), being especially mindful of the words of the Lord Jesus which He spoke teaching us meekness and long-suffering. For thus He spoke: Be merciful, that you may obtain mercy; forgive, that it may be forgiven to you; as you do, so shall it be done unto you; as you judge, so shall you be judged; as you are kind, so shall kindness be shown to you; with what measure you measure, with the same it shall be measured to you. By this precept and by these rules let us establish ourselves, that we walk with all humility in obedience to His holy words. For the holy word says, On whom shall I look, but on him that is meek and peaceable, and that trembles at my words? Isaiah 66:2

Chapter 14. We Should Obey God Rather Than the Authors of Sedition.

It is right and holy therefore, men and brethren, rather to obey God than to follow those who, through pride and sedition, have become the leaders of a detestable emulation. For we shall incur no slight injury, but rather great danger, if we rashly yield ourselves to the inclinations of men who aim at exciting strife and tumults, so as to draw us away from what is good. Let us be kind one to another after the pattern of the tender mercy and benignity of our Creator. For it is written, The kind-hearted shall inhabit the land, and the guiltless shall be left upon it, but transgressors shall be destroyed from off the face of it. Proverbs 2:21-22 And again [the Scripture] says, I saw the ungodly highly exalted, and lifted up like the cedars of Lebanon: I passed by, and, behold, he was not; and I diligently sought his place, and could not find it. Preserve innocence, and look on equity: for there shall be a remnant to the peaceable man.

Chapter 15. We Must Adhere to Those Who Cultivate Peace, Not to Those Who Merely Pretend to Do So.

Let us cleave, therefore, to those who cultivate peace with godliness, and not to those who hypocritically profess to desire it. For [the Scripture] says in a certain place, This people honours me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. And again: They bless with their mouth, but curse with their heart. And again it says, They loved Him with their mouth, and lied to Him with their tongue; but their heart was not right with Him, neither were they faithful in His covenant. Let the deceitful lips become silent, [and let the Lord destroy all the lying lips,] and the boastful tongue of those who have said, Let us magnify our tongue: our lips are our own; who is lord over us? For the oppression of the poor, and for the sighing of the needy, will I now arise, says the Lord: I will place him in safety; I will deal confidently with him.

Chapter 16. Christ as an Example of Humility.

For Christ is of those who are humble-minded, and not of those who exalt themselves over His flock. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Sceptre of the majesty of God, did not come in the pomp

of pride or arrogance, although He might have done so, but in a lowly condition, as the Holy Spirit had declared regarding Him. For He says, Lord, who has believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? We have declared [our message] in His presence: He is, as it were, a child, and like a root in thirsty ground; He has no form nor glory, yea, we saw Him, and He had no form nor comeliness; but His form was without eminence, yea, deficient in comparison with the [ordinary] form of men. He is a man exposed to stripes and suffering, and acquainted with the endurance of grief: for His countenance was turned away; He was despised, and not esteemed. He bears our iniquities, and is in sorrow for our sakes; yet we supposed that [on His own account] He was exposed to labour, and stripes, and affliction. But He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we were healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; [every] man has wandered in his own way; and the Lord has delivered Him up for our sins, while He in the midst of His sufferings opens not His mouth. He was brought as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before her shearer is dumb, so He opens not His mouth. In His humiliation His judgment was taken away; who shall declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth. For the transgressions of my people was He brought down to death. And I will give the wicked for His sepulchre, and the rich for His death, because He did no iniquity, neither was guile found in His mouth. And the Lord is pleased to purify him by stripes. If you make an offering for sin, your soul shall see a long-lived seed. And the Lord is pleased to relieve Him of the affliction of His soul, to show Him light, and to form Him with understanding, to justify the Just One who ministers well to many; and He Himself shall carry their sins. On this account He shall inherit many, and shall divide the spoil of the strong; because His soul was delivered to death, and He was reckoned among the transgressors, and He bare the sins of many, and for their sins was He delivered. And again He says, I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All that see me have derided me; they have spoken with their lips; they have wagged their head, [saying] He hoped in God, let Him deliver Him, let Him save Him, since He delights in Him. You see, beloved, what is the example which has been given us; for if the Lord thus humbled Himself, what shall we do who have through Him come under the yoke of His grace?

Chapter 17. The Saints as Examples of Humility.

Let us be imitators also of those who in goat-skins and sheep-skins Hebrews 11:37 went about proclaiming the coming of Christ; I mean Elijah, Elisha, and Ezekiel among the prophets, with those others to whom a like testimony is borne [in Scripture]. Abraham was specially honoured, and was called the friend of God; yet he, earnestly regarding the glory of God, humbly declared, I am but dust and ashes. Genesis 18:27 Moreover, it is thus written of Job, Job was a righteous man, and blameless, truthful, God-fearing, and one that kept himself from all evil. Job 1:1 But bringing an accusation against himself, he said, No man is free from defilement, even if his life be but of one day. Job 14:4-5 Moses was called faithful in all God's house; and through his instrumentality, God punished Egypt with plagues and tortures. Yet he, though thus greatly honoured, did not adopt lofty language, but said, when the divine oracle came to him out of the bush, Who am I, that You send me? I am a man of a feeble voice and a slow tongue. And again he said, I am but as the smoke of a pot.

Chapter 18. David as an Example of Humility.

But what shall we say concerning David, to whom such testimony was borne, and of whom God said, I have found a man after my own heart, David the son of Jesse; and in everlasting mercy have I anointed him? Yet this very man says to God, Have mercy on me, O Lord, according to Your great mercy; and according to the multitude of Your compassions, blot out my transgression. Wash me still more from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me. Against You only have I sinned, and done that which is evil in Your sight; that You may be justified in Your sayings, and may overcome when You are judged. For, behold, I was conceived in transgressions, and in sins did my mother conceive me. For, behold, You have loved truth; the secret and hidden things of wisdom have You shown me. You shall sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed; You shall wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. You shall make me to hear joy and gladness; my bones, which have been humbled, shall exult. Turn away Your face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and establish me by Your governing Spirit. I will teach transgressors Your ways, and the ungodly shall be converted unto You. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation: my tongue shall exult in Your righteousness. O Lord, You shall open my mouth, and my lips shall show forth Your praise. For if You had desired sacrifice, I would have given it; You will not delight in burnt-offerings. The sacrifice [acceptable] to God is a bruised spirit; a broken and a contrite heart God will not despise.

Chapter 19. Imitating These Examples, Let Us Seek After Peace.

Thus the humility and godly submission of so great and illustrious men have rendered not only us, but also all the generations before us, better; even as many as have received His oracles in fear and truth. Wherefore, having so many great and glorious examples set before us, let us turn again to the practice of that peace which from the beginning was the mark set before us; and let us look steadfastly to the Father and Creator of the universe, and cleave to His mighty and surpassingly great gifts and benefactions of peace. Let us contemplate Him with our understanding, and look with the eyes of our soul to His long-suffering will. Let us reflect how free from the wrath He is towards all His creation.

Chapter 20. The Peace and Harmony of the Universe.

The heavens, revolving under His government, are subject to Him in peace. Day and night run the course appointed by Him, in no wise hindering each other. The sun and moon, with the companies of the stars, roll on in harmony according to His command, within their prescribed limits, and without any deviation. The fruitful earth, according to His will, brings forth food in abundance, at the proper seasons, for man and beast and all the living beings upon it, never hesitating, nor changing any of the ordinances which He has fixed. The unsearchable places of abysses, and the indescribable arrangements of the lower world, are restrained by the same laws. The vast unmeasurable sea, gathered together by His working into various basins, never passes beyond the bounds placed around it, but does as He has commanded. For He said, Thus far shall you come, and your waves shall be broken within you. Job 38:11 The ocean, impassable to man and the worlds beyond it, are regulated by the same enactments of the Lord. The seasons of spring, summer, autumn, and winter, peacefully give place to one another. The winds in their several quarters fulfil,

at the proper time, their service without hindrance. The ever-flowing fountains, formed both for enjoyment and health, furnish without fail their breasts for the life of men. The very smallest of living beings meet together in peace and concord. All these the great Creator and Lord of all has appointed to exist in peace and harmony; while He does good to all, but most abundantly to us who have fled for refuge to His compassions through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be glory and majesty for ever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 21. Let Us Obey God, and Not the Authors of Sedition.

Take heed, beloved, lest His many kindnesses lead to the condemnation of us all. [For thus it must be] unless we walk worthy of Him, and with one mind do those things which are good and well-pleasing in His sight. For [the Scripture] says in a certain place, The Spirit of the Lord is a candle searching the secret parts of the belly. Proverbs 20:27 Let us reflect how near He is, and that none of the thoughts or reasonings in which we engage are hid from Him. It is right, therefore, that we should not leave the post which His will has assigned us. Let us rather offend those men who are foolish, and inconsiderate, and lifted up, and who glory in the pride of their speech, than [offend] God. Let us reverence the Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood was given for us; let us esteem those who have the rule over us; let us honour the aged among us; let us train up the young men in the fear of God; let us direct our wives to that which is good. Let them exhibit the lovely habit of purity [in all their conduct]; let them show forth the sincere disposition of meekness; let them make manifest the command which they have of their tongue, by their manner of speaking; let them display their love, not by preferring one to another, but by showing equal affection to all that piously fear God. Let your children be partakers of true Christian training; let them learn of how great avail humility is with God — how much the spirit of pure affection can prevail with Him — how excellent and great His fear is, and how it saves all those who walk in it with a pure mind. For He is a Searcher of the thoughts and desires [of the heart]: His breath is in us; and when He pleases, He will take it away.

Chapter 22. These Exhortations are Confirmed by the Christian Faith, Which Proclaims the Misery of Sinful Conduct.

Now the faith which is in Christ confirms all these [admonitions]. For He Himself by the Holy Ghost thus addresses us: Come, you children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. What man is he that desires life, and loves to see good days? Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are [open] unto their prayers. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. The righteous cried, and the Lord heard him, and delivered him out of all his troubles. Many are the stripes [appointed for] the wicked; but mercy shall compass those about who hope in the Lord.

Chapter 23. Be Humble, and Believe that Christ Will Come Again.

The all-merciful and beneficent Father has bowels [of compassion] towards those that fear Him, and kindly and lovingly bestows His favours upon those who come to Him with a simple mind. Wherefore let us not be double-minded; neither let our soul be lifted up on account of His exceedingly great and glorious gifts. Far from us be that which is written, Wretched are they who are of a double mind, and of a doubting heart; who say, These things we have heard even in the times of

our fathers; but, behold, we have grown old, and none of them has happened unto us; You foolish ones! compare yourselves to a tree; take [for instance] the vine. First of all, it sheds its leaves, then it buds, next it puts forth leaves, and then it flowers; after that comes the sour grape, and then follows the ripened fruit. You perceive how in a little time the fruit of a tree comes to maturity. Of a truth, soon and suddenly shall His will be accomplished, as the Scripture also bears witness, saying, Speedily will He come, and will not tarry; and, The Lord shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Holy One, for whom you look. Malachi 3:1

Chapter 24. God Continually Shows Us in Nature that There Will Be a Resurrection.

Let us consider, beloved, how the Lord continually proves to us that there shall be a future resurrection, of which He has rendered the Lord Jesus Christ the first-fruits by raising Him from the dead. Let us contemplate, beloved, the resurrection which is at all times taking place. Day and night declare to us a resurrection. The night sinks to sleep, and the day arises; the day [again] departs, and the night comes on. Let us behold the fruits [of the earth], how the sowing of grain takes place. The sower Luke 8:5 goes forth, and casts it into the ground, and the seed being thus scattered, though dry and naked when it fell upon the earth, is gradually dissolved. Then out of its dissolution the mighty power of the providence of the Lord raises it up again, and from one seed many arise and bring forth fruit.

Chapter 25. The Phoenix an Emblem of Our Resurrection.

Let us consider that wonderful sign [of the resurrection] which takes place in eastern lands, that is, in Arabia and the countries round about. There is a certain bird which is called a phoenix. This is the only one of its kind, and lives five hundred years. And when the time of its dissolution draws near that it must die, it builds itself a nest of frankincense, and myrrh, and other spices, into which, when the time is fulfilled, it enters and dies. But as the flesh decays a certain kind of worm is produced, which, being nourished by the juices of the dead bird, brings forth feathers. Then, when it has acquired strength, it takes up that nest in which are the bones of its parent, and bearing these it passes from the land of Arabia into Egypt, to the city called Heliopolis. And, in open day, flying in the sight of all men, it places them on the altar of the sun, and having done this, hastens back to its former abode. The priests then inspect the registers of the dates, and find that it has returned exactly as the five hundredth year was completed.

Chapter 26. We Shall Rise Again, Then, as the Scripture Also Testifies.

Do we then deem it any great and wonderful thing for the Maker of all things to raise up again those that have piously served Him in the assurance of a good faith, when even by a bird He shows us the mightiness of His power to fulfil His promise? For [the Scripture] says in a certain place, You shall raise me up, and I shall confess unto You; and again, I laid me down, and slept; I awoke, because You are with me; and again, Job says, You shall raise up this flesh of mine, which has suffered all these things. Job 19:25-26

Chapter 27. In the Hope of the Resurrection, Let Us Cleave to the Omnipotent and Omniscient God.

Having then this hope, let our souls be bound to Him who is faithful in His promises, and just in His judgments. He who has commanded us not to lie, shall much more Himself not lie; for nothing is impossible with God, except to lie. Let His faith therefore be stirred up again within us, and let us

consider that all things are near unto Him. By the word of His might He established all things, and by His word He can overthrow them. Who shall say unto Him, What have you done? Or, Who shall resist the power of His strength? When, and as He pleases, He will do all things, and none of the things determined by Him shall pass away. Matthew 24:35 All things are open before Him, and nothing can be hidden from His counsel. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows His handy-work. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night shows knowledge. And there are no words or speeches of which the voices are not heard. Psalm 19:1-4

Chapter 28. God Sees All Things: Therefore Let Us Avoid Transgression.

Since then all things are seen and heard [by God], let us fear Him, and forsake those wicked works which proceed from evil desires; so that, through His mercy, we may be protected from the judgments to come. For whither can any of us flee from His mighty hand? Or what world will receive any of those who run away from Him? For the Scripture says in a certain place, Whither shall I go, and where shall I be hid from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I go away even to the uttermost parts of the earth, there is Your right hand; if I make my bed in the abyss, there is Your Spirit. Whither, then, shall anyone go, or where shall he escape from Him who comprehends all things?

Chapter 29. Let Us Also Draw Near to God in Purity of Heart.

Let us then draw near to Him with holiness of spirit, lifting up pure and undefiled hands unto Him, loving our gracious and merciful Father, who has made us partakers in the blessings of His elect. For thus it is written, When the Most High divided the nations, when He scattered the sons of Adam, He fixed the bounds of the nations according to the number of the angels of God. His people Jacob became the portion of the Lord, and Israel the lot of His inheritance. Deuteronomy 32:8-9 And in another place [the Scripture] says, Behold, the Lord takes unto Himself a nation out of the midst of the nations, as a man takes the first-fruits of his threshing-floor; and from that nation shall come forth the Most Holy.

Chapter 30. Let Us Do Those Things that Please God, and Flee from Those He Hates, that We May Be Blessed.

Seeing, therefore, that we are the portion of the Holy One, let us do all those things which pertain to holiness, avoiding all evil-speaking, all abominable and impure embraces, together with all drunkenness, seeking after change, all abominable lusts, detestable adultery, and execrable pride. For God, [says the Scripture], resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Let us cleave, then, to those to whom grace has been given by God. Let us clothe ourselves with concord and humility, ever exercising self-control, standing far off from all whispering and evil-speaking, being justified by our works, and not our words. For [the Scripture] says, He that speaks much, shall also hear much in answer. And does he that is ready in speech deem himself righteous? Blessed is he that is born of woman, who lives but a short time: be not given to much speaking. Let our praise be in God, and not of ourselves; for God hates those that commend themselves. Let testimony to our good deeds be borne by others, as it was in the case of our righteous forefathers. Boldness, and arrogance, and audacity belong to those that are accursed of God; but moderation, humility, and meekness to such as are blessed by Him.

Chapter 31. Let Us See by What Means We May Obtain the Divine Blessing.

Let us cleave then to His blessing, and consider what are the means of possessing it. Let us think over the things which have taken place from the beginning. For what reason was our father Abraham blessed? Was it not because he wrought righteousness and truth through faith? Isaac, James 2:21 with perfect confidence, as if knowing what was to happen, cheerfully yielded himself as a sacrifice. Genesis 22:6-10 Jacob, through reason of his brother, went forth with humility from his own land, and came to Laban and served him; and there was given to him the sceptre of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Chapter 32. We are Justified Not by Our Own Works, But by Faith.

Whosoever will candidly consider each particular, will recognise the greatness of the gifts which were given by him. For from him have sprung the priests and all the Levites who minister at the altar of God. From him also [was descended] our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh. Romans 9:5 From him [arose] kings, princes, and rulers of the race of Judah. Nor are his other tribes in small glory, inasmuch as God had promised, Your seed shall be as the stars of heaven. All these, therefore, were highly honoured, and made great, not for their own sake, or for their own works, or for the righteousness which they wrought, but through the operation of His will. And we, too, being called by His will in Christ Jesus, are not justified by ourselves, nor by our own wisdom, or understanding, or godliness, or works which we have wrought in holiness of heart; but by that faith through which, from the beginning, Almighty God has justified all men; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 33. But Let Us Not Give Up the Practice of Good Works and Love. God Himself is an Example to Us of Good Works.

What shall we do, then, brethren? Shall we become slothful in well-doing, and cease from the practice of love? God forbid that any such course should be followed by us! But rather let us hasten with all energy and readiness of mind to perform every good work. For the Creator and Lord of all Himself rejoices in His works. For by His infinitely great power He established the heavens, and by His incomprehensible wisdom He adorned them. He also divided the earth from the water which surrounds it, and fixed it upon the immovable foundation of His own will. The animals also which are upon it He commanded by His own word into existence. So likewise, when He had formed the sea, and the living creatures which are in it, He enclosed them [within their proper bounds] by His own power. Above all, with His holy and undefiled hands He formed man, the most excellent [of His creatures], and truly great through the understanding given him — the express likeness of His own image. For thus says God: Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness. So God made man; male and female He created them. Genesis 1:26-27 Having thus finished all these things, He approved them, and blessed them, and said, Increase and multiply. Genesis 1:28 We see, then, how all righteous men have been adorned with good works, and how the Lord Himself, adorning Himself with His works, rejoiced. Having therefore such an example, let us without delay accede to His will, and let us work the work of righteousness with our whole strength.

Chapter 34. Great is the Reward of Good Works with God. Joined Together in Harmony, Let Us Implore that Reward from Him.

The good servant receives the bread of his labour with confidence; the lazy and slothful cannot look his employer in the face. It is requisite, therefore, that we be prompt in the practice of well-doing; for of Him are all things. And thus He forewarns us: Behold, the Lord [comes], and His reward is before His face, to render to every man according to his work. He exhorts us, therefore, with our whole heart to attend to this, that we be not lazy or slothful in any good work. Let our boasting and our confidence be in Him. Let us submit ourselves to His will. Let us consider the whole multitude of His angels, how they stand ever ready to minister to His will. For the Scripture says, Ten thousand times ten thousand stood around Him, and thousands of thousands ministered unto Him, Daniel 7:10 and cried, Holy, holy, holy, [is] the Lord of Sabaoth; the whole creation is full of His glory. Isaiah 6:3 And let us therefore, conscientiously gathering together in harmony, cry to Him earnestly, as with one mouth, that we may be made partakers of His great and glorious promises. For [the Scripture] says, Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which He has prepared for them that wait for Him. 1 Corinthians 2:9

Chapter 35. Immense is This Reward. How Shall We Obtain It?

How blessed and wonderful, beloved, are the gifts of God! Life in immortality, splendour in righteousness, truth in perfect confidence, faith in assurance, self-control in holiness! And all these fall under the cognizance of our understandings [now]; what then shall those things be which are prepared for such as wait for Him? The Creator and Father of all worlds, the Most Holy, alone knows their amount and their beauty. Let us therefore earnestly strive to be found in the number of those that wait for Him, in order that we may share in His promised gifts. But how, beloved, shall this be done? If our understanding be fixed by faith towards God; if we earnestly seek the things which are pleasing and acceptable to Him; if we do the things which are in harmony with His blameless will; and if we follow the way of truth, casting away from us all unrighteousness and iniquity, along with all covetousness, strife, evil practices, deceit, whispering, and evil-speaking, all hatred of God, pride and haughtiness, vain glory and ambition. For they that do such things are hateful to God; and not only they that do them, but also those that take pleasure in them that do them. Romans 1:32 For the Scripture says, But to the sinner God said, Wherefore do you declare my statutes, and take my covenant into your mouth, seeing you hate instruction, and castest my words behind you? When you saw a thief, you consented with him, and made your portion with adulterers. Your mouth has abounded with wickedness, and your tongue contrived deceit. You sit, and speak against your brother; you slander your own mother's son. These things you have done, and I kept silence; you thought, wicked one, that I should be like to yourself. But I will reprove you, and set yourself before you. Consider now these things, you that forget God, lest He tear you in pieces, like a lion, and there be none to deliver. The sacrifice of praise will glorify me, and a way is there by which I will show him the salvation of God.

Chapter 36. All Blessings are Given to Us Through Christ.

This is the way, beloved, in which we find our Saviour, even Jesus Christ, the High Priest of all our offerings, the defender and helper of our infirmity. By Him we look up to the heights of heaven. By Him we behold, as in a glass, His immaculate and most excellent visage. By Him are the eyes of our hearts opened. By Him our foolish and darkened understanding blossoms up anew towards His marvellous light. By Him the Lord has willed that we should taste of immortal knowledge, who, being the brightness of His majesty, is by so much greater than the angels, as He has by inheritance

obtained a more excellent name than they. Hebrews 1:3-4 For it is thus written, Who makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire. But concerning His Son the Lord spoke thus: You are my Son, today have I begotten You. Ask of me, and I will give You the heathen for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession. And again He says to Him, Sit at my right hand, until I make Your enemies Your footstool. But who are His enemies? All the wicked, and those who set themselves to oppose the will of God.

Chapter 37. Christ is Our Leader, and We His Soldiers.

Let us then, men and brethren, with all energy act the part of soldiers, in accordance with His holy commandments. Let us consider those who serve under our generals, with what order, obedience, and submissiveness they perform the things which are commanded them. All are not prefects, nor commanders of a thousand, nor of a hundred, nor of fifty, nor the like, but each one in his own rank performs the things commanded by the king and the generals. The great cannot subsist without the small, nor the small without the great. There is a kind of mixture in all things, and thence arises mutual advantage. Let us take our body for an example. The head is nothing without the feet, and the feet are nothing without the head; yea, the very smallest members of our body are necessary and useful to the whole body. But all work harmoniously together, and are under one common rule for the preservation of the whole body.

Chapter 38. Let the Members of the Church Submit Themselves, and No One Exalt Himself Above Another.

Let our whole body, then, be preserved in Christ Jesus; and let every one be subject to his neighbour, according to the special gift bestowed upon him. Let the strong not despise the weak, and let the weak show respect unto the strong. Let the rich man provide for the wants of the poor; and let the poor man bless God, because He has given him one by whom his need may be supplied. Let the wise man display his wisdom, not by [mere] words, but through good deeds. Let the humble not bear testimony to himself, but leave witness to be borne to him by another. Proverbs 27:2 Let him that is pure in the flesh not grow proud of it, and boast, knowing that it was another who bestowed on him the gift of continence. Let us consider, then, brethren, of what matter we were made — who and what manner of beings we came into the world, as it were out of a sepulchre, and from utter darkness. He who made us and fashioned us, having prepared His bountiful gifts for us before we were born, introduced us into His world. Since, therefore, we receive all these things from Him, we ought for everything to give Him thanks; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 39. There is No Reason for Self-Conceit.

Foolish and inconsiderate men, who have neither wisdom nor instruction, mock and deride us, being eager to exalt themselves in their own conceits. For what can a mortal man do, or what strength is there in one made out of the dust? For it is written, There was no shape before my eyes, only I heard a sound, and a voice [saying], What then? Shall a man be pure before the Lord? Or shall such an one be [counted] blameless in his deeds, seeing He does not confide in His servants, and has charged even His angels with perversity? The heaven is not clean in His sight: how much less they that dwell in houses of clay, of which also we ourselves were made! He smote them as a moth; and from morning even until evening they endure not. Because they could furnish no assistance to

themselves, they perished. He breathed upon them, and they died, because they had no wisdom. But call now, if any one will answer you, or if you will look to any of the holy angels; for wrath destroys the foolish man, and envy kills him that is in error. I have seen the foolish taking root, but their habitation was presently consumed. Let their sons be far from safety; let them be despised before the gates of those less than themselves, and there shall be none to deliver. For what was prepared for them, the righteous shall eat; and they shall not be delivered from evil.

Chapter 40. Let Us Preserve in the Church the Order Appointed by God.

These things therefore being manifest to us, and since we look into the depths of the divine knowledge, it behooves us to do all things in [their proper] order, which the Lord has commanded us to perform at stated times. He has enjoined offerings [to be presented] and service to be performed [to Him], and that not thoughtlessly or irregularly, but at the appointed times and hours. Where and by whom He desires these things to be done, He Himself has fixed by His own supreme will, in order that all things, being piously done according to His good pleasure, may be acceptable unto Him. Those, therefore, who present their offerings at the appointed times, are accepted and blessed; for inasmuch as they follow the laws of the Lord, they sin not. For his own peculiar services are assigned to the high priest, and their own proper place is prescribed to the priests, and their own special ministrations devolve on the Levites. The layman is bound by the laws that pertain to laymen.

Chapter 41. Continuation of the Same Subject.

Let every one of you, brethren, give thanks to God in his own order, living in all good conscience, with becoming gravity, and not going beyond the rule of the ministry prescribed to him. Not in every place, brethren, are the daily sacrifices offered, or the peace-offerings, or the sin-offerings and the trespass-offerings, but in Jerusalem only. And even there they are not offered in any place, but only at the altar before the temple, that which is offered being first carefully examined by the high priest and the ministers already mentioned. Those, therefore, who do anything beyond that which is agreeable to His will, are punished with death. You see, brethren, that the greater the knowledge that has been vouchsafed to us, the greater also is the danger to which we are exposed.

Chapter 42. The Order of Ministers in the Church.

The apostles have preached the gospel to us from the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ [has done so] from God. Christ therefore was sent forth by God, and the apostles by Christ. Both these appointments, then, were made in an orderly way, according to the will of God. Having therefore received their orders, and being fully assured by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and established in the word of God, with full assurance of the Holy Ghost, they went forth proclaiming that the kingdom of God was at hand. And thus preaching through countries and cities, they appointed the first fruits [of their labours], having first proved them by the Spirit, to be bishops and deacons of those who should afterwards believe. Nor was this any new thing, since indeed many ages before it was written concerning bishops and deacons. For thus says the Scripture in a certain place, I will appoint their bishops in righteousness, and their deacons in faith.

Chapter 43. Moses of Old Stilled the Contention Which Arose Concerning the Priestly Dignity.

And what wonder is it if those in Christ who were entrusted with such a duty by God, appointed those [ministers] before mentioned, when the blessed Moses also, a faithful servant in all his house, noted down in the sacred books all the injunctions which were given him, and when the other prophets also followed him, bearing witness with one consent to the ordinances which he had appointed? For, when rivalry arose concerning the priesthood, and the tribes were contending among themselves as to which of them should be adorned with that glorious title, he commanded the twelve princes of the tribes to bring him their rods, each one being inscribed with the name of the tribe. And he took them and bound them [together], and sealed them with the rings of the princes of the tribes, and laid them up in the tabernacle of witness on the table of God. And having shut the doors of the tabernacle, he sealed the keys, as he had done the rods, and said to them, Men and brethren, the tribe whose rod shall blossom has God chosen to fulfil the office of the priesthood, and to minister unto Him. And when the morning had come, he assembled all Israel, six hundred thousand men, and showed the seals to the princes of the tribes, and opened the tabernacle of witness, and brought forth the rods. And the rod of Aaron was found not only to have blossomed, but to bear fruit upon it. What think ye, beloved? Did not Moses know beforehand that this would happen? Undoubtedly he knew; but he acted thus, that there might be no sedition in Israel, and that the name of the true and only God might be glorified; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 44. The Ordinances of the Apostles, that There Might Be No Contention Respecting the Priestly Office.

Our apostles also knew, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that there would be strife on account of the office of the episcopate. For this reason, therefore, inasmuch as they had obtained a perfect foreknowledge of this, they appointed those [ministers] already mentioned, and afterwards gave instructions, that when these should fall asleep, other approved men should succeed them in their ministry. We are of opinion, therefore, that those appointed by them, or afterwards by other eminent men, with the consent of the whole church, and who have blamelessly served the flock of Christ, in a humble, peaceable, and disinterested spirit, and have for a long time possessed the good opinion of all, cannot be justly dismissed from the ministry. For our sin will not be small, if we eject from the episcopate those who have blamelessly and holily fulfilled its duties. Blessed are those presbyters who, having finished their course before now, have obtained a fruitful and perfect departure [from this world]; for they have no fear lest any one deprive them of the place now appointed them. But we see that you have removed some men of excellent behaviour from the ministry, which they fulfilled blamelessly and with honour.

Chapter 45. It is the Part of the Wicked to Vex the Righteous.

You are fond of contention, brethren, and full of zeal about things which do not pertain to salvation. Look carefully into the Scriptures, which are the true utterances of the Holy Spirit. Observe that nothing of an unjust or counterfeit character is written in them. There you will not find that the righteous were cast off by men who themselves were holy. The righteous were indeed persecuted, but only by the wicked. They were cast into prison, but only by the unholy; they were stoned, but only by transgressors; they were slain, but only by the accursed, and such as had conceived an unrighteous envy against them. Exposed to such sufferings, they endured them gloriously. For what

shall we say, brethren? Was Daniel Daniel 6:16 cast into the den of lions by such as feared God? Were Ananias, and Azarias, and Michael shut up in a furnace Daniel 3:20 of fire by those who observed the great and glorious worship of the Most High? Far from us be such a thought! Who, then, were they that did such things? The hateful, and those full of all wickedness, were roused to such a pitch of fury, that they inflicted torture on those who served God with a holy and blameless purpose [of heart], not knowing that the Most High is the Defender and Protector of all such as with a pure conscience venerate His all-excellent name; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. But they who with confidence endured [these things] are now heirs of glory and honour, and have been exalted and made illustrious by God in their memorial for ever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 46. Let Us Cleave to the Righteous: Your Strife is Pernicious.

Such examples, therefore, brethren, it is right that we should follow; since it is written, Cleave to the holy, for those that cleave to them shall [themselves] be made holy. And again, in another place, [the Scripture] says, With a harmless man you shall prove yourself harmless, and with an elect man you shall be elect, and with a perverse man you shall show yourself perverse. Let us cleave, therefore, to the innocent and righteous, since these are the elect of God. Why are there strifes, and tumults, and divisions, and schisms, and wars among you? Have we not [all] one God and one Christ? Is there not one Spirit of grace poured out upon us? And have we not one calling in Christ? Ephesians 4:4-6 Why do we divide and tear in pieces the members of Christ, and raise up strife against our own body, and have reached such a height of madness as to forget that we are members one of another? Romans 12:5 Remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, how He said, Woe to that man [by whom offenses come]! It were better for him that he had never been born, than that he should cast a stumbling-block before one of my elect. Yea, it were better for him that a millstone should be hung about [his neck], and he should be sunk in the depths of the sea, than that he should cast a stumbling-block before one of my little ones. Your schism has subverted [the faith of] many, has discouraged many, has given rise to doubt in many, and has caused grief to us all. And still your sedition continues.

Chapter 47. Your Recent Discord is Worse Than the Former Which Took Place in the Times of Paul.

Take up the epistle of the blessed Apostle Paul. What did he write to you at the time when the gospel first began to be preached? Truly, under the inspiration of the Spirit, he wrote to you concerning himself, and Cephas, and Apollos, because even then parties had been formed among you. But that inclination for one above another entailed less guilt upon you, inasmuch as your partialities were then shown towards apostles, already of high reputation, and towards a man whom they had approved. But now reflect who those are that have perverted you, and lessened the renown of your far-famed brotherly love. It is disgraceful, beloved, yea, highly disgraceful, and unworthy of your Christian profession, that such a thing should be heard of as that the most steadfast and ancient church of the Corinthians should, on account of one or two persons, engage in sedition against its presbyters. And this rumour has reached not only us, but those also who are unconnected with us; so that, through your infatuation, the name of the Lord is blasphemed, while danger is also brought upon yourselves.

Chapter 48. Let Us Return to the Practice of Brotherly Love.

Let us therefore, with all haste, put an end to this [state of things]; and let us fall down before the Lord, and beseech Him with tears, that He would mercifully be reconciled to us, and restore us to our former seemly and holy practice of brotherly love. For [such conduct] is the gate of righteousness, which is set open for the attainment of life, as it is written, Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go in by them, and will praise the Lord: this is the gate of the Lord: the righteous shall enter in by it. Although, therefore, many gates have been set open, yet this gate of righteousness is that gate in Christ by which blessed are all they that have entered in and have directed their way in holiness and righteousness, doing all things without disorder. Let a man be faithful: let him be powerful in the utterance of knowledge; let him be wise in judging of words; let him be pure in all his deeds; yet the more he seems to be superior to others [in these respects], the more humble-minded ought he to be, and to seek the common good of all, and not merely his own advantage.

Chapter 49. The Praise of Love.

Let him who has love in Christ keep the commandments of Christ. Who can describe the [blessed] bond of the love of God? What man is able to tell the excellence of its beauty, as it ought to be told? The height to which love exalts is unspeakable. Love unites us to God. Love covers a multitude of sins. Love bears all things, is long-suffering in all things. There is nothing base, nothing arrogant in love. Love admits of no schisms: love gives rise to no seditions: love does all things in harmony. By love have all the elect of God been made perfect; without love nothing is well-pleasing to God. In love has the Lord taken us to Himself. On account of the love He bore us, Jesus Christ our Lord gave His blood for us by the will of God; His flesh for our flesh, and His soul for our souls.

Chapter 50. Let Us Pray to Be Thought Worthy of Love.

You see, beloved, how great and wonderful a thing is love, and that there is no declaring its perfection. Who is fit to be found in it, except such as God has vouchsafed to render so? Let us pray, therefore, and implore of His mercy, that we may live blameless in love, free from all human partialities for one above another. All the generations from Adam even unto this day have passed away; but those who, through the grace of God, have been made perfect in love, now possess a place among the godly, and shall be made manifest at the revelation of the kingdom of Christ. For it is written, Enter into your secret chambers for a little time, until my wrath and fury pass away; and I will remember a propitious day, and will raise you up out of your graves. Isaiah 26:20 Blessed are we, beloved, if we keep the commandments of God in the harmony of love; that so through love our sins may be forgiven us. For it is written, Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not impute to him, and in whose mouth there is no guile. This blessedness comes upon those who have been chosen by God through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 51. Let the Partakers in Strife Acknowledge Their Sins.

Let us therefore implore forgiveness for all those transgressions which through any [suggestion] of the adversary we have committed. And these who have been the leaders of sedition and disagreement ought to have respect to the common hope. For such as live in fear and love would rather that they themselves than their neighbours should be involved in suffering. And they prefer to bear blame themselves, rather than that the concord which has been well and piously handed

down to us should suffer. For it is better that a man should acknowledge his transgressions than that he should harden his heart, as the hearts of those were hardened who stirred up sedition against Moses the servant of God, and whose condemnation was made manifest [unto all]. For they went down alive into Hades, and death swallowed them up. Pharaoh with his army and all the princes of Egypt, and the chariots with their riders, were sunk in the depths of the Red Sea, and perished, Exodus xiv for no other reason than that their foolish hearts were hardened, after so many signs and wonders had been wrought in the land of Egypt by Moses the servant of God.

Chapter 52. Such a Confession is Pleasing to God.

The Lord, brethren, stands in need of nothing; and He desires nothing of any one except that confession be made to Him. For, says the elect David, I will confess unto the Lord; and that will please Him more than a young bullock that has horns and hoofs. Let the poor see it, and be glad. And again he says, Offer unto God the sacrifice of praise, and pay your vows unto the Most High. And call upon me in the day of your trouble: I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me. For the sacrifice of God is a broken spirit.

Chapter 53. The Love of Moses Towards His People.

You understand, beloved, you understand well the sacred Scriptures, and you have looked very earnestly into the oracles of God. Call then these things to your remembrance. When Moses went up into the mount, and abode there, with fasting and humiliation, forty days and forty nights, the Lord said to him, Moses, Moses, get you down quickly from hence; for your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt have committed iniquity. They have speedily departed from the way in which I commanded them to walk, and have made to themselves molten images. And the Lord said to him, I have spoken to you once and again, saying, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people: let me destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven; and I will make you a great and wonderful nation, and one much more numerous than this. But Moses said, Far be it from You, Lord: pardon the sin of this people; else blot me also out of the book of the living. Exodus 32:32 O marvellous love! O insuperable perfection! The servant speaks freely to his Lord, and asks forgiveness for the people, or begs that he himself might perish along with them.

Chapter 54. He Who is Full of Love Will Incur Every Loss, that Peace May Be Restored to the Church.

Who then among you is noble-minded? Who compassionate? Who full of love? Let him declare, If on my account sedition and disagreement and schisms have arisen, I will depart, I will go away wherever ye desire, and I will do whatever the majority commands; only let the flock of Christ live on terms of peace with the presbyters set over it. He that acts thus shall procure to himself great glory in the Lord; and every place will welcome him. For the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof. These things they who live a godly life that is never to be repented of, both have done and always will do.

Chapter 55. Examples of Such Love.

To bring forward some examples from among the heathen: Many kings and princes, in times of pestilence, when they had been instructed by an oracle, have given themselves up to death, in order that by their own blood they might deliver their fellow citizens [from destruction]. Many have

gone forth from their own cities, that so sedition might be brought to an end within them. We know many among ourselves who have given themselves up to bonds, in order that they might ransom others. Many, too, have surrendered themselves to slavery, that with the price which they received for themselves, they might provide food for others. Many women also, being strengthened by the grace of God, have performed numerous manly exploits. The blessed Judith, when her city was besieged, asked of the elders permission to go forth into the camp of the strangers; and, exposing herself to danger, she went out for the love which she bare to her country and people then besieged; and the Lord delivered Holofernes into the hands of a woman. Judith 8:30 Esther also, being perfect in faith, exposed herself to no less danger, in order to deliver the twelve tribes of Israel from impending destruction. For with fasting and humiliation she entreated the everlasting God, who sees all things; and He, perceiving the humility of her spirit, delivered the people for whose sake she had encountered peril.

Chapter 56. Let Us Admonish and Correct One Another.

Let us then also pray for those who have fallen into any sin, that meekness and humility may be given to them, so that they may submit, not unto us, but to the will of God. For in this way they shall secure a fruitful and perfect remembrance from us, with sympathy for them, both in our prayers to God, and our mention of them to the saints. Let us receive correction, beloved, on account of which no one should feel displeased. Those exhortations by which we admonish one another are both good [in themselves], and highly profitable, for they tend to unite us to the will of God. For thus says the holy Word: The Lord has severely chastened me, yet has not given me over to death. For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives. The righteous, says it, shall chasten me in mercy, and reprove me; but let not the oil of sinners make fat my head. And again he says, Blessed is the man whom the Lord reproves, and reject not the warning of the Almighty. For He causes sorrow, and again restores [to gladness]; He wounds, and His hands make whole. He shall deliver you in six troubles, yea, in the seventh no evil shall touch you. In famine He shall rescue you from death, and in war He shall free you from the power of the sword. From the scourge of the tongue will He hide you, and you shall not fear when evil comes. You shall laugh at the unrighteous and the wicked, and shall not be afraid of the beasts of the field. For the wild beasts shall be at peace with you: then shall you know that your house shall be in peace, and the habitation of your tabernacle shall not fail. You shall know also that your seed shall be great, and your children like the grass of the field. And you shall come to the grave like ripened grain which is reaped in its season, or like a heap of the threshing-floor which is gathered together at the proper time. Job 5:17-26 You see, beloved, that protection is afforded to those that are chastened of the Lord; for since God is good, He corrects us, that we may be admonished by His holy chastisement.

Chapter 57. Let the Authors of Sedition Submit Themselves.

You therefore, who laid the foundation of this sedition, submit yourselves to the presbyters, and receive correction so as to repent, bending the knees of your hearts. Learn to be subject, laying aside the proud and arrogant self-confidence of your tongue. For it is better for you that you should occupy a humble but honourable place in the flock of Christ, than that, being highly exalted, you should be cast out from the hope of His people. For thus speaks all-virtuous Wisdom: Behold, I will bring forth to you the words of my Spirit, and I will teach you my speech. Since I called, and you did

not hear; I held forth my words, and you regarded not, but set at naught my counsels, and yielded not at my reproofs; therefore I too will laugh at your destruction; yea, I will rejoice when ruin comes upon you, and when sudden confusion overtakes you, when overturning presents itself like a tempest, or when tribulation and oppression fall upon you. For it shall come to pass, that when you call upon me, I will not hear you; the wicked shall seek me, and they shall not find me. For they hated wisdom, and did not choose the fear of the Lord; nor would they listen to my counsels, but despised my reproofs. Wherefore they shall eat the fruits of their own way, and they shall be filled with their own ungodliness. Proverbs 1:22-33 ...For, in punishment for the wrongs which they practised upon babes, shall they be slain, and inquiry will be death to the ungodly; but he that hears me shall rest in hope and be undisturbed by the fear of any evil.

Chapter 58. Submission the Precursor of Salvation.

Let us, therefore, flee from the warning threats pronounced by Wisdom on the disobedient, and yield submission to His all-holy and glorious name, that we may stay our trust upon the most hallowed name of His majesty. Receive our counsel, and you shall be without repentance. For, as God lives, and as the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost live — both the faith and hope of the elect, he who in lowliness of mind, with instant gentleness, and without repentance has observed the ordinances and appointments given by God— the same shall obtain a place and name in the number of those who are being saved through Jesus Christ, through whom is glory to Him for ever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 59. Warning Against Disobedience. Prayer.

If, however, any shall disobey the words spoken by Him through us, let them know that they will involve themselves in transgression and serious danger; but we shall be innocent of this sin, and, instant in prayer and supplication, shall desire that the Creator of all preserve unbroken the computed number of His elect in the whole world through His beloved Son Jesus Christ, through whom He called us from darkness to light, from ignorance to knowledge of the glory of His name, our hope resting on Your name which is primal cause of every creature — having opened the eyes of our heart to the knowledge of You, who alone rests highest among the highest, holy among the holy, Isaiah 57:15 who layest low the insolence of the haughty, Isaiah 13:11 who destroyest the calculations of the heathen, who settest the low on high and bringest low the exalted; who makest rich and makest poor, 1 Samuel 2:7 who killest and makest to live, Deuteronomy 32:39 only Benefactor of spirits and God of all flesh, who beholdest the depths, the eye-witness of human works, the help of those in danger, the Saviour of those in despair, the Creator and Guardian of every spirit, who multiplieth nations upon earth, and from all made choice of those who love You through Jesus Christ, Your beloved Son, through whom You instructed, sanctify, honour us. We would have You, Lord, to prove our help and succour. Those of us in affliction save, on the lowly take pity; the fallen raise; upon those in need arise; the sick heal; the wandering ones of Your people turn; fill the hungry; redeem those of us in bonds; raise up those that are weak; comfort the faint-hearted; let all the nations know that You are God alone and Jesus Christ Your Son, and we are Your people and the sheep of Your pasture.

Chapter 60. Prayer Continued.

You made to appear the enduring fabric of the world by the works of Your hand; You, Lord, created the earth on which we dwell — You, who is faithful in all generations, just in judgments, wonderful in strength and majesty, with wisdom creating and with understanding fixing the things which were made, who art good among them that are being saved and faithful among them whose trust is in You; O merciful and Compassionate One, forgive us our iniquities and offenses and transgressions and trespasses. Reckon not every sin of Your servants and handmaids, but You will purify us with the purification of Your truth; and direct our steps that we may walk in holiness of heart and do what is good and well-pleasing in Your sight and in the sight of our rulers. Yea, Lord, make Your face to shine upon us for good in peace, that we may be shielded by Your mighty hand and delivered from every sin by Your uplifted arm, and deliver us from those who hate us wrongfully. Give concord and peace to us and all who dwell upon the earth, even as You gave to our fathers, when they called upon You in faith and truth, submissive as we are to Your almighty and all-excellent Name.

Chapter 61. Prayer Continued — For Rulers and Governors. Conclusion.

To our rulers and governors on the earth — to them You, Lord, gave the power of the kingdom by Your glorious and ineffable might, to the end that we may know the glory and honour given to them by You and be subject to them, in nought resisting Your will; to them, Lord, give health, peace, concord, stability, that they may exercise the authority given to them without offense. For You, O heavenly Lord and King eternal, givest to the sons of men glory and honour and power over the things that are on the earth; do Thou, Lord, direct their counsel according to that which is good and well-pleasing in Your sight, that, devoutly in peace and meekness exercising the power given them by You, they may find You propitious. O Thou, who only has power to do these things and more abundant good with us, we praise You through the High Priest and Guardian of our souls Jesus Christ, through whom be glory and majesty to You both now and from generation to generation and for evermore. Amen.

Chapter 62. Summary and Conclusory — Concerning Godliness.

Concerning the things pertaining to our religious observance which are most profitable for a life of goodness to those who would pursue a godly and righteous course, we have written to you, men and brethren, at sufficient length. For concerning faith and repentance and true love and continence and soberness and patience, we have touched upon every passage, putting you in mind that you ought in righteousness and truth and long-suffering to be well-pleasing to Almighty God with holiness, being of one mind — not remembering evil— in love and peace with instant gentleness, even as also our fathers forementioned found favour by the humility of their thoughts towards the Father and God and Creator and all mankind. And of these things we put you in mind with the greater pleasure, since we were well assured that we were writing to men who were faithful and of highest repute and had peered into the oracles of the instruction of God.

Chapter 63. Hortatory, Letter Sent by Special Messengers.

Right is it, therefore, to approach examples so good and so many, and submit the neck and fulfil the part of obedience, in order that, undisturbed by vain sedition, we may attain unto the goal set before us in truth wholly free from blame. Joy and gladness will you afford us, if you become obedient to the words written by us and through the Holy Spirit root out the lawless wrath of your jealousy according to the intercession which we have made for peace and

unity in this letter. We have sent men faithful and discreet, whose conversation from youth to old age has been blameless among us — the same shall be witnesses between you and us. This we have done, that you may know that our whole concern has been and is that you may be speedily at peace.

Chapter 64. Blessings Sought for All that Call Upon God.

May God, who sees all things, and who is the Ruler of all spirits and the Lord of all flesh — who chose our Lord Jesus Christ and us through Him to be a peculiar Titus 2:14 people — grant to every soul that calls upon His glorious and holy name, faith, fear, peace, patience, long-suffering, self-control, purity, and sobriety, to the well-pleasing of His name, through our High Priest and Protector, Jesus Christ, by whom be to Him glory, and majesty, and power, and honour, both now and for evermore. Amen.

Chapter 65. The Corinthians are Exhorted Speedily to Send Back Word that Peace Has Been Restored. The Benediction.

Send back speedily to us in peace and with joy these our messengers to you: Claudius Ephebus and Valerius Bito, with Fortunatus; that they may the sooner announce to us the peace and harmony we so earnestly desire and long for [among you], and that we may the more quickly rejoice over the good order re-established among you. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, and with all everywhere that are the called of God through Him, by whom be to Him glory, honour, power, majesty, and eternal dominion, from everlasting to everlasting. Amen.

The Epistle of Barnabas (Expanded)

Chapter 1. After the salutation, the writer declares that he would communicate to his brethren something of that which he had himself received

All hail, you sons and daughters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who loved us in peace.

Seeing that the divine fruits of righteousness abound among you, I rejoice exceedingly and above measure in your happy and honoured spirits, because you have with such effect received the engrafted spiritual gift. Wherefore also I inwardly rejoice the more, hoping to be saved, because I truly perceive in you the Spirit poured forth from the rich Lord of love. Your greatly desired appearance has thus filled me with astonishment over you. I am therefore persuaded of this, and fully convinced in my own mind, that since I began to speak among you I understand many things, because the Lord has accompanied me in the way of righteousness. I am also on this account bound by the strictest obligation to love you above my own soul, because great are the faith and love dwelling in you, while you hope for the life which He has promised. Considering this, therefore, that if I should take the trouble to communicate to you some portion of what I have myself received, it will prove to me a sufficient reward that I minister to such spirits, I have hastened briefly to write unto you, in order that, along with your faith, you might have perfect knowledge. The doctrines of the Lord, then, are three: the hope of life, the beginning and the completion of it. For the Lord has made known to us by the prophets both the things which are past and present, giving us also the first-fruits of the knowledge of things to come, which things as we see accomplished,

one by one, we ought with the greater richness of faith and elevation of spirit to draw near to Him with reverence. I then, not as your teacher, but as one of yourselves, will set forth a few things by which in present circumstances you may be rendered the more joyful.

Chapter 2. The Jewish sacrifices are now abolished

Since, therefore, the days are evil, and Satan possesses the power of this world, we ought to give heed to ourselves, and diligently inquire into the ordinances of the Lord. Fear and patience, then, are helpers of our faith; and long-suffering and continence are things which fight on our side. While these remain pure in what respects the Lord, Wisdom, Understanding, Science, and Knowledge rejoice along with them. For He has revealed to us by all the prophets that He needs neither sacrifices, nor burnt-offerings, nor oblations, saying thus, What is the multitude of your sacrifices unto Me, says the Lord? I am full of burnt-offerings, and desire not the fat of lambs, and the blood of bulls and goats, not when you come to appear before Me: for who has required these things at your hands? Tread no more My courts, not though you bring with you fine flour. Incense is a vain abomination unto Me, and your new moons and sabbaths I cannot endure. He has therefore abolished these things, that the new law of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is without the yoke of necessity, might have a human oblation. And again He says to them, Did I command your fathers, when they went out from the land of Egypt, to offer unto Me burnt-offerings and sacrifices? But this rather I commanded them, Let no one of you cherish any evil in his heart against his neighbour, and love not an oath of falsehood. Jeremiah 7:22; Zechariah 8:17 We ought therefore, being possessed of understanding, to perceive the gracious intention of our Father; for He speaks to us, desirous that we, not going astray like them, should ask how we may approach Him. To us, then, He declares, A sacrifice [pleasing] to God is a broken spirit; a smell of sweet savour to the Lord is a heart that glorifies Him that made it. We ought therefore, brethren, carefully to inquire concerning our salvation, lest the wicked one, having made his entrance by deceit, should hurl us forth from our [true] life.

Chapter 3. The fasts of the Jews are not true fasts, nor acceptable to God

He says then to them again concerning these things, Why do you fast to Me as on this day, says the Lord, that your voice should be heard with a cry? I have not chosen this fast, says the Lord, that a man should humble his soul. Nor, though you bend your neck like a ring, and put upon you sackcloth and ashes, will you call it an acceptable fast. Isaiah 58:4-5 To us He says, Behold, this is the fast that I have chosen, says the Lord, not that a man should humble his soul, but that he should loose every band of iniquity, untie the fastenings of harsh agreements, restore to liberty them that are bruised, tear in pieces every unjust engagement, feed the hungry with your bread, clothe the naked when you see him, bring the homeless into your house, not despise the humble if you behold him, and not [turn away] from the members of your own family. Then shall your dawn break forth, and your healing shall quickly spring up, and righteousness shall go forth before you, and the glory of God shall encompass you; and then you shall call, and God shall hear you; while you are yet speaking, He shall say, Behold, I am with you; if you take away from yourself the chain [binding others], and the stretching forth of the hands [to swear falsely], and words of murmuring, and give cheerfully your bread to the hungry, and show compassion to the soul that has been humbled. Isaiah 58:6-10 To this end, therefore, brethren, He is long-suffering, foreseeing how the

people whom He has prepared shall with guilelessness believe in His Beloved. For He revealed all these things to us beforehand, that we should not rush forward as rash acceptors of their laws.

Chapter 4. Antichrist is at hand: let us therefore avoid Jewish errors

It therefore behooves us, who inquire much concerning events at hand, to search diligently into those things which are able to save us. Let us then utterly flee from all the works of iniquity, lest these should take hold of us; and let us hate the error of the present time, that we may set our love on the world to come: let us not give loose reins to our soul, that it should have power to run with sinners and the wicked, lest we become like them. The final stumbling-block (or source of danger) approaches, concerning which it is written, as Enoch says, For for this end the Lord has cut short the times and the days, that His Beloved may hasten; and He will come to the inheritance. And the prophet also speaks thus: Ten kingdoms shall reign upon the earth, and a little king shall rise up after them, who shall subdue under one three of the kings. In like manner Daniel says concerning the same, And I beheld the fourth beast, wicked and powerful, and more savage than all the beasts of the earth, and how from it sprang up ten horns, and out of them a little budding horn, and how it subdued under one three of the great horns. You ought therefore to understand. And this also I further beg of you, as being one of you, and loving you both individually and collectively more than my own soul, to take heed now to yourselves, and not to be like some, adding largely to your sins, and saying, The covenant is both theirs and ours. But they thus finally lost it, after Moses had already received it. For the Scripture says, And Moses was fasting in the mount forty days and forty nights, and received the covenant from the Lord, tables of stone written with the finger of the hand of the Lord; Exodus 31:18, Exodus 34:28 but turning away to idols, they lost it. For the Lord speaks thus to Moses: Moses go down quickly; for the people whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt have transgressed. Exodus 32:7; Deuteronomy 9:12 And Moses understood [the meaning of God], and cast the two tables out of his hands; and their covenant was broken, in order that the covenant of the beloved Jesus might be sealed upon our heart, in the hope which flows from believing in Him. Now, being desirous to write many things to you, not as your teacher, but as becomes one who loves you, I have taken care not to fail to write to you from what I myself possess, with a view to your purification. We take earnest heed in these last days; for the whole [past] time of your faith will profit you nothing, unless now in this wicked time we also withstand coming sources of danger, as becomes the sons of God. That the Black One may find no means of entrance, let us flee from every vanity, let us utterly hate the works of the way of wickedness. Do not, by retiring apart, live a solitary life, as if you were already [fully] justified; but coming together in one place, make common inquiry concerning what tends to your general welfare. For the Scripture says, Woe to them who are wise to themselves, and prudent in their own sight! Isaiah 5:21 Let us be spiritually-minded: let us be a perfect temple to God. As much as in us lies, let us meditate upon the fear of God, and let us keep His commandments, that we may rejoice in His ordinances. The Lord will judge the world without respect of persons. Each will receive as he has done: if he is righteous, his righteousness will precede him; if he is wicked, the reward of wickedness is before him. Take heed, lest resting at our ease, as those who are the called [of God], we should fall asleep in our sins, and the wicked prince, acquiring power over us, should thrust us away from the kingdom of the Lord. And all the more attend to this, my brethren, when you reflect and behold, that after so great signs and wonders were

wrought in Israel, they were thus [at length] abandoned. Let us beware lest we be found [fulfilling that saying], as it is written, Many are called, but few are chosen.

Chapter 5. The new covenant, founded on the sufferings of Christ, tends to our salvation, but to the Jews' destruction

For to this end the Lord endured to deliver up His flesh to corruption, that we might be sanctified through the remission of sins, which is effected by His blood of sprinkling. For it is written concerning Him, partly with reference to Israel, and partly to us; and [the Scripture] says thus: He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities: with His stripes we are healed. He was brought as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb which is dumb before its shearer. Isaiah 53:5, 7 Therefore we ought to be deeply grateful to the Lord, because He has both made known to us things that are past, and has given us wisdom concerning things present, and has not left us without understanding in regard to things which are to come. Now, the Scripture says, Not unjustly are nets spread out for birds. This means that the man perishes justly, who, having a knowledge of the way of righteousness, rushes off into the way of darkness. And further, my brethren: if the Lord endured to suffer for our soul, He being Lord of all the world, to whom God said at the foundation of the world, Let us make man after our image, and after our likeness, Genesis 1:26 understand how it was that He endured to suffer at the hand of men. The prophets, having obtained grace from Him, prophesied concerning Him. And He (since it behooved Him to appear in flesh), that He might abolish death, and reveal the resurrection from the dead, endured [what and as He did], in order that He might fulfil the promise made unto the fathers, and by preparing a new people for Himself, might show, while He dwelt on earth, that He, when He has raised mankind, will also judge them. Moreover, teaching Israel, and doing so great miracles and signs, He preached [the truth] to him, and greatly loved him. But when He chose His own apostles who were to preach His Gospel, [He did so from among those] who were sinners above all sin, that He might show He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Then He manifested Himself to be the Son of God. For if He had not come in the flesh, how could men have been saved by beholding Him? Since looking upon the sun which is to cease to exist, and is the work of His hands, their eyes are not able to bear his rays. The Son of God therefore came in the flesh with this view, that He might bring to a head the sum of their sins who had persecuted His prophets to the death. For this purpose, then, He endured. For God says, The stroke of his flesh is from them; and when I shall smite the Shepherd, then the sheep of the flock shall be scattered. Zechariah 13:7 He himself willed thus to suffer, for it was necessary that He should suffer on the tree. For says he who prophesies regarding Him, Spare my soul from the sword, fasten my flesh with nails; for the assemblies of the wicked have risen up against me. And again he says, Behold, I have given my back to scourges, and my cheeks to strokes, and I have set my countenance as a firm rock. Isaiah 50:6-7

Chapter 6. The sufferings of Christ, and the new covenant, were announced by the prophets

When, therefore, He has fulfilled the commandment, what says He? Who is he that will contend with Me? Let him oppose Me: or who is he that will enter into judgment with Me? Let him draw near to the servant of the Lord. Isaiah 50:8 Woe unto you, for you shall all wax old, like a garment, and the moth shall eat you up. Isaiah 50:9 And again the prophet says, Since as a mighty stone He is laid for crushing, behold I cast down for the foundations of Zion a stone, precious, elect, a corner-

stone, honourable. Next, what says He? And he who shall trust in it shall live forever. Is our hope, then, upon a stone? Far from it. But [the language is used] inasmuch as He laid his flesh [as a foundation] with power; for He says, And He placed me as a firm rock. Isaiah 50:7 And the prophet says again, The stone which the builders rejected, the same has become the head of the corner. And again he says, This is the great and wonderful day which the Lord has made. I write the more simply unto you, that you may understand. I am the off-scouring of your love. What, then, again says the prophet? The assembly of the wicked surrounded me; they encompassed me as bees do a honeycomb, and upon my garment they cast lots. Since, therefore, He was about to be manifested and to suffer in the flesh, His suffering was foreshown. For the prophet speaks against Israel, Woe to their soul, because they have counselled an evil counsel against themselves, Isaiah 3:9 saying, Let us bind the just one, because he is displeasing to us. And Moses also says to them, Behold these things, says the Lord God: Enter into the good land which the Lord swore [to give] to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and inherit it, a land flowing with milk and honey. Exodus 33:1; Leviticus 20:24 What, then, says Knowledge? Learn: Trust, she says, in Him who is to be manifested to you in the flesh — that is, Jesus. For man is earth in a suffering state, for the formation of Adam was from the face of the earth. What, then, means this: into the good land, a land flowing with milk and honey? Blessed be our Lord, who has placed in us wisdom and understanding of secret things. For the prophet says, Who shall understand the parable of the Lord, except him who is wise and prudent, and who loves his Lord? Since, therefore, having renewed us by the remission of our sins, He has made us after another pattern, [it is His purpose] that we should possess the soul of children, inasmuch as He has created us anew by His Spirit. For the Scripture says concerning us, while He speaks to the Son, Let Us make man after Our image, and after Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the beasts of the earth, and the fowls of heaven, and the fishes of the sea. Genesis 1:26 And the Lord said, on beholding the fair creature man, Increase, and multiply, and replenish the earth. Genesis 1:28 These things [were spoken] to the Son. Again, I will show you how, in respect to us, He has accomplished a second fashioning in these last days. The Lord says, Behold, I will make the last like the first. In reference to this, then, the prophet proclaimed, Enter into the land flowing with milk and honey, and have dominion over it. Exodus 33:3 Behold, therefore, we have been refashioned, as again He says in another prophet, Behold, says the Lord, I will take away from these, that is, from those whom the Spirit of the Lord foresaw, their stony hearts, and I will put hearts of flesh within them, Ezekiel 11:19, Ezekiel 36:26 because He was to be manifested in flesh, and to sojourn among us. For, my brethren, the habitation of our heart is a holy temple to the Lord. Ephesians 2:21 For again says the Lord, And wherewith shall I appear before the Lord my God, and be glorified? He says, I will confess to you in the Church in the midst of my brethren; and I will praise you in the midst of the assembly of the saints. We, then, are they whom He has led into the good land. What, then, mean milk and honey? This, that as the infant is kept alive first by honey, and then by milk, so also we, being quickened and kept alive by the faith of the promise and by the word, shall live ruling over the earth. But He said above, Let them increase, and rule over the fishes. Genesis 1:28 Who then is able to govern the beasts, or the fishes, or the fowls of heaven? For we ought to perceive that to govern implies authority, so that one should command and rule. If, therefore, this does not exist at present, yet still He has promised it to us. When? When we ourselves also have been made perfect [so as] to become heirs of the covenant of the Lord.

Chapter 7. Fasting, and the goat sent away, were types of Christ

Understand, then, you children of gladness, that the good Lord has foreshown all things to us, that we might know to whom we ought for everything to render thanksgiving and praise. If therefore the Son of God, who is Lord [of all things], and who will judge the living and the dead, suffered, that His stroke might give us life, let us believe that the Son of God could not have suffered except for our sakes. Moreover, when fixed to the cross, He had given Him to drink vinegar and gall. Harken how the priests of the people gave previous indications of this. His commandment having been written, the Lord enjoined, that whosoever did not keep the fast should be put to death, because He also Himself was to offer in sacrifice for our sins the vessel of the Spirit, in order that the type established in Isaac when he was offered upon the altar might be fully accomplished. What, then, says He in the prophet? And let them eat of the goat which is offered, with fasting, for all their sins. Attend carefully: And let all the priests alone eat the inwards, unwashed with vinegar. Wherefore? Because to me, who am to offer my flesh for the sins of my new people, you are to give gall with vinegar to drink: eat alone, while the people fast and mourn in sackcloth and ashes. [These things were done] that He might show that it was necessary for Him to suffer for them. How, then, ran the commandment? Give your attention. Take two goats of goodly aspect, and similar to each other, and offer them. And let the priest take one as a burnt-offering for sins. And what should they do with the other? Accursed, says He, is the one. Mark how the type of Jesus now comes out. And all of you spit upon it, and pierce it, and encircle its head with scarlet wool, and thus let it be driven into the wilderness. And when all this has been done, he who bears the goat brings it into the desert, and takes the wool off from it, and places that upon a shrub which is called *Rachia*, of which also we are accustomed to eat the fruits when we find them in the field. Of this kind of shrub alone the fruits are sweet. Why then, again, is this? Give good heed. [You see] one upon the altar, and the other accursed; and why [do you behold] the one that is accursed crowned? Because they shall see Him then in that day having a scarlet robe about his body down to his feet; and they shall say, Is not this He whom we once despised, and pierced, and mocked, and crucified? Truly this is He who then declared Himself to be the Son of God. For how like is He to Him! With a view to this, [He required] the goats to be of goodly aspect, and similar, that, when they see Him then coming, they may be amazed by the likeness of the goat. Behold, then, the type of Jesus who was to suffer. But why is it that they place the wool in the midst of thorns? It is a type of Jesus set before the view of the Church. [They place the wool among thorns], that any one who wishes to bear it away may find it necessary to suffer much, because the thorn is formidable, and thus obtain it only as the result of suffering. Thus also, says He, Those who wish to behold Me, and lay hold of My kingdom, must through tribulation and suffering obtain Me. Acts 14:22

Chapter 8. The red heifer a type of Christ

Now what do you suppose this to be a type of, that a command was given to Israel, that men of the greatest wickedness should offer a heifer, and slay and burn it, and, that then boys should take the ashes, and put these into vessels, and bind round a stick purple wool along with hyssop, and that thus the boys should sprinkle the people, one by one, in order that they might be purified from their sins? Consider how He speaks to you with simplicity. The calf is Jesus: the sinful men offering it are those who led Him to the slaughter. But now the men are no longer guilty, are no longer regarded as sinners. And the boys that sprinkle are those that have proclaimed to us the remission of sins and purification of heart. To these He gave authority to preach the Gospel, being twelve in number, corresponding to the twelve tribes of Israel. But why are there three boys that sprinkle? To

correspond to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, because these were great with God. And why was the wool [placed] upon the wood? Because by wood Jesus holds His kingdom, so that [through the cross] those believing on Him shall live forever. But why was hyssop joined with the wool? Because in His kingdom the days will be evil and polluted in which we shall be saved, [and] because he who suffers in body is cured through the cleansing efficacy of hyssop. And on this account the things which stand thus are clear to us, but obscure to them because they did not hear the voice of the Lord.

Chapter 9. The spiritual meaning of circumcision

He speaks moreover concerning our ears, how He has circumcised both them and our heart. The Lord says in the prophet, In the hearing of the ear they obeyed me. And again He says, By hearing, those shall hear who are afar off; they shall know what I have done. Isaiah 33:13 And, Be circumcised in your hearts, says the Lord. Jeremiah 4:4 And again He says, Hear, O Israel, for these things says the Lord your God. Jeremiah 7:2 And once more the Spirit of the Lord proclaims, Who is he that wishes to live for ever? By hearing let him hear the voice of my servant. And again He says, Hear, O heaven, and give ear, O earth, for God has spoken. Isaiah 1:2 These are in proof. And again He says, Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of this people. Isaiah 1:10 And again He says, Hear, you children, the voice of one crying in the wilderness. Therefore He has circumcised our ears, that we might hear His word and believe, for the circumcision in which they trusted is abolished. For He declared that circumcision was not of the flesh, but they transgressed because an evil angel deluded them. He says to them, These things says the Lord your God — (here I find a new commandment) — Sow not among thorns, but circumcise yourselves to the Lord. And why speaks He thus: Circumcise the stubbornness of your heart, and harden not your neck? Deuteronomy 10:16 And again: Behold, says the Lord, all the nations are uncircumcised in the flesh, but this people are uncircumcised in heart. Jeremiah 9:25-26 But you will say, Yea, verily the people are circumcised for a seal. But so also is every Syrian and Arab, and all the priests of idols: are these then also within the bond of His covenant? Yea, the Egyptians also practise circumcision. Learn then, my children, concerning all things richly, that Abraham, the first who enjoined circumcision, looking forward in spirit to Jesus, practised that rite, having received the mysteries of the three letters. For [the Scripture] says, And Abraham circumcised ten, and eight, and three hundred men of his household. What, then, was the knowledge given to him in this? Learn the eighteen first, and then the three hundred. The ten and the eight are thus denoted — Ten by I, and Eight by H. You have [the initials of the, name of] Jesus. And because the cross was to express the grace [of our redemption] by the letter T, he says also, Three Hundred. He signifies, therefore, Jesus by two letters, and the cross by one. He knows this, who has put within us the engrafted gift of His doctrine. No one has been admitted by me to a more excellent piece of knowledge than this, but I know that you are worthy.

Chapter 10. Spiritual significance of the precepts of Moses respecting different kinds of food

Now, wherefore did Moses say, You shall not eat the swine, nor the eagle, nor the hawk, nor the raven, nor any fish which is not possessed of scales? He embraced three doctrines in his mind [in doing so]. Moreover, the Lord says to them in Deuteronomy, And I will establish my ordinances among this people. Deuteronomy 4:1 Is there then not a command of God they should not eat [these things]? There is, but Moses spoke with a spiritual reference. For this reason he named the

swine, as much as to say, You shall not join yourself to men who resemble swine. For when they live in pleasure, they forget their Lord; but when they come to want, they acknowledge the Lord. And [in like manner] the swine, when it has eaten, does not recognize its master; but when hungry it cries out, and on receiving food is quiet again. Neither shall you eat, says he the eagle, nor the hawk, nor the kite, nor the raven. You shall not join yourself, he means, to such men as know not how to procure food for themselves by labour and sweat, but seize on that of others in their iniquity, and although wearing an aspect of simplicity, are on the watch to plunder others. So these birds, while they sit idle, inquire how they may devour the flesh of others, proving themselves pests [to all] by their wickedness. And you shall not eat, he says, the lamprey, or the polypus, or the cuttlefish. He means, You shall not join yourself or be like to such men as are ungodly to the end, and are condemned to death. In like manner as those fishes, above accursed, float in the deep, not swimming [on the surface] like the rest, but make their abode in the mud which lies at the bottom. Moreover, You shall not, he says, eat the hare. Wherefore? You shall not be a corrupter of boys, nor like such. Because the hare multiplies, year by year, the places of its conception; for as many years as it lives so many it has. Moreover, You shall not eat the hyena. He means, You shall not be an adulterer, nor a corrupter, nor be like to them that are such. Wherefore? Because that animal annually changes its sex, and is at one time male, and at another female. Moreover, he has rightly detested the weasel. For he means, You shall not be like to those whom we hear of as committing wickedness with the mouth, on account of their uncleanness; nor shall you be joined to those impure women who commit iniquity with the mouth. For this animal conceives by the mouth. Moses then issued three doctrines concerning meats with a spiritual significance; but they received them according to fleshly desire, as if he had merely spoken of [literal] meats. David, however, comprehends the knowledge of the three doctrines, and speaks in like manner: Blessed is the man who has not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, even as the fishes [referred to] go in darkness to the depths [of the sea]; and has not stood in the way of sinners, even as those who profess to fear the Lord, but go astray like swine; and has not sat in the seat of scorners, even as those birds that lie in wait for prey. Take a full and firm grasp of this spiritual knowledge. But Moses says still further, You shall eat every animal that is cloven-footed and ruminant. What does he mean? [The ruminant animal denotes him] who, on receiving food, recognizes Him that nourishes him, and being satisfied by Him, is visibly made glad. Well spoke [Moses], having respect to the commandment. What, then, does he mean? That we ought to join ourselves to those that fear the Lord, those who meditate in their heart on the commandment which they have received, those who both utter the judgments of the Lord and observe them, those who know that meditation is a work of gladness, and who ruminate upon the word of the Lord. But what means the cloven-footed? That the righteous man also walks in this world, yet looks forward to the holy state [to come]. Behold how well Moses legislated. But how was it possible for them to understand or comprehend these things? We then, rightly understanding his commandments, explain them as the Lord intended. For this purpose He circumcised our ears and our hearts, that we might understand these things.

Chapter 11. Baptism and the cross prefigured in the Old Testament

Let us further inquire whether the Lord took any care to foreshadow the water [of baptism] and the cross. Concerning the water, indeed, it is written, in reference to the Israelites, that they should not receive that baptism which leads to the remission of sins, but should procure another for

themselves. The prophet therefore declares, Be astonished, O heaven, and let the earth tremble at this, because this people has committed two great evils: they have forsaken Me, a living fountain, and have hewn out for themselves broken cisterns. Is my holy hill Zion a desolate rock? For you shall be as the fledglings of a bird, which fly away when the nest is removed. Isaiah 16:1-2 And again says the prophet, I will go before you and make level the mountains, and will break the brazen gates, and bruise in pieces the iron bars; and I will give you the secret, hidden, invisible treasures, that they may know that I am the Lord God. Isaiah 45:2-3 And He shall dwell in a lofty cave of the strong rock. Furthermore, what says He in reference to the Son? His water is sure; you shall see the King in His glory, and your soul shall meditate on the fear of the Lord. Isaiah 33:16-18 And again He says in another prophet, The man who does these things shall be like a tree planted by the courses of waters, which shall yield its fruit in due season; and his leaf shall not fade, and all that he does shall prosper. Not so are the ungodly, not so, but even as chaff, which the wind sweeps away from the face of the earth. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in judgment, nor sinners in the counsel of the just; for the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish. Mark how He has described at once both the water and the cross. For these words imply, Blessed are they who, placing their trust in the cross, have gone down into the water; for, says He, they shall receive their reward in due time: then He declares, I will recompense them. But now He says, Their leaves shall not fade. This means, that every word which proceeds out of your mouth in faith and love shall tend to bring conversion and hope to many. Again, another prophet says, And the land of Jacob shall be extolled above every land. Zephaniah 3:19 This means the vessel of His Spirit, which He shall glorify. Further, what says He? And there was a river flowing on the right, and from it arose beautiful trees; and whosoever shall eat of them shall live forever. Ezekiel 47:12 This means, that we indeed descend into the water full of sins and defilement, but come up, bearing fruit in our heart, having the fear [of God] and trust in Jesus in our spirit. And whosoever shall eat of these shall live for ever, This means: Whosoever, He declares, shall hear you speaking, and believe, shall live forever.

Chapter 12. The cross of Christ frequently announced in the Old Testament

In like manner He points to the cross of Christ in another prophet, who says, And when shall these things be accomplished? And the Lord says, When a tree shall be bent down, and again arise, and when blood shall flow out of wood. Here again you have an intimation concerning the cross, and Him who should be crucified. Yet again He speaks of this in Moses, when Israel was attacked by strangers. And that He might remind them, when assailed, that it was on account of their sins they were delivered to death, the Spirit speaks to the heart of Moses, that he should make a figure of the cross, and of Him about to suffer thereon; for unless they put their trust in Him, they shall be overcome forever. Moses therefore placed one weapon above another in the midst of the hill, and standing upon it, so as to be higher than all the people, he stretched forth his hands, and thus again Israel acquired the mastery. But when again he let down his hands, they were again destroyed. For what reason? That they might know that they could not be saved unless they put their trust in Him. And in another prophet He declares, All day long I have stretched forth My hands to an unbelieving people, and one that gainsays My righteous way. Isaiah 65:2 And again Moses makes a type of Jesus, [signifying] that it was necessary for Him to suffer, [and also] that He would be the author of life [to others], whom they believed to have destroyed on the cross when Israel was failing. For since transgression was committed by Eve through means of the

serpent, [the Lord] brought it to pass that every [kind of] serpents bit them, and they died, Numbers 21:6-9; John 3:14-18 that He might convince them, that on account of their transgression they were given over to the straits of death. Moreover Moses, when he commanded, You shall not have any graven or molten [image] for your God, did so that he might reveal a type of Jesus. Moses then makes a brazen serpent, and places it upon a beam, and by proclamation assembles the people. When, therefore, they had come together, they besought Moses that he would offer sacrifice in their behalf, and pray for their recovery. And Moses spoke unto them, saying, When any one of you is bitten, let him come to the serpent placed on the pole; and let him hope and believe, that even though dead, it is able to give him life, and immediately he shall be restored. Numbers 21:9 And they did so. You have in this also [an indication of] the glory of Jesus; for in Him and to Him are all things. Colossians 1:16 What, again, says Moses to Jesus (Joshua) the son of Nave, when he gave him this name, as being a prophet, with this view only, that all the people might hear that the Father would reveal all things concerning His Son Jesus to the son of Nave? This name then being given him when he sent him to spy out the land, he said, Take a book into your hands, and write what the Lord declares, that the Son of God will in the last days cut off from the roots all the house of Amalek. Exodus 17:14 Behold again: Jesus who was manifested, both by type and in the flesh, 1 Timothy 3:16 is not the Son of man, but the Son of God. Since, therefore, they were to say that Christ was the son of David, fearing and understanding the error of the wicked, he says, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies Your footstool. And again, thus says Isaiah, The Lord said to Christ, my Lord, whose right hand I have holden, that the nations should yield obedience before Him; and I will break in pieces the strength of kings. Isaiah 45:1 Behold how David calls Him Lord and the Son of God.

Chapter 13. Christians, and not Jews, the heirs of the covenant

But let us see if this people is the heir, or the former, and if the covenant belongs to us or to them. Hear now what the Scripture says concerning the people. Isaac prayed for Rebecca his wife, because she was barren; and she conceived. Genesis 25:21 Furthermore also, Rebecca went forth to inquire of the Lord; and the Lord said to her, Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples in your belly; and the one people shall surpass the other, and the elder shall serve the younger. Genesis 25:23 You ought to understand who was Isaac, who Rebecca, and concerning what persons He declared that this people should be greater than that. And in another prophecy Jacob speaks more clearly to his son Joseph, saying, Behold, the Lord has not deprived me of your presence; bring your sons to me, that I may bless them. And he brought Manasseh and Ephraim, desiring that Manasseh should be blessed, because he was the elder. With this view Joseph led him to the right hand of his father Jacob. But Jacob saw in spirit the type of the people to arise afterwards. And what says [the Scripture]? And Jacob changed the direction of his hands, and laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, the second and younger, and blessed him. And Joseph said to Jacob, Transfer your right hand to the head of Manasseh, for he is my first-born son. Genesis 48:18 And Jacob said, I know it, my son, I know it; but the elder shall serve the younger: yet he also shall be blessed. Genesis 48:19 You see on whom he laid [his hands], that this people should be first, and heir of the covenant. If then, still further, the same thing was intimated through Abraham, we reach the perfection of our knowledge. What, then, says He to Abraham? Because you have believed, it is imputed to you for righteousness: behold, I have made you the father of those nations who believe in the Lord while in [a state of] uncircumcision.

Chapter 14. The Lord has given us the testament which Moses received and broke

Yes [it is even so]; but let us inquire if the Lord has really given that testament which He swore to the fathers that He would give to the people. He did give it; but they were not worthy to receive it, on account of their sins. For the prophet declares, And Moses was fasting forty days and forty nights on Mount Sinai, that he might receive the testament of the Lord for the people. Exodus 24:18 And he received from the Lord Exodus 31:18 two tables, written in the spirit by the finger of the hand of the Lord. And Moses having received them, carried them down to give to the people. And the Lord said to Moses, Moses, Moses, go down quickly; for your people has sinned, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt. Exodus 32:7; Deuteronomy 9:12 And Moses understood that they had again made molten images; and he threw the tables out of his hands, and the tables of the testament of the Lord were broken. Moses then received it, but they proved themselves unworthy. Learn now how we have received it. Moses, as a servant, Hebrews 3:5 received it; but the Lord himself, having suffered in our behalf, has given it to us, that we should be the people of inheritance. But He was manifested, in order that they might be perfected in their iniquities, and that we, being constituted heirs through Him, might receive the testament of the Lord Jesus, who was prepared for this end, that by His personal manifestation, redeeming our hearts (which were already wasted by death, and given over to the iniquity of error) from darkness, He might by His word enter into a covenant with us. For it is written how the Father, about to redeem us from darkness, commanded Him to prepare a holy people for Himself. The prophet therefore declares, I, the Lord Your God, have called You in righteousness, and will hold Your hand, and will strengthen You; and I have given You for a covenant to the people, for a light to the nations, to open the eyes of the blind, and to bring forth from fetters them that are bound, and those that sit in darkness out of the prison-house. Isaiah 42:6-7 You perceive, then, whence we have been redeemed. And again, the prophet says, Behold, I have appointed You as a light to the nations, that You might be for salvation even to the ends of the earth, says the Lord God that redeems you. And again, the prophet says, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because He has anointed me to preach the Gospel to the humble: He has sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind; to announce the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of recompense; to comfort all that mourn. Isaiah 61:1-2

Chapter 15. The false and the true Sabbath

Further, also, it is written concerning the Sabbath in the Decalogue which [the Lord] spoke, face to face, to Moses on Mount Sinai, And sanctify the Sabbath of the Lord with clean hands and a pure heart. Exodus 20:8; Deuteronomy 5:12 And He says in another place, If my sons keep the Sabbath, then will I cause my mercy to rest upon them. Jeremiah 17:24-25 The Sabbath is mentioned at the beginning of the creation [thus]: And God made in six days the works of His hands, and made an end on the seventh day, and rested on it, and sanctified it. Attend, my children, to the meaning of this expression, He finished in six days. This implies that the Lord will finish all things in six thousand years, for a day is with Him a thousand years. And He Himself testifies, saying, Behold, today will be as a thousand years. Therefore, my children, in six days, that is, in six thousand years, all things will be finished. And He rested on the seventh day. This means: when His Son, coming [again], shall destroy the time of the wicked man, and judge the ungodly, and change the-sun, and the moon, and the stars, then shall He truly rest on the seventh day. Moreover, He says, You shall sanctify it with pure hands and a pure heart. If, therefore, any one can now sanctify the day

which God has sanctified, except he is pure in heart in all things, we are deceived. Behold, therefore: certainly then one properly resting sanctifies it, when we ourselves, having received the promise, wickedness no longer existing, and all things having been made new by the Lord, shall be able to work righteousness. Then we shall be able to sanctify it, having been first sanctified ourselves. Further, He says to them, Your new moons and your Sabbath I cannot endure. Isaiah 1:13 You perceive how He speaks: Your present Sabbaths are not acceptable to Me, but that is which I have made, [namely this,] when, giving rest to all things, I shall make a beginning of the eighth day, that is, a beginning of another world. Wherefore, also, we keep the eighth day with joyfulness, the day also on which Jesus rose again from the dead. And when He had manifested Himself, He ascended into the heavens.

Chapter 16. The spiritual temple of God

Moreover, I will also tell you concerning the temple, how the wretched [Jews], wandering in error, trusted not in God Himself, but in the temple, as being the house of God. For almost after the manner of the Gentiles they worshipped Him in the temple. But learn how the Lord speaks, when abolishing it: Who has meted out heaven with a span, and the earth with his palm? Have not I? Isaiah 40:12 Thus says the Lord, Heaven is My throne, and the earth My footstool: what kind of house will you build to Me, or what is the place of My rest? Isaiah 66:1 You perceive that their hope is vain. Moreover, He again says, Behold, they who have cast down this temple, even they shall build it up again. It has so happened. For through their going to war, it was destroyed by their enemies; and now: they, as the servants of their enemies, shall rebuild it. Again, it was revealed that the city and the temple and the people of Israel were to be given up. For the Scripture says, And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the Lord will deliver up the sheep of His pasture, and their sheep-fold and tower, to destruction. And it so happened as the Lord had spoken. Let us inquire, then, if there still is a temple of God. There is — where He himself declared He would make and finish it. For it is written, And it shall come to pass, when the week is completed, the temple of God shall be built in glory in the name of the Lord. Daniel 9:24-27; Haggai 2:10 I find, therefore, that a temple does exist. Learn, then, how it shall be built in the name of the Lord. Before we believed in God, the habitation of our heart was corrupt and weak, as being indeed like a temple made with hands. For it was full of idolatry, and was a habitation of demons, through our doing such things as were opposed to [the will of] God. But it shall be built, you observe, in the name of the Lord, in order that the temple of the Lord may be built in glory. How? Learn [as follows]. Having received the forgiveness of sins, and placed our trust in the name of the Lord, we have become new creatures, formed again from the beginning. Wherefore in our habitation God truly dwells in us. How? His word of faith; His calling of promise; the wisdom of the statutes; the commands of the doctrine; He himself prophesying in us; He himself dwelling in us; opening to us who were enslaved by death the doors of the temple, that is, the mouth; and by giving us repentance introduced us into the incorruptible temple. He then, who wishes to be saved, looks not to man, but to Him who dwells in him, and speaks in him, amazed at never having either heard him utter such words with his mouth, nor himself having ever desired to hear them. This is the spiritual temple built for the Lord.

Chapter 17. Conclusion of the first part of the epistle

As far as was possible, and could be done with perspicuity, I cherish the hope that, according to my desire, I have omitted none of those things at present [demanding consideration], which bear upon your salvation. For if I should write to you about things future, you would not understand, because such knowledge is hid in parables. These things then are so.

Chapter 18. Second part of the epistle. The two ways

But let us now pass to another sort of knowledge and doctrine. There are two ways of doctrine and authority, the one of light, and the other of darkness. But there is a great difference between these two ways. For over one are stationed the light-bringing angels of God, but over the other the angels 2 Corinthians 12:7 of Satan. And He indeed (i.e., God) is Lord for ever and ever, but he (i.e., Satan) is prince of the time of iniquity.

Chapter 19. The way of light

The way of light, then, is as follows. If any one desires to travel to the appointed place, he must be zealous in his works. The knowledge, therefore, which is given to us for the purpose of walking in this way, is the following. You shall love Him that created you: you shall glorify Him that redeemed you from death. You shall be simple in heart, and rich in spirit. You shall not join yourself to those who walk in the way of death. You shall hate doing what is displeasing to God: you shall hate all hypocrisy. You shall not forsake the commandments of the Lord. You shall not exalt yourself, but shall be of a lowly mind. You shall not take glory to yourself. You shall not take evil counsel against your neighbour. You shall not allow over-boldness to enter into your soul. You shall not commit fornication: you shall not commit adultery: you shall not be a corrupter of youth. You shall not let the word of God issue from your lips with any kind of impurity. You shall not accept persons when you reprove any one for transgression. You shall be meek: you shall be peaceable. You shall tremble at the words which you hear. You shall not be mindful of evil against your brother. You shall not be of doubtful mind James 1:8 as to whether a thing shall be or not. You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain. You shall love your neighbour more than your own soul. You shall not slay the child by procuring abortion; nor, again, shall you destroy it after it is born. You shall not withdraw your hand from your son, or from your daughter, but from their infancy you shall teach them the fear of the Lord. You shall not covet what is your neighbour's, nor shall you be avaricious. You shall not be joined in soul with the haughty, but you shall be reckoned with the righteous and lowly. Receive as good things the trials which come upon you. You shall not be of double mind or of double tongue, for a double tongue is a snare of death. You shall be subject to the Lord, and to [other] masters as the image of God, with modesty and fear. You shall not issue orders with bitterness to your maidservant or your man-servant, who trust in the same [God], lest you should not reverence that God who is above both; for He came to call men not according to their outward appearance, Ephesians 6:9 but according as the Spirit had prepared them. Romans 8:29-30 You shall communicate in all things with your neighbour; you shall not call things your own; for if you are partakers in common of things which are incorruptible, how much more [should you be] of those things which are corruptible! You shall not be hasty with your tongue, for the mouth is a snare of death. As far as possible, you shall be pure in your soul. Do not be ready to stretch forth your hands to take, while you contract them to give. You shall love, as the apple of your eye, every one that speaks to you the word of the Lord. You shall remember the day of judgment, night and day. You shall seek out every day the faces of the saints, either by word examining them, and going to exhort

them, and meditating how to save a soul by the word, or by your hands you shall labour for the redemption of your sins. You shall not hesitate to give, nor murmur when you give. Give to every one that asks you, and you shall know who is the good Recompenser of the reward. You shall preserve what you have received [in charge], neither adding to it nor taking from it. To the last you shall hate the wicked [one]. You shall judge righteously. You shall not make a schism, but you shall pacify those that contend by bringing them together. You shall confess your sins. You shall not go to prayer with an evil conscience. This is the way of light.

Chapter 20. The way of darkness

But the way of darkness is crooked, and full of cursing; for it is the way of eternal death with punishment, in which way are the things that destroy the soul, viz., idolatry, over-confidence, the arrogance of power, hypocrisy, double-heartedness, adultery, murder, rapine, haughtiness, transgression, deceit, malice, self-sufficiency, poisoning, magic, avarice, want of the fear of God. [In this way, too,] are those who persecute the good, those who hate truth, those who love falsehood, those who know not the reward of righteousness, those who cleave not to that which is good, those who attend not with just judgment to the widow and orphan, those who watch not to the fear of God, [but incline] to wickedness, from whom meekness and patience are far off; persons who love vanity, follow after a reward, pity not the needy, labour not in aid of him who is overcome with toil; who are prone to evil-speaking, who know not Him that made them, who are murderers of children, destroyers of the workmanship of God; who turn away him that is in want, who oppress the afflicted, who are advocates of the rich, who are unjust judges of the poor, and who are in every respect transgressors.

Chapter 21. Conclusion

It is well, therefore, that he who has learned the judgments of the Lord, as many as have been written, should walk in them. For he who keeps these shall be glorified in the kingdom of God; but he who chooses other things shall be destroyed with his works. On this account there will be a resurrection, on this account a retribution. I beseech you who are superiors, if you will receive any counsel of my good-will, have among yourselves those to whom you may show kindness: do not forsake them. For the day is at hand on which all things shall perish with the evil [one]. The Lord is near, and His reward. Again, and yet again, I beseech you: be good lawgivers to one another; continue faithful counsellors of one another; take away from among you all hypocrisy. And may God, who rules over all the world, give to you wisdom, intelligence, understanding, knowledge of His judgments, **with patience.** [The Codex Sinaiticus omits the preposition here.] And be taught of God, inquiring diligently what the Lord asks from you; and do it that you maybe safe in the day of judgment. And if you have any remembrance of what is good, be mindful of me, meditating on these things, in order that both my desire and watchfulness may result in some good. I beseech you, entreating this as a favour. While yet you are in this fair vessel, do not fail in any one of those things, but unceasingly seek after them, and fulfil every commandment; for these things are worthy. Wherefore I have been the more earnest to write to you, as my ability served, that I might cheer you. Farewell, you children of love and peace. The Lord of glory and of all grace be with your spirit. Amen.

The Martyrdom of Ignatius of Antioch

Chapter 1. Desire of Ignatius for martyrdom

When Trajan, not long since, succeeded to the empire of the Romans, Ignatius, the disciple of John the apostle, a man in all respects of an apostolic character, governed the Church of the Antiochians with great care, having with difficulty escaped the former storms of the many persecutions under Domitian, inasmuch as, like a good pilot, by the helm of prayer and fasting, by the earnestness of his teaching, and by his [constant] spiritual labour, he resisted the flood that rolled against him, fearing [only] lest he should lose any of those who were deficient in courage, or apt to suffer from their simplicity. Wherefore he rejoiced over the tranquil state of the Church, when the persecution ceased for a little time, but was grieved as to himself, that he had not yet attained to a true love to Christ, nor reached the perfect rank of a disciple. For he inwardly reflected, that the confession which is made by martyrdom, would bring him into a yet more intimate relation to the Lord. Wherefore, continuing a few years longer with the Church, and, like a divine lamp, enlightening every one's understanding by his expositions of the [Holy] Scriptures, he [at length] attained the object of his desire.

Chapter 2. Ignatius is condemned by Trajan

For Trajan, in the ninth year of his reign, being lifted up [with pride], after the victory he had gained over the Scythians and Dacians, and many other nations, and thinking that the religious body of the Christians were yet wanting to complete the subjugation of all things to himself, and [thereupon] threatening them with persecution unless they should agree to worship dæmons, as did all other nations, thus compelled all who were living godly lives either to sacrifice [to idols] or die. Wherefore the noble soldier of Christ [Ignatius], being in fear for the Church of the Antiochians, was, in accordance with his own desire, brought before Trajan, who was at that time staying at Antioch, but was in haste [to set forth] against Armenia and the Parthians. And when he was set before the Emperor Trajan, [that prince] said to him, Who are you, you evil demon, who so zealously breaks our commands, and persuades others to do the same, so that they should miserably perish? Ignatius replied, No one ought to call Theophorus evil; for all of the demons have departed from the servants of God. But if, because I am an enemy to these [demons], you call me wicked in respect to them, I quite agree with you; for inasmuch as I have Christ the King of heaven [within me], I destroy all the devices of these [demons]. Trajan answered, And who is Theophorus? Ignatius replied, He who has Christ within his breast. Trajan said, Do we not then seem to you to have the gods in our mind, whose assistance we enjoy in fighting against our enemies? Ignatius answered, You are in error when you call the dæmons of the nations gods. For there is but one God, who made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that are in them; and one Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, whose kingdom may I enjoy. Trajan said, Do you mean Him who was crucified under Pontius Pilate? Ignatius replied, I mean Him who crucified my sin, with him who was the inventor of it, and who has condemned [and cast down] all the deceit and malice of the devil under the feet of those who carry Him in their heart. Trajan said, Do you then carry within you Him that was crucified? Ignatius replied, Truly so; for it is written, 'I will dwell in them, and walk in them.' 2 Corinthians 6:16 Then Trajan pronounced sentence as follows: We command that Ignatius, who affirms that he carries about within him Him that was crucified, be bound by soldiers, and carried to the great [city] Rome, there to be devoured by the beasts, for the

gratification of the people. When the holy martyr heard this sentence, he cried out with joy, I thank you, O Lord, that You have vouchsafed to honour me with a perfect love towards You, and have made me to be bound with iron chains, like Your Apostle Paul. Having spoken thus, he then, with delight, clasped the chains about him; and when he had first prayed for the Church, and commended it with tears to the Lord, he was hurried away by the savage cruelty of the soldiers, like a distinguished ram the leader of a goodly flock, that he might be carried to Rome, there to furnish food to the bloodthirsty beasts.

Chapter 3. Ignatius sails to Smyrna

Wherefore, with great alacrity and joy, through his desire to suffer, he came down from Antioch to Seleucia, from which place he set sail. And after a great deal of suffering he came to Smyrna, where he disembarked with great joy, and hastened to see the holy Polycarp, [formerly] his fellow disciple, and [now] bishop of Smyrna. For they had both, in old times, been disciples of St. John the Apostle. Being then brought to him, and having communicated to him some spiritual gifts, and glorying in his bonds, he entreated of him to labour along with him for the fulfilment of his desire; earnestly indeed asking this of the whole Church (for the cities and Churches of Asia had welcomed the holy man through their bishops, and presbyters, and deacons, all hastening to meet him, if by any means they might receive from him some spiritual gift), but above all, the holy Polycarp, that, by means of the wild beasts, he soon disappearing from this world, might be manifested before the face of Christ.

Chapter 4. Ignatius writes to the churches

And these things he thus spoke, and thus testified, extending his love to Christ so far as one who was about to secure heaven through his good confession, and the earnestness of those who joined their prayers to his in regard to his [approaching] conflict; and to give a recompense to the Churches, who came to meet him through their rulers, sending letters of thanksgiving to them, which dropped spiritual grace, along with prayer and exhortation. Wherefore, seeing all men so kindly affected towards him, and fearing lest the love of the brotherhood should hinder his zeal towards the Lord, while a fair door of suffering martyrdom was opened to him, he wrote to the Church of the Romans the Epistle which is here subjoined.

Chapter 5. Ignatius is brought to Rome

Having therefore, by means of this Epistle, settled, as he wished, those of the brethren at Rome who were unwilling [for his martyrdom]; and setting sail from Smyrna (for Christophorus was pressed by the soldiers to hasten to the public spectacles in the mighty [city] Rome, that, being given up to the wild beasts in the sight of the Roman people, he might attain to the crown for which he strove), he [next] landed at Troas. Then, going on from that place to Neapolis, he went [on foot] by Philippi through Macedonia, and on to that part of Epirus which is near Epidamnus; and finding a ship in one of the seaports, he sailed over the Adriatic Sea, and entering from it on the Tyrrhene, he passed by the various islands and cities, until, when Puteoli came in sight, he was eager there to disembark, having a desire to tread in the footsteps of the Apostle Paul. Acts 28:13-14 But a violent wind arising did not allow him to do so, the ship being driven rapidly forwards; and, simply expressing his delight over the love of the brethren in that place, he sailed by. Wherefore, continuing to enjoy fair winds, we were reluctantly hurried on in one day and a night, mourning [as we did] over the coming

departure from us of this righteous man. But to him this happened just as he wished, since he was in haste as soon as possible to leave this world, that he might attain to the Lord whom he loved. Sailing then into the Roman harbour, and the unhallowed sports being just about to close, the soldiers began to be annoyed at our slowness, but the bishop rejoicingly yielded to their urgency.

Chapter 6. Ignatius is devoured by the beasts at Rome

They pushed forth therefore from the place which is called Portus; and (the fame of all relating to the holy martyr being already spread abroad) we met the brethren full of fear and joy; rejoicing indeed because they were thought worthy to meet with Theophorus, but struck with fear because so eminent a man was being led to death. Now he enjoined some to keep silence who, in their fervent zeal, were saying that they would appease the people, so that they should not demand the destruction of this just one. He being immediately aware of this through the Spirit, and having saluted them all, and begged of them to show a true affection towards him, and having dwelt [on this point] at greater length than in his Epistle, and having persuaded them not to envy him hastening to the Lord, he then, after he had, with all the brethren kneeling [beside him], entreated the Son of God on behalf of the Churches, that a stop might be put to the persecution, and that mutual love might continue among the brethren, was led with all haste into the amphitheatre. Then, being immediately thrown in, according to the command of Cæsar given some time ago, the public spectacles being just about to close (for it was then a solemn day, as they deemed it, being that which is called the thirteenth in the Roman tongue, on which the people were wont to assemble in more than ordinary numbers), he was thus cast to the wild beasts close beside the temple, that so by them the desire of the holy martyr Ignatius should be fulfilled, according to that which is written, The desire of the righteous is acceptable Proverbs 10:24 [to God], to the effect that he might not be troublesome to any of the brethren by the gathering of his remains, even as he had in his Epistle expressed a wish beforehand that so his end might be. For only the harder portions of his holy remains were left, which were conveyed to Antioch and wrapped in linen, as an inestimable treasure left to the holy Church by the grace which was in the martyr.

Chapter 7. Ignatius appears in a vision after his death

Now these things took place on the thirteenth day before the Kalends of January, that is, on the twentieth of December, Sura and Senecio being then the consuls of the Romans for the second time. Having ourselves been eye-witnesses of these things, and having spent the whole night in tears within the house, and having entreated the Lord, with bended knees and much prayer, that He would give us weak men full assurance respecting the things which were done, it came to pass, on our falling into a brief slumber, that some of us saw the blessed Ignatius suddenly standing by us and embracing us, while others beheld him again praying for us, and others still saw him dropping with sweat, as if he had just come from his great labour, and standing by the Lord. When, therefore, we had with great joy witnessed these things, and had compared our several visions together, we sang praise to God, the giver of all good things, and expressed our sense of the happiness of the holy [martyr]; and now we have made known to you both the day and the time [when these things happened], that, assembling ourselves together according to the time of his martyrdom, we may have fellowship with the champion and noble martyr of Christ, who trod under foot the devil, and perfected the course which, out of love to Christ, he had desired, in Christ Jesus our Lord; by whom, and with whom, be glory and power to the Father, with the Holy Spirit, for evermore! Amen.

The Ethiopian Book of Lamentations

The Book of Lamentations is a collection of five poems that serve as an anguished response to the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 B.C., after a long siege by the invading Babylonian army. (See 2 Kgs 25 for a prose account of the fall of Jerusalem.) Although the poems are traditionally ascribed to the prophet Jeremiah, this is unlikely. The Hebrew text of the book does not mention Jeremiah at all, and it is difficult to square some of the content of the poetry with what one finds in the Book of Jeremiah itself (cf. Lam 1:10; 2:9; 4:17, 20). While there are connections in theme and vocabulary among all five chapters (and especially between chaps. 1 and 2), the poems may have been composed separately and grouped together later. In any case, they are anonymous compositions probably used by survivors of the catastrophe of 587 B.C. in a communal expression of grief and mourning.

Jewish liturgical tradition considers the book one of the “scrolls” (*megillot*); it is read once a year on the ninth of Av (August–September), a fast day commemorating the destruction of both the first Temple in 587 B.C. and the second Temple in A.D. 70. While passages from chap. 3 are often incorporated into Christian services for Holy Thursday or Good Friday, the Church has otherwise tended to neglect the book. It is not hard to see why; a more anguished piece of writing is scarcely imaginable: from its portrayal of Jerusalem in chaps. 1 and 2 as an abandoned widow exposed to endless dangers, to the broken man of chap. 3, to the bleak description in chap. 4 of the inhabitants of the devastated city, to the final unanswered communal lament of chap. 5, the reader is not so much engaged by the Book of Lamentations as assaulted by it. But with its unsparing focus on destruction, pain, and suffering the book serves an invaluable function as part of Scripture, witnessing to a biblical faith determined to express honestly the harsh realities of a violent world and providing contemporary readers the language to do the same.

As a literary work, the Book of Lamentations combines elements of communal and individual laments (in which the speakers attempt to persuade God to intervene in the face of an acute crisis), funeral dirges (in which a death is mourned), and ancient Near Eastern city-laments (in which the destruction of a city is mourned). The meter is called *Qinah* (lament), that is, each verse normally has three beats followed by two. The poems are acrostics: in chaps. 1–4, the separate stanzas begin with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet from the first to the last. The last chapter, while not strictly an acrostic, nevertheless partially conforms to the pattern in its use of 22 lines, the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet. Far from destroying the spontaneous pathos of the songs, this feature conveys the expression of a profound grief that might otherwise seem to be without limit (cf. 2:13).

The Hymn of the Three Youths

Praise You the Lord, and exalt Him to all ages.

~Hymn of the Three Youths, Vespers Liturgy, Holy Saturday morning, Trans. by Fr. George Papadeas

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Now the king's servants who threw them in did not cease feeding the furnace fires with naphtha, pitch, tow and brush. And the flame streamed out above the furnace forty-nine cubits, and it broke through and burned those of the Chaldeans whom it caught about the furnace. But the angel of the Lord came down into the furnace to be with Azariah and his companions, and drove the fiery flame out of the furnace, and made the midst of the furnace like a moist whistling wind, so that the fire did not touch them at all or hurt or trouble them. Then the three, as with mouth, praised and glorified and blessed God in the furnace, saying: "Blessed are Thou, O Lord, God of our fathers, and to be praised and highly exalted forever."

Song of the Three Young Men 23-29

It seems that each year, I appreciate the service on Holy Saturday morning more deeply. It is a summary of the history of salvation, from the creation until the second coming. The service begins with Psalm 104, sometimes called the Psalm of Creation, (the Psalm that begins Vespers) which recounts how God created everything. These vespers are the vespers of Pascha (of the Resurrection) so the hymns give praise to God for the Resurrection. They are the hymns we discussed in the previous reflection about how Christ destroyed the power of Hades. Next is the entrance hymn of Vespers, "Gladsome Light" (or Fos Ilaron in Greek), another hymn of praise to God.

After the entrance hymn, we read from three prophecies. The first prophecy is from Genesis 1, the story of Creation. The book of Genesis begins:

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. (Genesis 1:1-3)

Not only do these verses reveal that God created everything, but that everything was created from nothing, and that God created in Trinity. The Holy Trinity is revealed in these verses. God the Father created, the Spirit of God was moving over the waters, and the "Word" of God gave the command "Let there be light." This will take on greater significance in the Gospel of John, chapter one, which will be read at the Paschal Divine Liturgy, because Jesus Christ will be revealed as the "Word" become flesh. We will discuss this further in a future reflection.

The second prophecy is the story of Jonah. Jonah was told by God to go preach at Nineveh. He refused God's order and boarded a ship bound for Tarshish. A great storm came up around the ship, so that everyone on board thought that the ship would sink and they would drown. The men on the ship decided to cast lots to see whose presence had brought misfortune upon them. And the lot fell to Jonah, who admitted that he had run from the command of God. Jonah told them to cast him into the sea, but they initially refused. When they saw that the sea was growing more and more tempestuous, they finally threw Jonah into the sea. God caused a great fish (in popular Christian literature, sometimes called a whale) to swallow Jonah. Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and then the fish vomited out Jonah, giving him new life. This prefigures the three day burial of Christ in the tomb.

The third prophecy is from the Book of Daniel. We are introduced to four Hebrews in the opening chapter of Daniel, whose names are Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. They were brought into the king's court and shown favoritism from King Nebuchadnezzar. Their names were changed to Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. At this time, the Hebrews were in exile in Babylon, so the fact that four of them were honored by the king and given positions of trust and responsibility is quite remarkable. These men, however, remained loyal to the God of Israel, even in exile.

Advisors of the king encouraged him to build a statue and have people worship the statue, and told the king that anyone who did not worship the statue should be burned in a fiery furnace. They then made the king aware that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego would not worship the statue (Daniel is not mentioned during this part of the book of Daniel but has his own trial later in the lion's den for not worshipping the king.) So Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were bound and cast into the fiery furnace.

The three youths sang a hymn to God. This is an apocryphal book which is not part of the Old Testament in certain versions of the Bible. However, the Apocrypha are part of the Septuagint (Greek) Bible and the Song of the Three Young Men has been inserted into the book of Daniel, chapter three. It is a hymn of praise to God, which we also sing a portion of on Holy Saturday morning.

King Nebuchadnezzar watched this scene about the fiery furnace, that the people who bound the three young men were burned and that the three young men were unhurt. In Daniel 3:24-25, the king said to his counselors: "Did we not cast three men bound into the fire? They answered 'True, O king.' He answered 'But I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods.'" Indeed, this mysterious fourth person is a pre-figuring of Christ, walking in the flames with the three righteous young men.

Thus, in this service, we see a summary of the Old Testament, how even in exile, a vestige of faithful people remained, and God remained faithful to them. God was still with the people in their brokenness. The next reflection will be about the rest of the service on Holy Saturday morning, how Christ redeemed the world through His Cross and Resurrection, the establishment of the church, and how we are to worship Christ until He comes again.

All the words of the Lord, bless the Lord; praise and exalt Him to all ages.

Bless the Lord, angels of the Lord, and the havens of the Lord

Bless the Lord, you waters that are above the heavens and all the powers of the Lord.

Bless the Lord, sun and moon and stars of heaven.

Bless the Lord, light and darkness, nights and days.

Bless the Lord, showers and dew and all winds.

Bless the Lord fire and warmth, cold and heat.

Bless the Lord, dews and snows, frosts and cold;

Bless the Lord, frosts and snows, lightnings and clouds.

Bless the Lord, earth, mountains and hills and all things growing on it

Bless the Lord, fountains, seas and rivers, whales and all that move in the waters.

Bless the Lord, fowls of heaven, all animals and all beasts.

Bless the Lord, sons of men, bless Him and let Israel bless.

Bless the Lord, priests of the Lord, servants of the Lord.

Bless the Lord, spirits and souls of the righteous, holy and humble men of heart.

Bless the Lord Ananias, Azarias and Misael;

Bless the Lord, Apostles, prophets, and witnesses of the Lord.

We bless the Father, Son and Holy Spirit the Lord,

We praise and exalt the Lord to all the ages.

We praise, we bless and worship the Lord.

We praise and glory the Lord to all the ages.

(Hymn of the Three Youth, Vespertine Liturgy, Holy Saturday morning, Trans. by Fr. George Papadeas, Adapted from the book Song of the Three Youths, verses 37-66)

God is faithful, even when we are not. God is present, even in our brokenness.

The Ethiopian Book of Glory

The Kəbrä Nəgäšt's story about a Black Queen of Sheba has riveted audiences for centuries and is the frequent subject of popular history shows. For the book relates how the Queen of Sheba, whose story is first told in the Bible, was an Ethiopian queen who had a son with the Israelite King Solomon. Imaginatively expanding on the laconic biblical account, the Kəbrä Nəgäšt tells how Solomon tricked the Queen of Sheba into sleeping with him and how their son eventually took the Ark of the Covenant from Israel to Ethiopia, thus transferring God's blessings to a new chosen people. Ever since, Ethiopian tradition claims, the kings of Ethiopia have descended from the Middle Eastern King Solomon and the African Queen of Sheba. The transfer of the ark from Jerusalem to Ethiopia, like the transfer of the sacred images of the gods from Troy to Rome in Virgil's Aeneid, anchors the Christian Ethiopian nation's claim to spiritual supremacy and its kings' claims to dominion over other kings. The hybrid national and racial identity crystalized in the Kəbrä Nəgäšt has been mirrored in the work's reception in later periods, especially its central role among the Rastafari communities.

Ethiopia has eight centuries of criminally understudied texts. It is one of the most important literary archives in the world. Although this archive is being digitized at a terrific rate, very little of it is being translated or studied. Less than one percent of its over hundred thousand texts is available in any

European language. They are written in the ancient language of Gəʿəz (or Classical Ethiopic), an Afro-Asiatic language spoken and written in Ethiopia throughout the first millennium CE and still used in the Ethiopian church today.

Yet, these are texts written by Africans for Africans in African languages about African people from the 1200s into the present. Most people in the world do not believe that Africa has any writing before the mid-twentieth century or the arrival of Europeans. Without translations and editions of at least some of the texts, this tenacious lie, that Africa has no written culture, will continue to thrive. Without good editions and translations, these texts cannot be taught and the global canon cannot be expanded. And, if the global canon cannot be expanded, then the humanities will wither. Providing access to these texts is essential to the future of the humanities, which cannot survive with Africa as a lacuna.

The Ethiopian Exorcism Manual

The general objective of this study was to investigate and describe the conceptualization of demons along with the process of treatments for mental illness of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. To meet this objective qualitative research approach, case study research method, was found to be appropriate. **Entoto Hammere Noah Kidane Mihret Monastery** was selected as a unit of analysis. From this unit of analysis, it was possible to draw sub units namely Exorcist/Priests, Treatments, and Clients. In fetching the required data, in-depth interviews were conducted with religious healers (n=4) and patients (n=2). Direct observation was also employed to study the available treatment processes and reactions of clients during treatments. A theme based frame work was followed to analyze the findings of the study; and the final reporting of the findings followed a linear analytic structure. Based on the posed research questions, eight themes that are grouped under three clusters, i.e. 1. how the story began comprising demons and possession as conceptualized in EOTC, origins of demons, possessing spirits, symptoms of a demoniac, causes of demonic possession, types of possession 2. the healing process in EOTC that include exorcism and healing rituals, and 3. Case presentations were developed. Demonic possession is believed to be the main reason of mental illnesses in the Ethiopian Orthodox church. Demons are recognized to be the archenemy of human race. In their aims and ways of attack, demons vary. There are many evil spirits or demons (including Zar, Buda, Ayine Tila, and Ye digimt Menfes) that are determined to possess human beings and inflict sickness. They possess people starting from their mother's womb or after they are born. Some evil spirits are catching. They transmit from one host to the other by using parts of the body, an eye for example, as a bridge or through other means like conjuration. Once people get possessed by the evil spirits, they show different common symptoms. Possessions may be of a different type. Pathogenic possessions for example are distinguished from executive possessions based on the way the evil spirits manifest themselves in/through the host. Because the EOTC considers mental illness as the result of demons mischief, different symptoms of mental illnesses are considered to be the tricks in manifestation of the demons. There are different treatments available for the various problems of the clients. The treatments include Holy Water, Holy Oil, Cross, and Holy Ash. The main objective of the treatments is then flashing of driving out the possessing demons from their host.

The Testament of Levi

Chapter 1

1:1 *"A copy of the words of Levi: the things that he decreed to his sons concerning all they were to do, and the things that would happen to them until the day of judgment."*

1:2 *"He was in good health when he summoned them to him, but it had been revealed to him that he was about to die. When they all were gathered together he said to them:"*

Chapter 2

2:1 *"I, Levi, was born in Haran and came with my father to Shechem."*

2:2 *"I was a youth, about twenty years old. It was then that, together with Simeon, I performed vengeance against Hamor because of our sister, Dinah."*

2:3 *"As I was tending the flocks in Abel-Maoul a spirit of understanding from the Lord came upon me, and I observed all human beings making their way in life deceitfully. Sin was erecting walls and injustice was ensconced in towers."*

2:4 *"I kept grieving over the race of the sons of men, and I prayed to the Lord that I might be delivered."*

2:5 *"Then sleep fell upon me, and I beheld a high mountain, and I was on it."*

2:c *"And behold, the heavens were opened, and an angel of the Lord spoke to me: 'Levi, Levi, enter!'"*

2:7 *"And I entered the first heaven, and saw there much water suspended."*

2:8 *"And again I saw a second heaven much brighter and more lustrous, for there was a measureless height in it."*

2:S *"And I said to the angel, 'Why are these things thus?' And the angel said to me, 'Do not be amazed concerning this, for you shall see another heaven more lustrous and beyond compare."*

2:10 *"And when you have mounted there, you shall stand near the Lord. You shall be his priest and you shall tell forth his mysteries to men. You shall announce the one who is about to redeem Israel."*

2:11 *"Through you and Judah the Lord will be seen by men."*

2:12 *"Your life shall be from the Lord's provision; he shall be to you as field and vineyard and produce, as silver and gold."*

Chapter 3

3:1 *"Listen, therefore, concerning the heavens which have been shown to you."*

3:2 *"The lowest is dark for this reason: It sees all the injustices of humankind and contains fire, snow, and ice, ready for the Day determined by God's Righteous Judgment. In it are all the spirits of those dispatched to achieve the punishment of mankind."*

3:3 *"In the second are the armies arrayed for the Day of Judgment to work vengeance on the spirits of error and of Beliar. Above them are the Holy Ones." Revelation 1S:11-1c*

3:4 *"In the uppermost heaven of all dwells the Great Glory in the Holy of Holies, superior to all holiness."*

3:5 *"There with him are the archangels, who serve and offer propitiatory sacrifices to the Lord in behalf of all the sins of ignorance of the righteous ones."*

3:c *"They present to the Lord a pleasing odor, a rational and bloodless oblation."*

3:7 *"In the heaven below them are the messengers who carry the responses to the angels of the*

Lord's presence."

3:8 "There with him are thrones and authorities; there praises to God are offered eternally."

3:S "So when the Lord looks upon us we all tremble. Even the heavens and earth and the abysses tremble before the presence of his majesty."

3:10 "But the sons of men, being insensitive to these matters, keep sinning and provoking the anger of the Most High."

Chapter 4

4:1 "Know, then, that the Lord will effect judgment on the sons of men. 'For even when stones are split, when the sun is extinguished, the waters are dried up, fire is cowed down, all creation is distraught, invisible spirits are vanishing, and hell is snatching spoils by sufferance of the Most High, men – unbelieving still – will persist in their wrongdoing. Therefore they shall be condemned with punishment."

4:2 "The Most High has given heed to your prayer that you be delivered from wrongdoing, that you should become a son to him, as minister and priest in his presence."

4:3 "The light of knowledge you shall kindle in Jacob, and you shall be as the sun for all the posterity of Israel."

4:4 "Blessing shall be given to you and to all your posterity until through his son's compassion the Lord shall visit all the nations forever, [although your sons will lay hands on him in order to impale him]."

4:5 "Therefore counsel and understanding have been given to you so that you might give understanding to your sons concerning this."

4:c "Because those who bless him shall be blessed, those who curse him shall be destroyed."

Chapter 5

5:1 "At this moment the angel opened for me the gates of heaven and I saw the Holy Most High sitting on the throne."

5:2 "And he said to me, 'Levi, to you I have given the blessing of the priesthood until I shall come and dwell in the midst of Israel."

5:3 "Then the angel led me back to the earth, and gave me a shield and a sword, and said to me, 'Perform vengeance on Shechem for the sake of Dinah, your sister, and I shall be with you, for the Lord sent me."

5:4 "At that time I put an end to the sons of Hamor, as is written in the tablets of the fathers."

5:5 "And I said to him, 'I beg you, Lord, teach me your name, so that I may call on you in the day of tribulation."

5:c "And he said, 'I am the angel who makes intercession for the nation Israel, that they might not be beaten."

5:7 "And after this I awoke and blessed the Most High."

Chapter C

c:1 "And as I was going to my father, I found a brass/brzen shield. Thus the name of the mountain is Aspis, which is near Gebal to the right of Abima."

c:2 "And I guarded these words in my heart."

c:3 "Then I advised my father and Reuben that they tell the sons of Hamor that they should not be

circumcised, because I was filled with zeal on account of the abominable thing they had done to my sister."

c:4 "And I destroyed Shechem first, and Simeon destroyed Hamor."

c:5 "Then my brothers came and destroyed that city by the sword."

c:c "When my father heard of this he was angry and sorrowful, because they had received circumcision and died, and so he passed us by in his blessings."

c:7 "Thus we sinned in doing this contrary to his opinion, and he became sick that very day."

c:8 "But I saw that God's sentence was 'Guilty,' because they had wanted to do the same thing to Sarah and Rebecca that they did to Dinah, our sister. But the Lord prevented them."

c:S "They persecuted Abraham when he was a nomad, and they harassed his flocks when they were pregnant, and they grossly mistreated Eblaen, who had been born in this house."

c:10 "This is how they treated the nomadic people, seizing their wives and murdering them."

c:11 "But the wrath of God ultimately came upon them."

Chapter 7

7:1 "And I said to my father, Jacob, 'Through you the Lord will bring the Canaanites to nothing and will give their land to you and your descendants after you.'"

7:2 "For from this day forward, Shechem shall be called "City of the Senseless," because as one might scoff at a fool, so we scoffed at them,"

7:3 "Because by defiling my sister they committed folly in Israel,"

7:4 "And we left there and came to Bethel."

Chapter 8

8:1 "There I again saw the vision as formerly, after we had been there seventy days."

8:2 "And I saw seven men in white clothing, who were saying to me, 'Arise, put on the vestments of the priesthood, the crown of righteousness, the oracle of understanding, the robe of truth, the breastplate of faith/truth, the miter for the head, and the apron for prophetic power,"

8:3 "Each carried one of these and put them on me and said, 'From now on be a priest, you and all your posterity."

8:4 "The first anointed me with holy oil and gave me a staff."

8:5 "The second washed me with pure water, fed me by hand with bread and holy wine, and put on me a holy and glorious vestment."

8:c "The third put on me something made of linen, like an ephod."

8:7 "The forth placed around me a girdle which was like purple."

8:8 "The fifth gave me a branch of rich olive wood."

8:S "The sixth placed a wreath on my head."

8:10 "The seventh placed the priestly diadem on me and filled my hands with incense, in order that I might serve as priest for the Lord God."

8:11 "And they said to me, 'Levi, your posterity shall be divided into three offices as a sign of the glory of the Lord who is coming."

8:12 "The first lot shall be great; no other shall be greater than it."

8:13 "The second shall be in the priestly role."

8:14 "But the third shall be granted a new name, because from Judah a king will arise and shall found a new priesthood in accord with the gentile model/model of the people and for all nations."

8:15 *"His presence is beloved, as a prophet of the Most High, a descendant of Abraham, our father."*

8:1c *"To you and your posterity will be everything desired in Israel, and you shall eat everything attractive to behold, and your posterity will share among themselves the Lord's table."*

8:17 *"From among them will be priests, judges, and scribes, and by their word the sanctuary will be controlled."*

8:18 *"When I awoke, I understood that this was like the first dream."*

8:1S *"And I hid this in my heart as well, and I did not report it to any human being on the earth."*

Chapter 3

S:1 *"And after two days Judah and I went with our father, Jacob, to Isaac, our grandfather."*

S:2 *"And my father's father blessed me in accord with the vision that I had seen. And he did not want to go with us to Bethel."*

S:3 *"When we came to Bethel my father, Jacob, saw a vision concerning me that I should be in the priesthood."*

S:4 *"And thus we came to Hebron to settle there."*

S:5 *"He arose early and paid tithes for all to the Lord, through me."*

S:c *"And Isaac kept calling me continually to bring to my remembrance the Law of the Lord, just as the angel had shown me."*

S:7 *"And he taught me the law of the priesthood: sacrifices, holocausts, voluntary offerings of the first fruits, offerings for safe return."*

S:8 *"Day by day he was informing me, occupying himself with me. And he said to me,"*

S:S *"Be on your guard against the spirit of promiscuity, for it is constantly active and through your descendants it is about to defile the sanctuary."*

S:10 *"Therefore take for yourself a wife while you are still young, a wife who is free of blame or profanation, who is not from the race of alien nations."*

S:11 *"Before you enter the sanctuary, bathe; while you are sacrificing, wash, and again when the sacrifice is concluded, wash."*

S:12 *"Present to the Lord the twelve trees that have leaves, as Abraham taught me."*

S:13 *"And from every clean living animal and bird, bring a sacrifice to the Lord,"*

S:14 *"And of all your first fruits and wine bring the very first as a sacrifice to the Lord God. And salt with salt every sacrificial offering."*

Chapter 10

10:1 *"And now, my children, observe the things which I commanded you, since what I heard from my ancestors I have told to you."*

10:2 *"See, I am free of responsibility for your impiety or for any transgression which you may commit until the consummation of the ages in leading Israel astray and in fomenting in it great evils against the Lord."*

10:3 *"And you shall act lawlessly in Israel, with the result that Jerusalem cannot bear the presence of your wickedness, but the curtain of the Temple will be torn, so that it will no longer conceal your shameful behavior."*

10:4 *"You shall be scattered as captives among the nations, where you will be a disgrace and a curse."*

10:5 *"For the house which the Lord shall choose shall be called Jerusalem, as the book of Enoch the Righteous maintains."*

Chapter 11

11:1 *"I was twenty-eight when I took a wife; her name was Melcha."*

11:2 *"She conceived and gave birth to a son, and I gave him the name Gersom, because we were sojourners in the land."*

11:3 *"And I saw that, as concerns him, he would not be in the first rank."*

11:4 *"And Kohath was born in the thirty-fifth year of my life, before sunrise."*

11:5 *"And in a vision I saw him standing in the heights, in the midst of the congregation."*

11:c *"This is why I called him Kohath, that is the Ruler of Majesty and Reconciliation."*

11:7 *"And she bore me a third son, Merari, in the fortieth year of my life, and since his mother bore him with great pain, I called him Merari; that is Bitterness."*

11:8 *"Jochebed was born in Egypt in the sixty-fourth year of my life, for by that time I had a great reputation in the midst of my brothers."*

Chapter 12

12:1 *"And Gersom took a wife who bore him Lomne and Semei."*

12:2 *"The sons of Kohath were Abraham, Issachar, Hebron, and Osee."*

12:3 *"And the sons of Merari were Mooli and Moses."*

12:4 *"And in the ninety-fourth year Abraham took Jochebed, my daughter, as his wife, because he and my daughter had been born on the same day."*

12:5 *"I was eight years old when I entered the land of Canaan, and eighteen years old when I killed Shechem. At nineteen years I served as a priest; at twenty-eight years I took a wife; and at forty-eight I entered Egypt. See, my children, you are a third generation. During my one hundred eighteenth year Joseph died."*

Chapter 13

13:1 *"And now, my children, I command you: Fear/reverence the Lord your God with your whole heart, and walk according to his Law in integrity."*

13:2 *"Teach your children letters also, so that they might have understanding throughout all their lives as they ceaselessly read the Law of God."*

13:3 *"For everyone who knows the Law of God shall be honored wherever he goes, he shall not be a stranger."*

13:4 *"He shall acquire many more friends than his parents, and many men will want to serve him and to hear the Law from his mouth."*

13:5 *"Therefore, my sons, do righteousness on earth in order that you might find it in heaven."*

13:c *"Sow good things in your souls and you will find them in your lives. If you sow evil, you will reap every trouble and tribulation."*

13:7 *"Acquire wisdom in the fear/reverence of the Lord because if a captivity occurs, if cities and territories are laid waste, if silver and gold and every possession are lost, nothing can take away the wisdom of the wise man except the blindness of impiety and the obtuseness of sin."*

13:8 *"For if anyone preserves himself from these evil deeds, his wisdom shall be glorious, even among his opponents; it will be found to be a homeland in a foreign territory, and a friend in the*

midst of his enemies.”

13:S “Whoever teaches good things and practices them shall be enthroned with kings, as was Joseph, my brother.”

Chapter 14

14:1 “And now, my children, I know from the writings of Enoch that in the end-time you will act impiously against the Lord, setting your hands to every evil deed; because of you, your brothers will be humiliated and among all the nations you shall become the occasion for scorn.”

14:2 “For your father, Israel, is pure with respect to all the impieties of the chief priests, [who laid their hands on the Savior].”

14:3 “As heaven is pure above the earth, and you should be the lights of Israel as the sun and the moon.”

14:4 “For what will all the nations do if you become darkened with impiety? You will bring down a curse on our nation, because you want to destroy the light of the Law which was granted to you for the enlightenment of every man, teaching commandments which are opposed to God’s just ordinances.”

14:5 “You plunder the Lord’s offerings; from his share you steal choice parts, contemptuously eating them with whores.”

14:c “You teach the Lord’s commands out of greed for gain; married women you profane; you have intercourse with whores and adulteresses. You take gentile/hethan women for your wives and your sexual relations will become like Sodom and Gomorrah.”

14:7 “You will be inflated with pride over your priesthood, exalting yourselves not merely by human standards but contrary to the commands of God.”

14:8 “With contempt and laughter you will deride the sacred things.”

Chapter 15

15:1 “Therefore the sanctuary which the Lord chose shall become desolate through your uncleanness, and you will be captives in all the nations.”

15:2 “And you shall be to them a revolting thing, and you shall receive scorn and eternal humiliation through the just judgment of God.”

15:3 “All who hate you will rejoice at your destruction.”

15:4 “And unless you had received mercy through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, our fathers, not a single one of your descendants would be left on the earth.”

Chapter 1C

1c:1 “Now I have come to know that for seventy weeks you shall wander astray and profane the priesthood and defile the sacrificial altars.”

1c:2 “You shall set aside the Law and nullify the words of the prophets by your wicked perversity. You persecute just men: and you hate the pious; the word of the faithful you regard with revulsion.”

1c:3 “A man who by the power of the Most High renews the Law, you name ‘Deceiver,’ and finally you shall plot to kill him, not discerning his eminence; by your wickedness you take innocent blood on your heads.”

1c:4 “I tell you, on account of him your holy places shall be razed to the ground.”

1c:5 "You shall have no place that is clean, but you will be as a curse and a dispersion among the nations until he will again have regard for you, and will take you back in compassion."

Chapter 17

17:1 "Because you have heard about the seventy weeks, listen also concerning the priesthood."

17:2 "In each jubilee there shall be a priesthood: In the first jubilee the first person to be anointed to the priesthood will be great, and he shall speak to God as father; and his priesthood shall be fully satisfactory to the Lord, and in the days of his joy, he shall rise up for the salvation of the world."

17:3 "In the second jubilee the Anointed One shall be conceived in sorrow of the beloved one, and his priesthood shall be praised and shall be glorified by all."

17:4 "The third priest shall be overtaken by grief, and,"

17:5 "The fourth priesthood shall be with sufferings, because injustice shall be imposed upon him in a high degree, and all Israel shall hate each one his neighbor."

17:c "The fifth shall be overcome by darkness;"

17:7 "Likewise the sixth and the seventh."

17:8 "In the seventh there shall be pollution such as I am unable to declare in the presence of human beings, because only the ones who do these things understand such matters."

17:S "Therefore they shall be in captivity and will be preyed upon; both their land and their possessions shall be stolen."

17:10 "And in the fifth week they shall return to the land of their desolation, and shall restore anew the house of the Lord."

17:11 "In the seventh week there will come priests; idolaters, adulterers, money lovers, arrogant, lawless, voluptuaries, pederasts, those who practice bestiality."

Chapter 18

18:1 "When vengeance will have come upon them from the Lord, the priesthood will lapse."

18:2 "And then the Lord will raise up a new priest to whom all the words of the Lord will be revealed. He shall effect the judgment of truth over the earth for many days."

18:3 "And his star shall rise in heaven like a king; kindling the light of knowledge as day is illumined by the sun. And he shall be extolled by the whole inhabited world."

18:4 "This one will shine forth like the sun in the earth; he shall take away all darkness from under heaven, and there shall be peace in all the earth."

18:5 "The heavens shall greatly rejoice in his days and the earth shall be glad; the clouds will be filled with joy and the knowledge of the Lord will be poured out on the earth like the water of the seas. And the angels of glory of the Lord's presence will be made glad by him."

18:c "The heavens will be opened, and from the temple of glory sanctification will come upon him, with a fatherly voice, as from Abraham to Isaac."

18:7 "And the glory of the Most High shall burst forth upon him. And the spirit of understanding and sanctification shall rest upon him [in the water]."

18:8 "For he shall give the majesty of the Lord to those who are his sons in truth forever. And there shall be no successor for him from generation to generation forever."

18:S "And in his priesthood the nations shall be multiplied in knowledge on the earth, and they shall be illumined by the grace of the Lord, but Israel shall be diminished by her ignorance and darkened by her grief. In his priesthood sin shall cease and lawless men shall rest from their evil deeds, and

righteous men shall find rest in him."

18:10 "And he shall open the gates of paradise, he shall remove the sword that has threatened since Adam,"

18:11 "And he will grant to the saints/elect to eat of the tree of life."

18:12 "And Beliar/Satan shall be bound by him. And he shall grant to his children the authority to trample on wicked spirits."

18:13 "And the Lord will rejoice in his children; he will be well pleased by his beloved ones forever."

18:14 "Then Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will rejoice, and I shall be glad, and all the saints/elect shall be clothed in righteousness."

Chapter 13

1S:1 "And now, my children, you have heard everything. Choose for yourselves light or darkness, the Law of the Lord or the works of Beliar/Satan."

1S:2 "And his sons replied: Before the Lord we will live according to his Law,"

1S:3 "And their father said to them: The Lord is my witness and his angels are witnesses, and you are witnesses, and I am witness concerning the word from your mouth."

1S:4 "And his sons said: We are witnesses. Then Levi finished giving instructions to his sons. He stretched out his feet on his bed and was gathered to his fathers, having lived a hundred and thirty-seven years."

1S:5 "And they put him in a coffin and later buried him in Hebron with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

The Testament of Simeon

the second son of Jacob and Leah

Chapter 1

1:1 "A copy of the words of Simeon, which he spoke to his sons before he died in the hundred and twentieth year of his life, at the time when his brother Joseph died."

1:2 "While Simeon was sick his sons came to see him, and becoming stronger, he sat up, kissed them, and said,"

Chapter 2

2:1 "Listen, my children, to Simeon, your father, and I shall tell you the things which I have in my heart."

2:2 "I was born of Jacob, a second son for my father; and Leah, my mother, called me Simeon because the Lord had heard her prayer."

2:3 "And I became extraordinarily strong; I did not hold back from any exploit, nor did I fear anything."

2:4 "My heart was firm, my courage was high, and my feelings were dispassionate."

2:5 "For by the Most High, manly courage is given to men in soul and body."

2:6 "In the time of my youth I was jealous of Joseph, because my father loved him more than the rest of us."

2:7 "I determined inwardly to destroy him, because the Prince of Error blinded my mind so that I did

not consider him as a brother nor did I spare Jacob, my father."

2:8 "But his God and the God of our fathers sent his messenger and delivered him from my hands."

2:9 "For when I went to Shechem to procure an unguent for the flocks, and Reuben went to Dothan where our supplies and stores were, my brother Judah sold him to the Ishmaelites."

2:10 "When Reuben heard this he was sorrowful, for he wanted to restore him to his father."

2:11 "But when I heard it, I was furious with Judah because he had let him go away alive. For five months I was angry with him."

2:12 "The Lord bound my hands and feet, however, and thus prevented my hands from performing their deeds, because for seven days my right hand became partly withered."

2:13 "I knew, children, that this had happened to me because of Joseph, so I repented and wept. Then I prayed to the Lord God that my hand might be restored and that I might refrain from every defilement and grudge and from all folly, for I knew that I had contemplated an evil deed in the sight of the Lord and of Jacob, my father, on account of Joseph, my brother, because of my envying him."

Chapter 3

3:1 "And now, my children, pay heed to me. Beware of the spirit of deceit and envy."

3:2 "For envy dominates the whole of man's mind and does not permit him to eat or drink or to do anything good."

3:3 "Rather it keeps prodding him to destroy the one whom he envies. Whenever the one who is envied flourishes, the envious one languishes."

3:4 "Out of the fear/reverence of the Lord I chastened my soul by fasting for two years. And I came to know that liberation from envy occurs through fear/reverence of the Lord."

3:5 "If anyone flees to the Lord for refuge, the evil spirit will quickly depart from him, and his mind will be eased."

3:6 "From then on he has compassion on the one whom he envied and has sympathetic feelings with those who love him, thus his envy ceases."

Chapter 4

4:1 "Now my father was inquiring about me because he saw that I was sullen."

4:2 "And I said to him, I am inwardly in pain, for I was more sorrowful than all of them because it was I who was responsible for what had been done to Joseph."

4:3 "And when we went down into Egypt and he placed me in fetters as a spy, I knew that I was suffering justly, and I did not lament."

4:4 "But Joseph was a good man, one who had within him the spirit of God, and being full of compassion and mercy he did not bear ill will toward me, but loved me as well as my brothers."

4:5 "Guard yourselves therefore, my children, from all jealousy and envy. Live in the integrity of your heart, so that God might give you grace and glory and blessing upon your heads, just as you have observed in Joseph."

4:6 "In all his days he did not reproach us for this deed, but he loved us as his own life; he extolled us more than he did his own sons, and he showered us with wealth, flocks, and produce."

4:7 "And you, my children, each of you love his brothers with a good heart, and the spirit of envy will depart from you."

4:8 "For that attitude makes the soul savage and corrupts the body; it fomented wrath and conflict in the reason, excites to the shedding of blood, drives the mind to distraction, arouses tumult in the

soul and trembling in the body.”

4:9 “Even in sleep some passion for evil fills his fantasy and consumes him; by evil spirits it stirs up his soul and fills his body with terror. In distress it rouses his mind from sleep, and like and evil, penetrating spirit, so it manifests itself to human beings.”

Chapter 5

5:1 “Because nothing evil resided in Joseph, he was attractive in appearance and handsome to behold, for the face evidences any troubling of the spirit.”

5:2 “And now my children, Make your hearts virtuous in the Lord’s sight, make your paths straight before men, and you shall continually find grace with the Lord and with men.”

5:3 “Guard yourselves from sexual promiscuity because fornication is the mother of all wicked deeds; it separates from God and leads men to Beliar/Satan.”

5:4 “For I have seen in a copy of the book of Enoch that your sons will be ruined by promiscuity, and they shall injure with a sword the sons of Levi.”

5:5 “But they shall not be able to withstand Levi, because he shall wage the Lord’s war and will triumph over all your battalions.”

5:6 “These forces distributed among Levi and Judah will be few in number, and from you there will be no one for leadership, just as our father predicted in his blessings.”

Chapter 6

6:1 “See, I have told you everything, so that I might be exonerated with regard to your sin.”

6:2 “If you divest yourselves of envy and every hardness of heart, my bones will flourish as a rose in Israel and my flesh as a lily in Jacob. My odor shall be like the odor of Lebanon. Holy ones shall be multiplied from me forever and ever, and their branches shall extend to a great distance.”

6:3 “Then the seed of Canaan will be destroyed, and there will be no posterity of Amalek. All the Cappadocians shall be destroyed and all the Hittites shall be wholly obliterated.”

6:4 “The land of Ham shall be wanting, and all that people shall perish. Then the whole earth shall be at rest from trouble, and everything under heaven shall be free from war.”

6:5 “Then Shem shall be glorified; because God the Lord, the Great One in Israel, will be manifest upon the earth [as a man]. By himself will he save Adam.”

6:6 “Then all the spirits of error shall be given over to being trampled underfoot. And men will have mastery over the evil spirits”

6:7 “Then I shall arise in gladness and I shall bless the Most High for his marvels.”

Chapter 7

7:1 “And now, my children, be obedient to Levi and to Judah. Do not exalt yourselves above these two tribes, [because from them will arise the Savior come from God].”

7:2 “For the Lord will raise up from Levi someone as high priest and from Judah someone as king [God and man]. He will save all the gentiles/nations and the tribe/race of Israel.”

7:3 “For this reason I command these things to you and you command them to your children, so that they may observe them in their successive generations.”

Chapter 8

8:1 "And when Simeon had finished his instructions to his sons, he fell asleep with his fathers at the age of one hundred and twenty years."

8:2 "They placed him in a wooden coffin in order to carry his bones up to Hebron; they took them up in secret during a war with Egypt."

8:3 "The bones of Joseph the Egyptians kept in the tombs of the kings, since their wizards/magi told them that at the departure of Joseph's bones there would be darkness and gloom in the whole land and a great plague on the Egyptians, so that even with a lamp no one could recognize his brother."

Chapter 9

9:1 "And the sons of Simeon uttered lamentations for their father."

9:2 "And they were in Egypt until the day of their departure by the hand of Moses."

The Vision of Moses

Introduction

The coming forth of the content of Moses 1 in June 1830 may have been signaled in a series of April 1829 revelations that mention scriptural records containing the Lord's gospel that were to be brought to light.^[1] The Book of Mormon indicated that plain and precious parts of the gospel that had been "taken away" and "kept back" would be restored (1 Nephi 13:28, 32). Notably, Joseph Smith "dictated these passages in the spring of 1829 and may have understood them as calling for a reexamination and new 'translation' of the Bible," although we cannot be certain of this.^[2] Although these restorative translations may not have been in his immediate plans, Joseph would learn that they certainly were in the Lord's plans.

In October 1829 Joseph and Oliver purchased an H. and E. Phinney Cooperstown Bible. Joseph wrote on the flyleaf, "The Book of the Jews and the property of Joseph Smith junior and Oliver Cowdery Bought October the 8th 1829 at E. B. Grandins Book Store Palmyra Wayne County New York Price \$3.75 H[o]liness to the L[ord]."^[3] As Joseph Smith began working his way through the Bible, revelation would flow.^[4] In fact, the heading to the Moses 1 manuscript, written in Oliver Cowdery's handwriting, includes the defining description "a revelation given to Joseph the Revelator June 1830."^[5] This description accurately characterizes and defines the work of the Joseph Smith Translation. The reception of Moses 1 was a revelatory experience that may well have involved Joseph seeing visions of the processes and events recorded in the book of Genesis and the visions, experiences, and life events of Moses.^[6] We are thus taken back in time through Joseph's revelations to the visions and experiences of Moses.^[7] Moses 1 thus becomes an introductory text to the creation accounts found in Genesis 1 and appears to reveal the workings and the doings of the Lord through Moses. Moses 1 also gives us a window into how the Lord was working through the Prophet Joseph Smith in bringing these revelations to light.

Environment of Its Reception

Moses 1 was revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith amid physical persecutions directed at him and spiritual trials for the infant church.[8] Of one such incident, Joseph recalled that when he was under arrest on spurious charges and in the custody of a constable, some men “used every means to abuse, ridicule and insult me. They spit upon me, pointed their fingers at me, saying, ‘Prophecy, prophecy!’ and thus did they imitate those who crucified the Savior of mankind, not knowing what they did.”[9] In this tribulation Joseph did indeed prophecy, and he performed what came to be known as the first miracle in the restored Church. This miracle occurred when the Prophet cast an evil spirit out of Newell Knight, who was being tossed about by the spirit that possessed him:

In the same month in which the Church was organized, Newell Knight was possessed by an evil spirit. So severe and agonizing were the circumstances that the afflicted believer’s “visage was distorted, and his limbs were twisted out of shape in a frightful manner,” and “he was caught up from the floor and tossed about the room.” The Prophet “rebuked the evil spirit in the name of Jesus Christ and commanded him to depart.” Brother Knight then “saw the evil spirit leave him and vanish from his sight.” Then all was peace.[10]

Such was the environment of persecution, struggle, and oppression when the Joseph Smith received his visions and revelations from the Lord, now constituting Moses 1.

The account of Moses’s encounter with and expulsion of the adversary must have been of special interest to the early Saints who witnessed or learned of Newell Knight’s assault by an evil spirit. Of course, as a youth Joseph himself had been seized by an evil power that he described as “some actual being from the unseen world” (see Joseph Smith—History 1:15–17).[11] In light of Moses’s struggle with the adversary, Joseph’s similar experience may have made more sense to him. Later he would receive a revelation explaining how to detect evil spirits in order to avoid being deceived (see Doctrine and Covenants 129).[12] Through the mercy and grace of God, who was diligently watching over the establishment of his Church, the revelations kept flowing and Joseph and the members were strengthened. A note recorded in the hand of William W. Phelps assessed the Saints’ situation thus: “Amid all the trials and tribulations we had to wade through, the Lord, who well knew our infantile and delicate situation, vouchsafed for us a supply of strength, and granted us ‘line upon line of knowledge—here a little and there a little,’ of which the following was a precious morsel [Moses 1].”[13]

Moses 1 was indeed a “precious morsel.” It explains the nature of God and our relationship to him, the reality of the adversary, and the absolute power of God and Christ over him; and it demonstrates how willing God is to rescue, save, exalt, and care for his children. Its doctrinal and theological significance cannot be overstated. This theologically rich material had been taken from the revelations of Moses, some of which appear to have originally been written down (compare Moses 1:40–42) and some version of which may have been available to Lehi and his family on the plates of brass.[14]

Joseph’s reception of this revelation thus constitutes a restoration of lost truth and depicts important aspects of Moses’s experiences.[15] The text itself explains this as the Lord foretells of its deliberate removal:

41 And in a day when the children of men shall esteem my words as naught and take away many of them from the book which thou shalt write, behold, I will raise up another like unto thee; and they shall be had again among the children of men—among as many as shall believe.

42 (These words were spoken unto Moses in the mount, the name of which shall not be known among the children of men. And now they are spoken unto you. Show them not unto any except them that believe. Even so. Amen).^[16]

Ancient Near Eastern languages and compositions employed literary devices and alliteration to convey a persuasive mode of communication.^[17] Ancient scripture deriving from this region is no different. Although we do not know the exact dialect in which the Lord communicated this revelation to Moses, if we make a comparison with the later Hebrew of the Bible, we may witness in the following literary construction the Lord revealing the “raising up” of the Prophet Joseph Smith, through whom He would restore lost truths:

A And in a day when the children of men shall esteem my words as naught

B and *take many of them from* the book which thou shalt write,

C behold, *I will raise up another like unto thee;*

B' and *they shall be had again*

A' among the children of men—among as many as shall believe. (Moses 1:41)

If this comparison is accurate, not only does the Lord reveal the “raising up” of Joseph Smith and his Moses-like prophetic role, but he may also be alluding to Joseph’s name. The name of the patriarch Joseph, after whom Joseph Smith Jr. and Sr. were both named,^[18] means “may He [God] add.” The patriarchal narrative in Genesis explains the meaning of the name Joseph in terms of the concepts of divine “taking away” and “adding”:

A And she conceived, and bare a son;

B and said, *God hath taken away* [’āsap ’ēlōhīm] my reproach:

C And she called his name *Joseph* [yōsēp];

B' and said, *The Lord shall add* [yōsēp yhw̄h] to me

A' another son. (Genesis 30:23–24)

Just as Rachel’s explanation for the naming of Joseph the patriarch is centered in divine “taking away” and “adding,” we may be witnessing a similar type of literary execution with the Lord’s promise of the “rais[ing] up” of “another like unto” Moses in Moses 1:41, which is centered in the human “taking” away of the Lord’s words to Moses and their latter-day re-*adding* (“they shall be had again”).^[19] A common way of expressing “to do something again” in biblical Hebrew is by employing the causative verb form *yōsīp*, the source of the name Joseph (*yōsēp*). Perhaps we are witnessing something similar in the Lord’s revelation to Moses, in a language and literary structure familiar to Moses.^[20]

In any case, it is clear from JST Genesis 50:23 and 2 Nephi 3 that, before Moses, Joseph in Egypt knew that the “another like unto thee” would be named Joseph. Although Joseph Smith most likely did not hear the Semitic echoes of his name in Moses 1:41, it must have been tremendously moving for him to have read the revelation regarding his prophetic role of re-adding lost scripture. Joseph was hearing and seeing what Moses had heard and seen. And in the very process of hearing and seeing them, he was recording and re-adding them for the world to *once again* know of God’s dealings with that great prophet and his experience with the Lord’s covenant purposes.

The Ancient Setting and Context of Moses 1: Moses on the Mountaintop

Moses 1 immediately situates us in a dramatic opening scene as we encounter Moses atop an unnamed mountain speaking with the Lord face-to-face. This was not Moses’s first such experience (see his initial call from the burning bush at Horeb, “the mountain of God,” in Exodus 3), nor would it be his last (see Exodus 19–20; 32:20; compare Moses 1:25, pointing to his future mission). Again, this was an experience Joseph Smith could relate to with his own face-to-face encounter with the Father and Son in his first vision. For Joseph Smith, this revelation on Moses’s theophany must have felt extremely personal and poignant, reminding him of what it had felt like to be in the presence of God and of the Lord’s intention to prepare others for that glorious opportunity.^[21] Moses 1 explains such significant concepts as the relationship of God to his children, the purpose of creation, and the role Moses would play in salvation history—God’s ongoing work to bring to pass the salvation of his children. The chapter provides an explanation of the “why” of creation and acts as a springboard into the details of creation as they occur in the subsequent chapter (Genesis 1/Moses 2). In Moses 1 the Lord helps Moses grasp the purpose of his calling to work on the Lord’s behalf. God’s words to Moses will inspire and empower him to do the otherwise impossible: lead Israel out of Egyptian bondage and into the wilderness to receive and make covenants with God. Because he knows that it is God commanding him to do it and why God is asking him to do it, Moses, through many personal and external struggles, will do his utmost to accomplish his mission with the Lord’s help.

The Revelation

1 The words of God, which he spake unto Moses at a time when Moses was caught up into an exceedingly high mountain,

2 And he saw God face to face, and he talked with him, and the glory of God was upon Moses; therefore Moses could endure his presence.

3 And God spake unto Moses, saying: Behold, I am the Lord God Almighty, and Endless is my name; for I am without beginning of days or end of years; and is not this endless?

4 And, behold, thou art my son; wherefore look, and I will show thee the workmanship of mine hands; but not all, for my works are without end, and also my words, for they never cease.

5 Wherefore, no man can behold all my works, except he behold all my glory; and no man can behold all my glory, and afterwards remain in the flesh on the earth.

6 And I have a work for thee, Moses, my son; and thou art in the similitude of mine Only Begotten; and mine Only Begotten is and shall be the Savior,^[22] for he is full of grace and truth; but there is no God beside me, and all things are present with me, for I know them all.

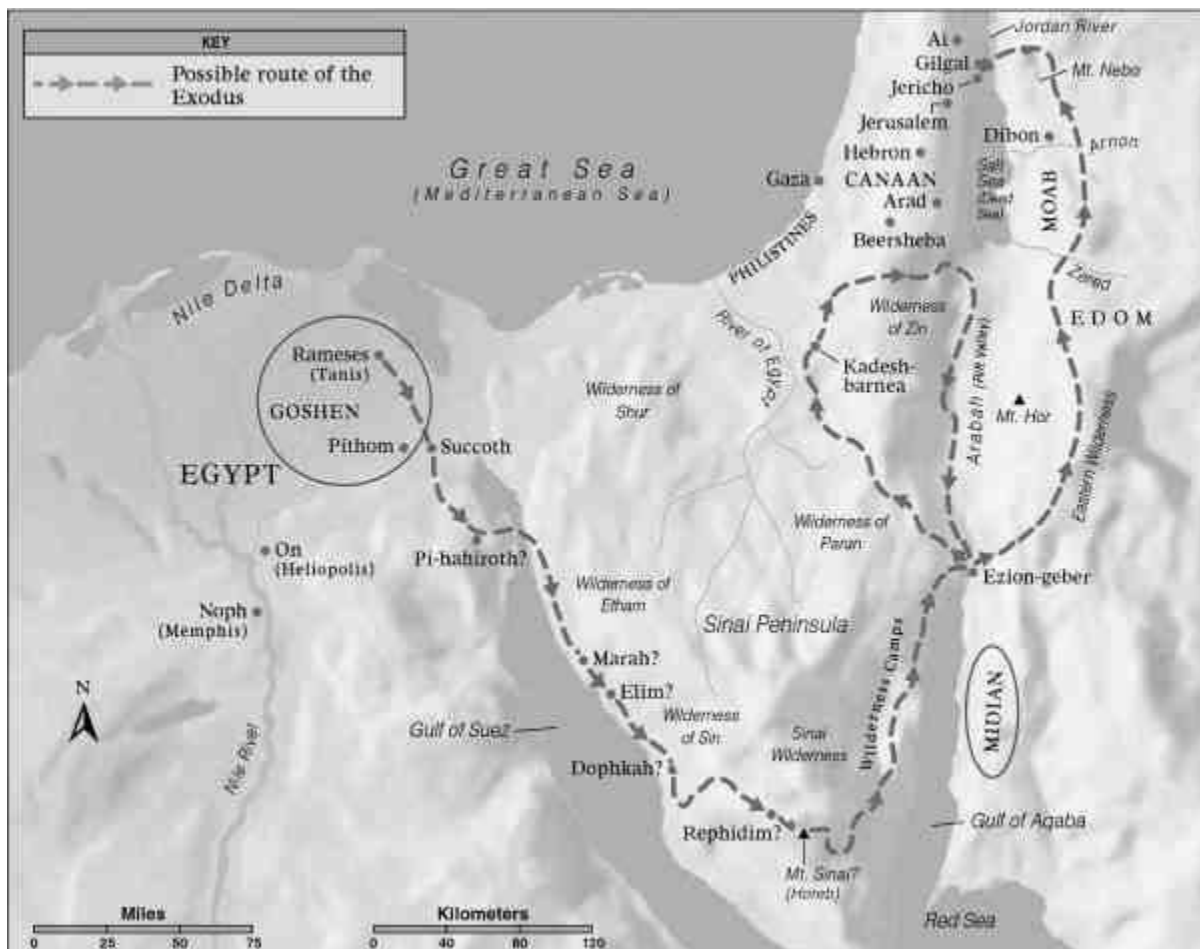
7 And now, behold, this one thing I show unto thee, Moses, my son, for thou art in the world, and now I show it unto thee.

8 And it came to pass that Moses looked, and beheld the world upon which he was created; and Moses beheld the world and the ends thereof, and all the children of men which are, and which were created; of the same he greatly marveled and wondered.

9 And the presence of God withdrew from Moses, that his glory was not upon Moses; and Moses was left unto himself. And as he was left unto himself, he fell unto the earth.

10 And it came to pass that it was for the space of many hours before Moses did again receive his natural strength like unto man; and he said unto himself: Now, for this cause I know that man is nothing, which thing I never had supposed.

11 But now mine own eyes have beheld God; but not my natural, but my spiritual eyes, for my natural eyes could not have beheld; for I should have withered and died in his presence; but his glory was upon me; and I beheld his face, for I was transfigured before him.



Map 1: Egypt and Surrounding Area. In this map depicting a possible route of the Exodus, the circle on the left depicts the general location of the Israelites in Egyptian captivity, and the circle on the right marks a general geographic location where Moses encounters Jethro and the Midianites.

We do not know the exact time or location of this experience on the mountain, but it happened sometime after the “burning bush” experience (see Exodus 3:2–7; Moses 1:17) and sometime before the Exodus (see Moses 1:25–26).^[23] This shows that the Lord was continually instructing Moses, helping him fulfill his calling beyond his initial call. Perhaps Moses received more and even frequent instruction from the Lord while in the wilderness, preparing him before he was to be sent to Egypt to confront Pharaoh.^[24] The biblical text describes Jethro, Moses’s father-in-law, as “the priest of Midian” (Exodus 2:16; 3:1; 18:1). The Joseph Smith Translation of Exodus 18:1 clarifies that Jethro was “the high priest of Midian,” suggesting that he was a high priest after the order of Melchizedek. Given the type of administrative guidance that we see Jethro giving Moses in Exodus 18:13–27, it is reasonable to suppose that instruction in the priesthood and priestly duties under the tutelage of Jethro constituted at least part of Moses’s earlier forty-year period of preparation for what lay ahead.^[25] Perhaps it was during this crucial time of Moses’s life that the Lord helped him overcome his fears and doubts (see Exodus 3:11). In fact, when Moses experienced his own theophany, the Lord promised him that those whom he would lead out of Egypt would “serve God upon this mountain” (Exodus 3:12), and this was to be a “token” to Moses.^[26] God’s promise to Moses that others would also experience his presence foreshadows the grand purposes the Lord had for his people and accentuates and clarifies the purpose behind Moses’s calling. God would eventually lead Moses and the children of Israel into the wilderness where he intended to make them a “peculiar treasure” and a “kingdom of priests” (Exodus 19:3–6). Here the Hebrew text uses the word *sēgullâ*, clarifying that the people would become the Lord’s,^[27] his “sealed”^[28] possession. The implication is that this will happen through priestly functions and ordinances, resulting in the Israelites becoming a “kingdom of priests.”^[29]

Becoming a “peculiar treasure” and a “kingdom of priests” directly pertains to the ordinances of the Melchizedek Priesthood. Doctrine and Covenants 84:19–25 details the blessings that God was extending to Israel when he sent Moses to deliver his people. They would receive the ordinances of the Melchizedek Priesthood and see God’s face. Brigham Young taught, “If they had been sanctified and holy, the Children of Israel would not have traveled one year with Moses before they would have received their endowments and the Melchizedek Priesthood.”^[30] What God wanted for ancient Israel Moses was then experiencing: being restored to the presence of God, an essential component of the “eternal life” that constitutes his “work to [his] glory” (OT1) or his “work and [his] glory” (Moses 1:39). Moses received the necessary divine guidance, encouragement, and preparation to help him succeed, including the daunting tasks of confronting Pharaoh, sending the plagues on Egypt, and delivering Israel from bondage. The Lord provided this assistance through personal visitations and consistent communication with his newly called prophet.

To enable Moses to endure His immediate, physical presence, God effected a change in Moses’s physical body, a process the text describes as the “glory of God [being] upon Moses.”^[31] Moses calls it a *transfiguration*,^[32] a temporary change in appearance and nature that enables a person to stand in the presence of divine beings, ending shortly after the events of the experience have transpired. This short-term physical change differs from the longer-term physical change known as *translation*, which occurs when a special work is required of a person with a tangible body.^[33] The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that translation constitutes an extended yet temporary terrestrial state:

Many may have supposed that the doctrine of translation was a doctrine whereby men were taken immediately into the presence of God and into an Eternal fullness, but this is a mistaken idea. Their place of habitation is that of the terrestrial order and a place prepared for such characters, he held in reserve to be ministering Angels unto many Planets, and who as yet have not entered into so great a fulness as those who are resurrected from the dead.[34]

The physical reason for the transfiguration of Moses in chapter 1 is explained in the text: "Mine own eyes have beheld God; but not my natural, but my spiritual eyes, for my natural eyes could not have beheld; for I should have withered and died in his presence; but his glory was upon me; and I beheld his face, for I was transfigured before him" (Moses 1:11).[35] Withering can be associated with drying and shriveling up, a process often facilitated by intense heat. Notably, God is sometimes described in scripture as dwelling in "everlasting burnings" (Isaiah 33:14; Doctrine and Covenants 29:12; 130:6–7; 133:41; 137:2–3), which accords well with Moses's experience of encountering God speaking from a burning bush (see Exodus 3:3). That bush was not necessarily on fire, but the radiance and appearance of flames represented the glory of God and is consistent with Ezekiel's visions that describe the light and glory of God amid flames and light (see Ezekiel 1–2). The expressions "pillar of light" and a "pillar of fire" attempt to describe the same phenomenon in limited human language: the awe-inspiring appearance of celestial glory in the telestial world. In accounts of the First Vision, Joseph Smith states that a pillar of fire descended on him (see 1 Nephi 1:6 for Lehi's similar experience)—rather than the pillar of light described in our current 1838 text of the Joseph Smith History—and expresses surprise that the sacred grove was not consumed:

a pillar of fire appeared above my head, it presently rested down upon my <me> head, and filled me with joy unspeakable, a personage appeared in the midst, of this pillar of flame which was spread all around, and yet nothing consumed, another personage soon appeared like unto the first, he said unto me thy sins are forgiven thee, he testified unto me that Jesus Christ is the son of God; <and I saw many angels in this vision> [36]

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught:

God Almighty himself dwells in Eternal fire, flesh and blood cannot go there, all corruption is devoured by the fire—Our God is a consuming fire [Deuteronomy 4:24; Hebrews 12:29]—when our flesh is quickened by the Spirit, there will be no blood—some dwell in higher glory than others. . . . Immortality dwells in everlasting burning.[37]

Accounts from the School of the Prophets also describe such burnings and sensations during visitations from heavenly beings and underscore a concept we might not always think about while reading of theophanies—namely, what it feels like to be in the presence of divine beings.

About the time the school was first organized some wished to see an angel, and a number joined in the circle and prayed. When the vision came, two of the brethren shrank and called for the vision to close *or they would perish*; they were brothers Hancock and Humphries. When the Prophet came in they told him what they had done and he said the angel was no further off than the roof of the house, and a moment more he would have been in their midst.[38]

Isaiah's self-described fear of perishing in the Lord's presence in Isaiah 6:5 is similar to what some early Church members felt upon witnessing theophanies. The following account about Zebedee Coltrin provides a vivid example:

At one of these meetings after the organization of the school, . . . when we were all together, Joseph having given instructions, and while engaged in silent prayer, kneeling, with our hands uplifted each one praying in silence, no one whispered above his breath, a personage walked through the room from east to west, and Joseph asked if we saw him. I saw him and suppose the others did and Joseph answered that is Jesus, the Son of God, our elder brother. Afterward Joseph told us to resume our former position in prayer, which we did. Another person came through; he was surrounded as with a flame of fire. He (Brother Coltrin) experienced a sensation that it might destroy the tabernacle as it was of consuming fire of great brightness. The Prophet Joseph said this was the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. I saw Him.

When asked about the kind of clothing the Father had on, Brother Coltrin said: I did not discover his clothing for he was surrounded as with a flame of fire, which was so brilliant that I could not discover anything else but his person. I saw his hands, his legs, his feet, his eyes, nose, mouth, head and body in the shape and form of a perfect man. He sat in a chair as a man would sit in a chair, but this appearance was so grand and overwhelming that it *seemed I should melt down in his presence*, and the sensation was so powerful that it thrilled through my whole system and I felt it in the marrow of my bones. The Prophet Joseph said: Brethren, now you are prepared to be the apostles of Jesus Christ, for you have seen both the Father and the Son and know that they exist and that they are two separate personages.[39]

In the opening verses in the Book of Moses, Moses speaks with the Lord face-to-face and learns the purpose of his calling. He feels what it is like to be with God, and that inevitably had a profound effect on how he moved forward in his calling. As in the Prophet Joseph Smith's 1838 account of his first vision and his subsequent interviews with the angel Moroni (see Joseph Smith—History 1:20, 48), Moses describes being completely drained of energy following his conversation with the Lord:

9 And the presence of God withdrew from Moses, that his glory was not upon Moses; and Moses was left unto himself. And as he was left unto himself, he fell unto the earth.

10 And it came to pass that it was for the space of many hours before Moses did again receive his natural strength like unto man; and he said unto himself: Now, for this cause I know that man is nothing, which thing I never had supposed.[40]

Moses truly came to understand his and humankind's nothingness in comparison to God, and he learned an essential truth in relation to participating in the work of the Lord:

The Lord has made it very clear that no man can assist with this work unless he is humble and full of love (see DCC 12:8). Humility does not mean timidity. Humility does not mean fear. Humility does not mean weakness. You can be humble and still be courageous. You can be humble and still be vigorous and strong and fearless.....Humility is an acknowledged recognition of our dependence on a higher power.[41]

Moses gained this humility when he came to know God on a very personal basis. What is more, the Lord affirmed that Moses was anything but "nothing":

4 And, behold, thou art my son; wherefore look, and I will show thee the workmanship of mine hands; but not all, for my works are without end, and also my words, for they never cease.

5 Wherefore, no man can behold all my works, except he behold all my glory; and no man can behold all my glory, and afterwards remain in the flesh on the earth.

6 And I have a work for thee, Moses, my son; and thou art in the similitude of mine Only Begotten; and mine Only Begotten is and shall be the Savior, for he is full of grace and truth; but there is no God beside me, and all things are present with me, for I know them all.

Moses heard the precious declaration “Moses, my son”—his own personal name followed by a precise relational declaration—teaching him of his relationship to God and of his own divine potential.^[42] What a life-changing and soul-expanding discovery for one called to the work! What a precious pearl of great price! The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that we cannot understand our own nature without understanding the nature of God:

If men do not comprehend the character of God, they do not comprehend themselves. . . .

If the vail was rent to-day, and the Great God who holds this world in its orbit, and who upholds all worlds and all things by his power, was to make himself visible; I say, if you were to see Him to-day, you would see him like a man in form— like yourselves, in all the person, image, and very form as a man;— for Adam was created in the very fashion, image, and likeness of God, and received instruction from and walked, talked, and conversed with him, as one man talks and communes with another.....Having a knowledge of God, we begin to know how to approach him, and how to ask so as to receive an answer. When we understand the character of God, and know how to come to him, he begins to unfold the heavens to us, and to tell us all about it. When we are ready to come to him, He is ready to come to us.^[43]

Hearing the words “my son” must have instilled Moses with dignity, confidence, and assurance as the Lord further informed him that He had a work for him to do. Moses would also learn the more specific, related truth that he was “in the similitude of the only begotten” who “shall be the Savior,” possibly a reference beyond being a son of God to the role Moses would play in saving and delivering Israel from Egyptian bondage.^[44] This truth connected him more deeply to Jesus Christ and his role as Redeemer of Israel and Savior of the world. These truths must have been staggering for Moses to learn, but learning them invited his trust in the Lord. In the face of his Egyptian, polytheistic upbringing in the Egyptian royal household whose members were believed to be “begotten” incarnations of deities, Moses learned that there is “no God besides me” and that “all things are present with me, for I know them all” (Moses 1:6).

What happens next serves as a poignant lesson for Moses as he comes to understand the omniscience of God and the nature of his *omnipresence* (“all things are present before me,” v. 6). He not only *hears* these crucial truths that will help him in his calling, but he will also now *see* and be shown what God has told him:

7 And now, behold, this one thing I show unto thee, Moses, my son, for thou art in the world, and now I show it unto thee.

8 And it came to pass that Moses looked, and beheld the world upon which he was created; and Moses beheld the world and the ends thereof, and all the children of men which are, and which were created; of the same he greatly marveled and wondered.

Moses is beginning to see what God sees.^[45] He witnesses God's children on earth (at least those of the past and present, if not more). The Lord introduces Moses to the purpose of creation and his role on this earth. Moses learns the important truth that we are required to trust in the Lord as we navigate our way through life, including through the difficult assignments and callings we are asked to accomplish, and during which we may often feel are far beyond our own capabilities to accomplish.^[46]

Moses also learns that the Lord can do a lot more with our lives than we can and that he is willing to share knowledge with us to help us accomplish his purposes. And we, with Moses, learn that we can trust in the Lord's omniscience. He has created and saved "worlds without number" (Moses 1:33). We can trust him. Our Heavenly Father did not and does not leave the accomplishment of his plan of salvation to chance, hoping that things go well as he encounters situations he did not see coming. Elder Neal A. Maxwell underscores this reality:

There is a vast difference, therefore, between an omniscient God and the false notion that God is on some sort of post-doctoral fellowship, still searching for additional key truths and vital data. Were the latter so, God might, at any moment, discover some new truth not previously known to Him that would restructure, diminish, or undercut certain truths previously known by Him. Prophecy would be mere prediction. Planning assumptions pertaining to our redemption would need to be revised. Fortunately for us, however, His plan of salvation is constantly underway—not constantly under revision.^[47]

The personal nature of Moses's encounter with God and what he was learning must have infused Moses with confidence.

The Conversation

Moses's face-to-face conversation with the Lord in the opening verses of the Book of Moses may give one the impression that Moses is speaking with God the Father. Indeed, the words "Moses, my son; . . . thou art in the similitude of mine Only Begotten" (Moses 1:6) seem to indicate as much. Such wording, however, may be an example of what has been termed divine investiture of authority—that is, Jehovah, who is Christ, is speaking on behalf of the Father. President Joseph Fielding Smith taught this principle:

All revelation since the fall has come through Jesus Christ, who is the Jehovah of the Old Testament. In all of the scriptures, where God is mentioned and where he has appeared, it was Jehovah who talked with Abraham, with Noah, Enoch, Moses and all the prophets. He is the God of Israel, the Holy One of Israel; the one who led that nation out of Egyptian bondage, and who gave and fulfilled the Law of Moses. The Father has never dealt with man directly and personally since the fall, and he has never appeared except to introduce and bear record of the Son.^[48]

Of the pattern of divine investiture of authority, Elder Robert E. Wells offered this summary: "Jesus Christ was and is Jehovah of the Old Testament, the God of Adam and of Noah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jehovah appeared to and talked to the ancient prophets. When He

spoke, He did so on behalf of the Father, and He said what His Father would have said. Jehovah of the Old Testament became Jesus Christ of the New Testament when He was born into mortality.”[49] Thus we should not find it strange that Jesus (Jehovah), as the Son of God, often speaks on behalf of his Father. The same pattern of authorized, delegated speech in the first person occurs throughout the scriptures, especially in the form of prophets speaking for the Lord.

The following example comes from instruction that Jeremiah received from the Lord. Notice the first-person declaration that Jeremiah is commanded to speak to the people of his day—speech that is unquestionably the Lord’s but is uttered by Jeremiah:

4 And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord; If ye will not hearken to me, to walk in my law, which I have set before you,

5 To hearken to the words of my servants the prophets, whom I sent unto you, both rising up early, and sending them, but ye have not hearkened;

6 Then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth.

7 So the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the Lord. (Jeremiah 26:4–7)

This type of delegation of first-person speech is not uncommon; we are just more accustomed to hearing the Old Testament language of the preceding introductory clause, “Thus saith the Lord.”

That said, we do not negate the possibility that the Father is present at some point during the conversations with Moses as they are described in Moses 1. In view of what the Prophet Joseph Smith stated in relation to the “Second Comforter,” or “the Lord Jesus Christ himself” (Bible Dictionary, s.v. “Comforter”), it is possible that the Father was present or appeared at some point during the events described in Moses 1. The Savior himself, during those tender discussions associated with the Last Supper before his travails in Gethsemane and on the cross, described that he and the Father would come and make his abode with his disciples (see John 14). He spoke of a Second Comforter. The Prophet Joseph Smith explained the nature of this Second Comforter:

Now what is this other Comforter? It is no more nor less than the Lord Jesus Christ himself C this is the sum C substance of the whole matter, that when any man obtains this last Comforter he will have the personage of Jesus Christ to attend him or appear unto him from time to time. C even he will manifest the Father unto him C they will take up their abode with him, C the visions of the heavens will be opened unto him C the Lord will teach him face to face C he may have a perfect knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of God. C this is the state C place the Ancient Saints arrived at when they had such glorious vision Isaiah, Ezekiel, John upon the Isle of patmos, St. Paul in the third heavens, C all the saints who held communion with the general Assembly C church of the Firstborn.[50]

While there is no conclusive evidence that the Father was present on the mountain during these conversations with Moses, it remains a possibility. Elder Alvin R. Dyer suggested that the Father and the Son were present on both occasions of these divine manifestations to Moses and Joseph Smith.[51] What is clear, in any case, is that Moses comes to better understand who God is, who he

himself is, and what God is asking him to do. These experiences prepare Moses to learn more about God, but also about the nature of Satan, who will vigorously oppose and attempt to thwart the work God calls Moses to do. These divine manifestations and spiritual experiences will sustain Moses through a terrifying encounter with Satan. God and his love for Moses are the anchor that will stabilize Moses throughout that ordeal.

Notes

[1] See Revelation, April 1829–A [DCC 6], pp. 36–37, *The Joseph Smith Papers*; and Doctrine and Covenants 6:26–27. Some of the revelations feature Oliver Cowdery, who would be instrumental in helping to bring forth the Book of Mormon as scribe, but the revelations may also indicate further scribal activity beyond the Book of Mormon. According to Revelation Book 1, Joseph dictated four revelations in April 1829, all of them associated with translation, potentially alluding to the revelation of the Book of Moses the following year. See Revelation, April 1829–B [DCC 8], p. 13, *The Joseph Smith Papers*; and Matthews, “*Plainer Translation*,” 26–27.

[2] See Visions of Moses, June 1830 [Moses 1], “Historical Introduction,” *The Joseph Smith Papers*. Robert J. Matthews, in “*Plainer Translation*,” 26, suggests that Joseph and Oliver may have had some understanding of their future translation activities.

[3] Visions of Moses, June 1830 [Moses 1], “Historical Introduction,” note 4, *The Joseph Smith Papers*. See Jackson, “Joseph Smith’s Cooperstown Bible,” 41–70.

[4] “Many Latter-day Saints still do not know that the book of Moses in the Pearl of Great Price is an excerpt from the JST. It includes the vision Moses experienced before God revealed to him the creation account (now Moses 1), and it includes the JST of Genesis 1:1–6:13 (now Moses 2–8).” Jackson, “New Discoveries in the Joseph Smith Translation,” 175. Richard L. Bushman, in *Mormonism: A Very Short Introduction*, 64, notes that Moses 1 was not “an independent revelation that evolved into a retranslation of the Bible” but an important component of the translation project as a whole.

[5] Visions of Moses, June 1830 [Moses 1], p. 3, *The Joseph Smith Papers*. As noted in the historical introduction to that document, “The June 1830 revelation began a new episode in Joseph’s involvement with ancient texts, becoming as it did the opening portion of a much larger Genesis-related manuscript. Joseph and Oliver likely saw the ‘Visions of Moses’ as providing insight into a biblical figure and event; in this case, the revelation expands the view of Moses but also records narratives at best hinted at in biblical texts.” See Draper, “Remarkable Book of Moses,” 15.

[6] See MacKay and Frederick, *Joseph Smith’s Seer Stones*, 126–27; and Flake, “Translating Time,” 506. On many occasions Joseph described what he “saw” in vision. See, e.g., the heading to Doctrine and Covenants 76; Dibble, “Recollections of the Prophet Joseph Smith,” *Juvenile Instructor*, May 15, 1892, 303–4; Discourse, 16 April 1843, as Reported by Wilford Woodruff, p. [27], *The Joseph Smith Papers*; and Book of Commandments, 1833, p. 18, *The Joseph Smith Papers*. Speaking of some of the visions Joseph had in which he witnessed ancient events, his mother, Lucy Mack Smith, recorded that “Joseph would occasionally give us some of the most amusing [interesting] recitals that could be imagined. He would describe the ancient inhabitants of this continent; their dress, mode of travelling, and the animals upon which they rode; their cities,

and their buildings, with every particular; he would describe their <mode of> warfare, as also their religious worship. This he would do with as much ease, seemingly, as if he had spent his whole life with them." Lucy Mack Smith, History, 1845, p. 87, *The Joseph Smith Papers*. Throughout his ministry as a prophet, seer, and revelator, Joseph Smith would see glorious visions of eternity, including events, episodes, and peoples associated with ancient scripture.

[7] Terryl Givens and Brian Hauglid, in *Pearl of Greatest Price*, 37, see in Moses 1 a possible fulfillment of events described in Numbers 12:8, an account they believe may have included seeing the similitude of the Lord and other things that are now removed from that account.

[8] For more information about the persecution faced by Joseph and Church members, see the entry for June 1830 in History, 1838–1856, volume A–1 [23 December 1805–30 August 1834], p. 41–48, *The Joseph Smith Papers*. The list of persecutions included tearing down dammed-up streams where baptisms were performed, seeking to prevent baptisms and disrupt confirmations, ridiculing early converts, and making physical threats against the prophet and others. Knight, "Autobiography and Journal. Throughout the summer and fall of 1830, mobs combined against Church members and overturned wagons, and Joseph Smith was arrested and chased by a mob as he was being escorted to a courthouse, where he was subsequently acquitted. See Bushman, *Rough Stone Rolling*, 116–18.

[9] History, 1838–1856, volume A–1 [23 December 1805–30 August 1834], p. 45, *The Joseph Smith Papers*.

[10] McConkie, "Joseph Smith: The Mighty Prophet of the Restoration." This should be added to the bib. See History, circa June–October 1839 [Draft 1], pp. 12–13, *The Joseph Smith Papers*. Roy Doxey provided the following summary of this account and the faithfulness of Newel Knight throughout his life thereafter:

Newell Knight was the subject of the first miracle performed in the Church. The Prophet persuaded him to pray in public, whereupon he said, "he would try and take up his cross, and pray vocally during meeting." He failed, but retired to the woods the next morning and was overcome by an evil power. Upon reaching home, he summoned the Prophet, who, when he arrived, found "his visage and limbs distorted and twisted in every shape and appearance." The Prophet commanded the evil spirit to come out of him, and Brother Knight said "he saw the devil leave him and vanish from his sight." Brother Knight remained a faithful, devoted member of the Church until his death January, 1847, on the plains of Nebraska, leaving his wife, Lydia, and their seven children. When she and her family were confronted with the trek across the plains alone, she cried out in her loneliness: "Oh Newel, why hast thou left me?" As she spoke, he stood by her side, and said: "Be calm, let not sorrow overcome you. It was necessary that I should go. I was needed behind the veil to represent the true condition of this camp and people. You cannot fully comprehend it now; but the time will come when you shall know why I left you and our little ones. Therefore, dry up your tears. Be patient. I will go before you and protect you in your journeyings. And you and your little ones shall never perish for lack of food. Although the ravens of the valley should feed you and your little ones, you shall not perish for the want of bread." Doxey, *Prophecies and Prophetic Promises*, 64–65.

[11] History, 1838–1856, volume A–1 [23 December 1805–30 August 1834], p. 3, *The Joseph Smith Papers*. Richard Bushman, in *Rough Stone Rolling*, 135–36, compares Joseph's struggle with the

power of evil before his first vision with the alternation of light/truth and evil/darkness as described in Moses 1.

[12] The future revelation of temple ritual would further explain the nature of the adversary, and some of the events found in the early chapters of Moses would be ritually reenacted in the temple through drama. The early chapters of Moses touching on the existence and origin of the devil would have a profound influence on the Saints and increase their ability to expel evil influences from their lives. For the development of temple ritual in the Restoration and the effect of the Book of Moses on it, see chapter 22 herein.

[13] History, 1838–1856, volume A–1 [23 December 1805–30 August 1834], p. 48, *The Joseph Smith Papers*.

[14] See Lindsay and Reynolds, “Case for Ancient Roots in the Book of Moses,” 1–92.

[15] See, History, 1838–1856, volume E–1 [1 July 1843–30 April 1844], p. 1755, in *The Joseph Smith Papers*, <https://josephsmithpapers.org/>.

[16] This reading follows OT1. OT2 has the phrase following “children of men” crossed out. Throughout this volume we will use the 2013 canonized text of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints unless otherwise noted. For the manuscript editions and the variations on this verse contained therein, see Jackson, *Book of Moses and the Joseph Smith Translation Manuscripts*, 57–66; Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews, *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible*, 86. For a discussion on extra-biblical writings that preserve traditions of the visions Moses received on mountain peaks with a command not to write them but to keep them secret, see Bradshaw, *In God’s Image*, 36–37. Bradshaw, in *Image and Likeness*, 33, describes Moses 1 as a restoration of “an authentic core of primeval traditions in its stories of Satan’s rebellion in the premortal existence, and of his dramatic confrontation with Moses.”

[17] See, i.e., Avishur, *Phoenician Inscriptions and the Bible*; Avishur, *Studies in Biblical Narrative*; and Moor and Watson, *Verse in Ancient Near Eastern Prose*.

[18] See 2 Nephi 3:15 (14–16); JST Genesis 50:33.

[19] See Bowen, “Onomastic Allusions to Joseph in Moses 1:41,” 297–304.

[20] It is unclear what language(s) Moses would have spoken (Egyptian, Canaanite, etc.). The Hebrew language developed after Moses, but he probably spoke a language and dialect similar to it and from which Hebrew would eventually derive (along with the literary conventions that would develop into Hebrew scribal traditions).

[21] In Joseph Smith’s 1832 account of his first vision, he described the peace he felt after his initial fear and the comfort that came after God called him by name, as well as the effect it had on him in the following days: “and my soul was filled with love and for many days I could rejoice with great Joy and the Lord was with me but could find none that would believe the hevnly vision nevertheless I pondered these things in my heart.” History, circa Summer 1832, p. 3, *The Joseph Smith Papers*. We will learn later in this chapter that the events of Moses 1 occur after the burning bush incident in Exodus 3 but before the Exodus. In Exodus 3 Moses is told that his theophany is what the Lord intended for all the children of Israel. In fact, the Lord says of his appearance to Moses, “This shall

be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye [plural] shall serve God upon this mountain" (Exodus 3:12). The entire purpose of the Exodus was to prepare the people to see and converse with God (compare Doctrine and Covenants 84:23–24; JST Exodus 3:11–12). Subsequently, this theme of preparing to see God continued throughout the Restoration (see Doctrine and Covenants 67:10, 13; 93:1). All of this is paving the way for the Lord's explanation in Moses 1:39 that his work and glory is "to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life" of his children. We witness this up through the events of Exodus 19–20.

[22] The title "Savior" was not present in OT1 but was added by an undetermined scribe in OT2. Jackson, *Book of Moses and the Joseph Smith Translation Manuscripts*, 59. In this context the title helps clarify the role of God's Only Begotten Son. This will be in stark contrast to the polytheistic world in which Moses was raised. A major point of contention, and the backdrop of the entire exodus story, is the confrontation between Pharaoh and the gods of Egypt (see Exodus 12:12; 9:29). See Muhlestein, "What I Will Do to Pharaoh." This shifting template for Moses is now based on what he is learning from his revelations and theophanies that have come to help him see and hear the words of God.

[23] Although unknown, the location of Moses's theophany is traditionally located somewhere on Mount Sinai (also known as Mount Horeb throughout Exodus and Deuteronomy). At least twelve mountainous locations have been proposed as the site. Olson, *New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, 280. Based on geographical descriptions in the Bible and the association with Midianite peoples, many see the interaction of Moses with his father-in-law Jethro plausibly located in the region of Midian in northwestern Arabia, just east of the Sinai Peninsula. Others, in view of elevation and biblical descriptions of travel times throughout the Exodus, follow Byzantine traditions that situate the events at Jebel Musa (Arabic for "mountain of Moses") at the southern end of the Sinai Peninsula. See Olson, *New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, 280–81. See also Hoffmeier, *Ancient Israel in Sinai*, 131; and Finkelstein, "Raider of the Lost Mountain," 46–50.

[24] On multiple occasions Moses receives his training from the Lord on high mountaintops (see Exodus 3:1; Moses 1:1, 42). There are several high mountain peaks in the Sinai Peninsula and very few surrounding Pharaoh's cities, which, according to the book of Exodus, suggests that the Israelites and Moses were around the cities of Pithom and Raamses (see Exodus 1:11). The sites referred to as biblical Goshen are in the region of the old Hyksos capital of Avaris/Tell El-Dab'a (see map). Moses also seems to have received his early training in the company of his father-in-law Jethro, priest of Midian (see Exodus 2:16, 3:1—also named Ruel in Exodus 2:18 and Hobab), from whom Moses received the Melchizedek Priesthood (see Doctrine and Covenants 84:6) and who lived in the region at this time with his Midianite people (see map of Midianites). The Midianites' story is an interesting one. Midian was the son of Abraham and Keturah (see Genesis 25:2), and here several centuries later in the fringes of the Sinai or Arabian Peninsula, we find his descendants holding the Melchizedek Priesthood and exercising it (see Exodus 18:12; Doctrine and Covenants 84:6). This gives us a much greater perspective of priesthood operation in the Old Testament world and opens interesting possibilities about the scope of God's plan in that day and age. While we tend to focus on Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac, there are descendants of Abraham and Keturah who held the Melchizedek Priesthood and exercised its authority in this relatively unknown story defining the priesthood lineage/heritage of the ministry of Moses. The use of the priesthood seems to have been more widespread than we sometimes assume. From some early Late Bronze Age texts in the region

of Midian, the epigraphic evidence includes a divine name YHW, which some believe was an early form of the God Jehovah. See Blenkinsopp, "Midianite-Kenite Hypothesis Revisited," 131–53; and Booij, "Mountain and Theophany in the Sinai Narrative," 1–26.

[25] Moses's life is traditionally broken down into three forty-year periods: forty years in Egypt, forty years pre-Exodus, and forty years post-exodus (see Acts 7:20–36). The recorded events in the life of Moses may not have happened in close succession; the Lord seems to have been training Moses for decades in his priestly duties in preparation for his prophetic calling and the events described in the Book of Moses and as well as in Exodus. This training seems to have come, at least in part, at the hands of Jethro. Moses could have had numerous significant preparatory experiences before Exodus 3 and the burning bush. Moses perhaps felt prophetic stirrings even before leaving Egypt and before his contact with the Midianites: "And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not" (Acts 7:23–25). These stirrings may have been the Lord guiding Moses in his early preparations to become God's prophet.

[26] The word *token* (אֶזְכָּרָה "sign, pledge, token") constitutes a pledge between God and Moses. Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 16 (hereafter *BDB*). "A sign (ֹת) is a concrete object or event that signifies something else..... It can also be used of things that humans are to do to remind themselves of God, his works, and his relationship with them (e.g., Gen 17:11; Exod 31:13). References often function pedagogically as a means of instructing Israel to remember what God has done for them and to trust in him accordingly." "Miracles," in Mangum et al., *Lexham Theological Wordbook*. This covenantal type pledge is also found within the flood story, the token of the rainbow, the Sabbath as a promise and covenant made to God, and the Cain and Abel story (see Exodus 3:12; Genesis 9:11–13; Exodus 31:13, 16; Genesis 4:15/Moses 5:40).

[27] סְגֻלָּה (*segullâ*) means "possession, valued property, peculiar treasure" (*BDB*, 688); and *segullâ* may have parallels with Akk. *sikiltu(m)*, which in various inscriptions means "to acquire a private fortune" and can designate "the king as the 'special, personal property,' as a 'worshiper,' of the deity." Jenni and Westermann, *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 791. This seems to help highlight how much we mean to God and how far he is willing to go to ensure we enjoy his presence. We are his treasures.

[28] Nibley, "On the Sacred and the Symbolic," 559.

[29] See Schade and Seely, "Writings of Malachi in Third Nephi," 261–79; and Belnap and Skinner, "Promise and the Provocation."

[30] See Doctrine and Covenants 84:23; and Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 6:100 (November 29, 1857).

[31] We do not know the original word translated here, but often in the Hebrew Bible the word is כְּבוֹד (*kābôd*), "glory, honor, divine presence." It often "refers to manifestations of the presence of God in the tabernacle or temple; can also refer to the reputation or character of God or, occasionally,

men." G. R. Lanier, "Glory," in Mangum et al., *Lexham Theological Wordbook*. The context here seems to situate Moses in personal communication with God.

[32] "The English word *transfiguration* stems from the KJV, which translated the aorist passive form of the Greek verb μεταμορφῶ (*metamorphoō*) as "he was transfigured" (Matt 17:2; Mark 9:2)." T. R. Hatina, "Transfiguration," in Barry et al., *Lexham Bible Dictionary*. *Transfiguration* is the "name given to that singular event recorded in all the Synoptic Gospels (Matt 17:1–8; Mark 9:2–8; Luke 9:28–36), when Jesus was visibly glorified in the presence of three select disciples. The name is derived from the Latin term used to translate the Greek *metamorphoō*, meaning 'to change into another form.' The accounts portray the transformation as outwardly visible and consisting in an actual physical change in the body of Jesus: 'The appearance of his face changed' (Luke 9:29), 'his face shone like the sun' (Matt 17:2), while 'his clothes became dazzling white' (Mark 9:3). The glory was not caused by the falling of a heavenly light on him from without but by the flashing forth of the radiant splendor within. He had passed into a higher state of existence." Douglas and Tenney, *New International Bible Dictionary*, 1032.

[33] See Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:111, 271–272.

[34] History, 1838–1856, volume C–1 [2 November 1838–31 July 1842], p. 17 [addenda], *The Joseph Smith Papers*. A translated person is taken from the realms of mortality but can tarry on earth, not tasting of death until the time of the Resurrection (see McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 806–7), when that person will be changed in "the twinkling of an eye" (3 Nephi 28:8; Doctrine and Covenants 43:32; 63:51; 101:31) without feeling the pains of death. At the end of his mortal life, Moses was translated (see Deuteronomy 34:5–6; Alma 45:19; Doctrine and Covenants 84:25). In that state he appeared with Elijah, another translated being (see 2 Kings 2:9–12), on the Mount of Transfiguration to bestow priesthood keys on Peter, James, and John (see Matthew 17:3–4; Mark 9:4–9; Luke 9:30). See Matthews, "Tradition, Testimony, Transfiguration, and Keys," 305. Moses also returned in this dispensation as a resurrected being and again bestowed priesthood keys as part of the Restoration (see Doctrine and Covenants 110:11).

[35] The 1843 account in the *Times and Seasons* reads "strengthened before him" rather than "transfigured before him" (Jackson, *Book of Moses and the Joseph Smith Translation Manuscripts*, 14), perhaps emphasizing the extinguishing of strength that Moses experienced (see Moses 1:9–10). The idea of being strengthened may reinforce the concept of transfiguration and its effects that enabled Moses to dwell in the presence of God. Moses 1:11 also mentions glory, a word that in Hebrew is etymologically related to "be heavy," "the distinctive feature of the presence of God, often compared to power, weight or brightness." Manser, *Dictionary of Bible Themes*, s.v. "glory." Such a nuance may help highlight the physical condition associated with being transfigured.

[36] Conversations with Robert Matthews, 9–11 November 1835, p. 24, *The Joseph Smith Papers*.

[37] Discourse, 12 May 1844, as Reported by Thomas Bullock, p. [2], *The Joseph Smith Papers*. See also Doctrine and Covenants 67:10–13; 76:117–118. Interestingly, Doctrine and Covenants 84:21–22 associates seeing God with the priesthood and its ordinances. See Brown, *Joseph Smith's Translation*, 100–1.

[38] Coltrin, "Minutes of the Salt Lake City School of the Prophets," 66.

[39] Coltrin, "Minutes of the Salt Lake City School of the Prophets," 56–57; emphasis added. For a similar sacred experience, see the account cited in Ballard, *Sermons and Missionary Services*, 156–57.

[40] OT1 and OT2 read here "for this once I know," following the 1843 *Times and Seasons* publication. See Jackson, *Book of Moses and the Joseph Smith Translation Manuscripts*, 14. Sidney Rigdon was exhausted after the vision he and Joseph Smith had upon receiving the revelation now recorded as Doctrine and Covenants 76. During that vision Joseph and Sidney conversed back and forth about what they were seeing of the three degrees of glory. Philo Dibble wrote what he had witnessed in observing that experience: "Joseph sat firmly and calmly all the time in the midst of a magnificent glory, but Sidney sat limp and pale, apparently as limber as a rag, observing which Joseph remarked, smilingly, 'Sidney is not used to it as I am.'" Cannon, "Recollections of the Prophet Joseph Smith," 303–4. Such spiritual experiences helped people like Moses, Joseph Smith, and Sidney Rigdon "for this once" to comprehend the majesty of God. Moses's experience recorded in Moses 1 taught him about God's glory and the devil's lack thereof. That knowledge would be pivotal in Moses's subsequent experiences and ministry.

[41] Benson, *Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, 119, 369.

[42] "Moses grew up essentially an orphan in pharaoh's house with a name that meant 'son of no one.' . . . How marvelous it must have been . . . to have the Savior appear to him and say, 'You are my son.'" Marsh, *Precious Truths Restored*, 78. The name Moses etymologically derives from the Egyptian *mss*, "begotten of." Many Egyptian names derive from this etymology followed by a theophoric or nominal element (Rameses, Thutmose, etc). If Moses ever had a theophoric or other descriptive element attached to his name, it is impossible to retrieve it based on the extant textual evidence. In the scriptural texts we simply know him as Moses.

[43] History, 1838–1856, volume E–1 [1 July 1843–30 April 1844], pp. 1969, 1970, 1972–1973, *The Joseph Smith Papers*. When Moses received his revelations on creation, he learned more about being created in the image of God and what that meant.

[44] With only the English translation, and without knowing the original word, *similitude* is difficult to interpret in this passage. In English it can refer to the quality of, or being similar to, something. However, in the KJV where the word *similitude* occurs, multiple Hebrew words are employed, ranging from the meaning of "to be similar" to "image," used in the creation account to describe the physical characteristics of God. Therefore, the meaning here may elicit multiple meanings reflecting Moses as a son of God, but also the necessity for Moses to minister like the Son of God. It is interesting that in Deuteronomy 18:15 we read of one who will be raised up like unto Moses: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken." In 1 Nephi 22:21, Nephi describes this prophet as "the Holy One of Israel." In the New Testament, Peter declares Jesus as a fulfillment of this prophet (see Acts 3:22), and in the Restoration, Moroni told Joseph that this passage in Acts 3:22 referred to Christ (see Joseph Smith—History 1:40). Thus, Moses was going to be in similitude of the Savior in his day as a deliverer of God's people, and Jesus, in his own day, was going to be a fulfillment of the "prophet" whom the people were to follow in Christ's day and whom Moses commanded that they should follow. Perhaps this is at least partially referenced in John 5:39, 46 when Jesus tells the people to

"search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" and "for had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me."

[45] Doctrine and Covenants 76:94 states, "They who dwell in his [God's] presence are the church of the Firstborn; and they see as they are seen, and know as they are known, having received of his fulness and of his grace." Moses is beginning to learn in some small measure what it is like to see through the eyes of God, not only how he views himself but how he views others.

[46] See for example, Doctrine and Covenants, 1835, p. 47, *The Joseph Smith Papers*; and Smith, *Lectures on Faith*, 4:43.

[47] Maxwell, *All These Things Shall Give Thee Experience*, 15.

[48] Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:27. The identification of Jesus as Jehovah is significant here and may be reflected in the designation "Endless is my name" (Moses 1:3). The name Jehovah (*yhw*) is known as the *tetragrammaton* (Greek for "four letters") and constitutes the divine, sacred name of God. To this day it is not vocalized in Judaism (nor do we know the original pronunciation from ancient sources alone); instead, it is replaced with words meaning "the name" (*hashem*) or "Lord" (*Adonai*). The name is possibly reflected in the Semitic root meaning "to be" (*hyh*, the older root *hwh*), i.e., existing with no designation of a beginning or end. The original pronunciation of the word has been lost, but variant spellings and writings of this deity occur in hypocoristic, abbreviated names in epigraphic material (some possibly as early as the 11th century BC), as well as in Greek transcriptions from early Christian writers such as Clement of Alexandria. See Van der Toorn, Becking, and Van der Horst, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, 910. The name Jehovah originates from the same root used in Exodus 3:14, where the Lord, speaking to Moses, refers to himself as "I Am"; this is also the same root word that underlies the language the Savior in the New Testament used when he declared, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58), thereby linking himself to that God of the Old Testament. (In John 8:58, Jesus's declaration "I am" is preserved in Greek with the words *egō eimi*. John's recording events uses the Septuagint (LXX) translation of Exodus 3:14, *egō eimi ho ōn*, to capture Jesus's allusion to the divine name). See Jackson, *Restored Gospel and the Book of Genesis*, 16n6.

[49] Wells, "Our Message to the World."

[50] Discourse, between circa 26 June and circa 2 July 1839, as Reported by Willard Richards, pp. 20–21, *The Joseph Smith Papers*. In the 1835 account of the First Vision, two beings are depicted as appearing, one before the other. See Journal, 1835–1836, pp. 23–24, *The Joseph Smith Papers*. Perhaps something similar happened in Moses 1.

[51] Dyer, *Meaning of Truth*, 12. Moses 1:31 describes that the "glory of the Lord was upon Moses," a phrase found in this passage originally in the 1902 edition of the Pearl of Great Price. See Jackson, *Book of Moses and the Joseph Smith Translation Manuscripts*, 45. Both OT1 and OT2 read in that verse "the glory of God," perhaps "implying more clearly that Moses stood in the presence of the Father rather than the Son." Bradshaw, *In God's Image*, 1:45. This statement is made in reference to verse 31 but may highlight or be applicable to the context under discussion here. What is interesting is that in the first few chapters of Genesis an alternation of the titles of God occurs. This variation has caused consternation for Bible scholars attempting to resolve why these different

names occur. "While Gen 1 uses God, *ʾēlōhîm*, consistently throughout, in Gen 2–3 we encounter right away the compound designation *yhwh ʾēlōhîm*, Yahweh/the Lord God, which occurs nowhere else in Genesis. The synoptic reading produced by the editor quite naturally invites us to identify the God of Gen 1 with Yahweh God of Genesis 2–3. By reading them together, we are thrust at once into the heart of Israelite theology, which equates the God of the ancestors of Genesis 12–36 with the God of Moses and Sinai, whose name is Yahweh (Exodus 3:15–16; 6:2–8). Israel's covenant God is also the sovereign Creator of the universe. The simple juxtaposition of Yahweh and Elohîm as a compound name for God ensures that we read Genesis 1 and Genesis 2–3 *together*, in binocular fashion, and that we understand that the God of Israel's covenant is also the God of creation." Arnold, *Genesis: New Cambridge Bible Commentary*, 56. See Wenham, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 1:56–57.

The shift between the names of God in these chapters is perhaps attempting to highlight that Elohîm and Jehovah are two separate beings and that Elohîm is involved in the events of Genesis 1. The compound name that is formed in Genesis 2–3 is perhaps a conflation of *Elohîm* and *Jehovah* as redactors of the Bible attempted to sort out how the two interacted and became conflated into confusion. The Restoration and its scripture, along with prophetic commentary on the subject, help to restore meaning to confusion and instill the existence of Elohîm back into the events associated with creation. Perhaps Moses 1 also underscores Elohîm's participation in the events while defining the interconnected role of his son in these episodes, theophanies, and creative endeavors described in Moses 2/Genesis 1. It is interesting that *Elohîm* is consistently used in Genesis 3:1–5 in the conversation between Eve and the serpent. See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 56. Perhaps this usage emphasizes Elohîm's participation in the events rather than just being the general term for "God."

The Prayer of Ezra

Ezra's Prayer About Internarriage

¹After these things had been done, the leaders came to me and said, "The people of Israel, including the priests and the Levites, have not kept themselves separate from the neighboring peoples with their detestable practices, like those of the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians and Amorites. ²They have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, and have mingled the holy race with the peoples around them. And the leaders and officials have led the way in this unfaithfulness."

³When I heard this, I tore my tunic and cloak, pulled hair from my head and beard and sat down appalled. ⁴Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel gathered around me because of this unfaithfulness of the exiles. And I sat there appalled until the evening sacrifice.

⁵Then, at the evening sacrifice, I rose from my self-abasement, with my tunic and cloak torn, and fell on my knees with my hands spread out to the Lord my God ⁶and prayed:

"I am too ashamed and disgraced, my God, to lift up my face to you, because our sins are higher than our heads and our guilt has reached to the heavens. ⁷From the days of our ancestors until now,

our guilt has been great. Because of our sins, we and our kings and our priests have been subjected to the sword and captivity, to pillage and humiliation at the hand of foreign kings, as it is today.

⁸“But now, for a brief moment, the Lord our God has been gracious in leaving us a remnant and giving us a firm place in his sanctuary, and so our God gives light to our eyes and a little relief in our bondage. ⁹Though we are slaves, our God has not forsaken us in our bondage. He has shown us kindness in the sight of the kings of Persia: He has granted us new life to rebuild the house of our God and repair its ruins, and he has given us a wall of protection in Judah and Jerusalem.

¹⁰“But now, our God, what can we say after this? For we have forsaken the commands ¹¹you gave through your servants the prophets when you said: ‘The land you are entering to possess is a land polluted by the corruption of its peoples. By their detestable practices they have filled it with their impurity from one end to the other. ¹²Therefore, do not give your daughters in marriage to their sons or take their daughters for your sons. Do not seek a treaty of friendship with them at any time, that you may be strong and eat the good things of the land and leave it to your children as an everlasting inheritance.’

¹³“What has happened to us is a result of our evil deeds and our great guilt, and yet, our God, you have punished us less than our sins deserved and have given us a remnant like this. ¹⁴Shall we then break your commands again and intermarry with the peoples who commit such detestable practices? Would you not be angry enough with us to destroy us, leaving us no remnant or survivor? ¹⁵Lord, the God of Israel, you are righteous! We are left this day as a remnant. Here we are before you in our guilt, though because of it not one of us can stand in your presence.”

The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel

Sefer Zerubbabel^[1] is a medieval Hebrew^[2] apocalypse written at the beginning of the seventh century in the style of biblical visions (e.g. Daniel, Ezekiel) placed into the mouth of Zerubbabel,^{[3][4]} the last descendant of the Davidic line to take a prominent part in Israel's history, who laid the foundation of the Second Temple in the 6th century BCE.^[2] The enigmatic postexilic biblical leader receives a revelatory vision outlining personalities and events associated with the restoration of Israel, the End of Days,^[5] and the establishment of the Third Temple.^[2]

History

The groundwork for the book was probably written in Palestine between 629 and 636^[6] during fierce struggles between Persia and the Byzantine Empire for control of the Holy Land^[5] (qq.v. Byzantine-Arab Wars, Muslim conquest of Syria). These wars touched Palestine and stirred Messianic hopes among Jews, including the author for whom the wars appear to be eschatological events leading to the appearance of the Messiah.^[2] However, firm evidence of the work's existence prior to the tenth century is elusive.^[5] The Zohar is cognizant of the legend of Hefzibah^[7] whom the apocalypse first names as the mother of the Davidic Messiah.^[5] Rabbis Saadia Gaon (892–942) and Hai ben Sherira Gaon (939–1038) probably knew the book, but never mention it by name.^[5]

Sefer Zerubbabel is extant in a number of manuscript and print recensions. The first publication was in 1519 in Constantinople within an anthology called *Liqqutim Shonim*.^[5] It was reprinted again along with the *Sefer Malkiel* in Vilna in 1819, and again by Adolph Jellinek in his *Bet Ha-Midrash* (1853–77) and S. A. Wertheimer in his *Leqet Midrashim* (Jerusalem, 1903).^[5] The fullest edition of the work was prepared by Israel Levi in his book *L'apocalypse*.^[5]

Because the book gave an unequivocal date (1058 CE) for the return of the Messiah, it exerted great influence upon contemporary Messianic thought.^[6] The book is mentioned by Eleazar of Worms^[6] and supposedly^[5] by Rashi.^[6] Abraham ibn Ezra criticized the book as "unreliable."^[5]

One edition of the *Pirke Hekalot* gave a figure of 890 years until the return of the Messiah, making the Messianic year 958 CE, within a decade of the birth of Saadia Gaon.^[6] That date perhaps led to a message sent by Rhenish Jews to Palestine inquiring after rumors of the Messiah's advent.^[6]

Contents

The sefer describes the eschatological struggle between the Antichrist^[2] Armilus,^[8] who is the leader of Rome and Christianity, and the Messiah ben Joseph, who fails in battle but paves the way for the Davidic Messiah^[3] and the ultimate triumph of righteousness.^[2] The original author expected the Messiah would come in the immediate future; subsequent editors substituted later dates.^[6]

Set after Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of Jerusalem,^[3] the book begins with Zerubbabel, whose name was associated with the first restoration, receiving a vision after praying for "knowledge of the form of the eternal house."^[2] In the vision he is transported by the angel Metatron to Ninevah, the "city of blood" representing Rome^[6] by which the author likely means Byzantium.^[2] There he finds in the marketplace a "bruised and despised man" who reveals himself to be the Messiah, Menahem ben 'Amiel, doomed to abide there until his appointed hour. Zerubbabel asks when the lamp of Israel would be kindled.^[6] Metatron interjects that the Messiah would return 990 years after the destruction of the Temple (approximately 1058 CE).^[6]

Five years prior to the coming of Hefzibah,^[7] who would be the mother of the Messiah ben David, the Messiah ben Joseph, Nehemiah ben Hushiel, will appear but he will be slain by Armilus.^[6] Afterwards, the Messiah ben David will resurrect him.^[6]

Zerubbabel is led to a "house of disgrace" (a church), a kind of antitemple.^[2] There he sees a beautiful statue of a woman (the Virgin Mary).^[2] With Satan as the father, the statue gives birth to the Antichrist Armilus.^[2] Forces associated with Armilus and the antitemple come to rule over the entire world.^[2] But in the end these forces are defeated.^[2] The work concludes with Zerubbabel's vision of the descent of the Heavenly Temple to earth.^[2] Thus the "form of the eternal house" is revealed; unlike the Second Temple it is made in heaven.^[2]

The Book of Jannes and Jambres

Jannes and Mambres (or *Mambres*). The *Penitence of Jannes and Mambres* is mentioned in the *Gelasian Decree*. Origen (*on Matthew xxv.*) says: "Paul's statement, 'As Jannes and Mambres withstood Moses' (2 Tim. iii. 8) is not found in the 'public' scriptures, but in a secret (apocryphal) book entitled the Book of Jannes and Mambres." The writer called Ambrosiaster, *on 2 Timothy*, says:

"This example is from the Apocrypha. For Jannes and Mambres were brothers, magicians or poisoners, of the Egyptians, who thought they could resist by the art of their magic the mighty works of God which were being accomplished through them. But when the might of Moses in his works proved greater, they were humbled, and confessed, with the pain of their wounds (of. Philostorgius, below), that it was God that wrought in Moses."

These are the old allusions that imply the existence of a book of Jannes and Mambres. There is a good deal of scattered legend about them, chiefly Jewish. They are the two sons of Balaam (Num. xxi. 22): they educated Moses (Abulpharaj): they were drowned in the Red Sea, or slain with their father by Phinehas. St. Macarius visited their tomb, which was full of demons, from whom he obtained leave to enter and look round. He found a brazen vessel hanging by an iron chain in a well and much consumed by time, and also a number of dried-up pomegranates (Palladius, *Hist. Lausiaca*).

Another set of allusions is in heathen writers. Numenius, quoted by Eusebius, names them, and so does Artapanus. Pliny speaks confusedly (*N. H.*, xxx. 11) of the magicians Moses, Jannes, Jotapa; and Apuleius (*Apology*, 90), enumerating famous wizards, names Jesus perhaps, and certainly Moses and Jannes, Apollonius, Dardanus, Zoroaster, Hostanes.

The allusions to the two wizards which occur in Oriental chronicles have been collected by Iselin in *Zeitschrift f. Wissenschaftl. Theol.*, 1894, 321.

We now come to consider possible fragments of the book. Photius's excerpts from Philostorgius's *Ecclesiastical History* has one (ix. 2, p. 166, ed. Bidez): "Moses chastised Jannes and Jambres with sores and sent the mother of one of them to death." This must have been introduced by Philostorgius as an illustration: the ninth book of the *History* is concerned with the reign of Valens.

In the eleventh-century MS. Cotton Tiberius B. V., appended to a tract *On the Marvels of the East*, is the following fragment in Latin and Anglo-Saxon, illustrated by a beautiful picture of Mambres doing an incantation, and hell open with souls in it.

"Mambres opened the magical books of his brother Jannes, and did necromancy and brought up from hell the shade of his brother. The soul of Jannes answered him saying: I thy brother died not unjustly, but of a truth justly, and judgment will go against me, for I was wiser than all wise magicians, and I withstood the two brethren, Moses and Aaron, who did great signs and wonders: therefore died I and was brought down from among *men* into hell, where there is great burning, and the pit (lake) of perdition, whence there is no coming up. And now, my brother Mambres, take heed to thyself in thy lifetime to do good to thy sons and thy friends: for in hell there is nothing of good, but sadness and darkness: and when thou shalt have died and shalt be in hell among the dead, thy dwelling-place and thy abode (seat) will be twenty (*probably* two) cubits broad and four cubits long."

With the *Penitence of Jannes and Mambres* in the *Gelasian Decree* is classed the *Penitence of Cyprian* (the magician and martyr of Antioch, the parent of the Faust-legend). This we have, and it gives an account of his initiation into the devil's service. There are two mentions of our wizards in it: §6. The prince of the devils praises Cyprian, and calls him a youth of good gifts, a new Jambres, apt

for the ministry. §17. Cyprian says of himself: "I do not believe there was ever a worse man than I was: I outdid the Jannes and Jambres of history. They in the midst of their lying wonders acknowledged the finger of God, but I was wholly set upon it that there was no God. If God did not pardon them who even partly recognized Him, how should He pardon me who ignored Him altogether?" In this view the Egyptian magicians, it seems, did not find forgiveness.

The Greek *Acts of St. Katherine* are printed in three texts by J. Viteau (Paris, 1897). The first says that Katherine had studied all the art of Hippocrates, Galen, Aristotle, Homer, Plato, Philistion, Eusebius, and the necromancies of Jannes and Jambres and the Sibyl. The second repeats this, more than once, and also gives two quotations from Jannes and Mambres, the first of which defies translation, but adds: "They show, to them that seek to behold, the faces (*or persons*) that have slept in the earth from the ages." The other is better: "But concerning the mountains (*sic—? mules*) Jannes and Jambres spake, signifying the sign of the manger of the Lord; and concerning the stone whereby the stone of the tomb (*a verb is wanted*), as also it was said by the prophet: The stone which the builders rejected," etc.

If this is a genuine quotation at all (and one from the Sibyl which precedes it is correct) it implies Messianic, even Christian, predictions in the book.

Philostorgius by speaking of the mother "of one of them" (θατέρου) contradicts the tradition that the two men were brothers, if he is to be taken literally.

The Latin fragment remains the best. It would form a possible opening for the book, or it might come near the end of it: it would hardly be the closing note. Mambres must have made some reply, and even perhaps repented as a *finale*. But we must confess ourselves quite ignorant of the general character of the *Penitence*. It was older, we see, than Origen, and it may have been Christian. Cyprian's *Penitence* is possibly modelled upon it to some extent.

By way of appendix a curious fragment may find a place here. In the Roman edition of the works of Ephraem Syrus (ii. p. 405), in the midst of the Syriac *Testament of Ephraem* is suddenly interpolated the following piece of Syriac verse, which has no link of connexion with its context, and which I here translate from the Latin rendering:

"In the time of Moses the magicians rose up against the son of Amram: but the finger of God overcame them, as they themselves also confessed.

"The righteousness of God smote the wicked men with an evil sore, that even against their will they might proclaim the truth: for the Truth is wont to bear patiently until deceivers repent: but when they are puffed up and think themselves safe, then are they cast down into the pit.

"For when Moses was sent to bring the people out of Egypt, at the bidding of Pharaoh's Lord he came to Pharaoh and told him the command of God. When Pharaoh heard it he was driven to rage and fury and turned to blasphemy; and when the matter was published throughout the city and was come to the ears of the nobles of those parts, some said: It is the command of God and must be obeyed at all costs.

"But the King, when he saw Moses, feared, and began to feel the punishment that hung over him.

"Is there any that does not fear at the sight of the Lord? or who would not tremble at beholding God? So Pharaoh feared Moses, because he was the god of Pharaoh.

"The whole multitude of the magicians of Egypt hasted together to see a new marvel, for in the face of Moses was the angel of fire and wind, surpassing the brightness of the sun and of lightning, so that whoever fixed his eyes on him took him for a god; but they who heard his voice—for he was stammering and stuttered—despised and contemned him as a man. And one affirmed that he was come down from heaven: another set him wholly at naught: for, said he, if there were any great thing *in him*, surely he would have healed himself.

"Now Moses, as you have heard, knew the tongue of that country well; bred up in the house of Pharaoh, he had drunk in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, as the Apostle witnesses to us of him. And though he were not aware of it himself, yet he had the Holy Spirit dwelling in him, from whom he had learned all that had happened from Adam even to his own days, and was not ignorant of what the magicians were plotting against him.

"So Pharaoh called together all the magicians and their disciples and spoke to them of Moses thus: It is now time that whatever power you have you should put forth for the common good. When war is upon us there is need of mighty men, and the skill of physicians appears then when diseases are rife. Throughout all the world the people will laugh at us with great disgrace of our name if we are overcome by this stammering stutterer. Be therefore strong in conflict till we bear off victory: contend valiantly till we triumph. There is no man who knows not our name or extols you not as workers of wonders: we (ye?) have been wont to be helpers even of Kings when war came upon them. If then they see us made a laughing-stock to a stammerer, much more shall we be despised by all other men. Up then, put on a manly spirit, and go forth to battle like heroes of renown, that we may gain an eternal name; and so all who hear of it may be smitten with fear and not dare to resist our people. And though I excel in royal dignity, yet I uphold the common cause with you. To all of us there will be like honour or like shame.

"The magicians, stirred by these words, as if made drunk with wine, promised seas and mountains to Pharaoh King of Egypt. The sun, said they, shall not again rise to lighten Egypt before the son of Amram has ceased to live. What time thou, O King, takest quiet slumber in thy bed, then shalt thou hear that Moses has been punished by a shameful death. And this, indeed, we account as nothing: it is child's play. Come then, enter thy chamber and climb up upon thy bed and sleep: for the death of Moses is at the doors, and he shall not, believe us, see another day.

"Thus the magicians left Pharaoh. And he, believing their words, could not sleep for his impatience, looking for the dawn of day: nor, had he slept, could he rest without the coming of the same images to him in his slumber.

"But they, practising their arts, called up devils and sent them against Moses. The evil spirits rushed in hosts upon the holy man: but the power of God and the prayer of the righteous one drove them back as the storm scatters the fire and the wind the smoke. So did the demons fly from the face of Moses as the conquered flee in battle before the victors, and thieves turn their backs when they hear the voices of the watchmen approaching.

"As light dispels darkness, so did Moses drive away the wicked ones. Headlong they returned to the magicians by whom they had been hired; and, said they: We lose our labour against this man, for he is stronger than we, and we cannot get near to the border of the place where he dwells.

"Meanwhile the day dawned, and Pharaoh anxiously expected that what the magicians had promised him, of the death of Moses, should have been fulfilled. But when the appointed time was past, and there came none to tell the tidings he desired, the King called the magicians and spake thus to them: Why, said he, hath the matter fallen out otherwise than as you promised? for you said, Moses shall not see another day after this.

"The magicians said to him: Have patience a little: the man's death is indeed near, but we can do nothing in haste, O King, and this day allows it not, for to-day it is new moon: when the moon begins to wane, then shall the life of Moses fail.

"This was the cause they pretended to him, until the appointed hour should come to Moses: but the King received their words gladly, being subject to the same errors as they.

"The magicians therefore set to work: they took somewhat of the hairs and garments of Moses, and made an image of him, and laid it up in a tomb, and set evil demons against it. Immediately the demons came, and the princes of them: Satan was ready with his hosts, all of them in divers forms, to destroy Moses.

"They ran against him in a troop. But when they lifted up their eyes to the holy prophet and saw him encompassed by a host of angels, like as it was once with Elisha, they could not bear the look of him, much less attack him, and all together they fled away in confusion with cries and howlings.

"This thing brought the magicians to perplexity. They turned therefore to other means to save their name and not be found guilty of deceit and lying before the King. Accordingly they took a cup full of wine and by their enchantments compelled vipers and dragons to spue their venom into it; and when it was ready they gave the cup to Moses, that he might drink it and burst asunder. Take, said they, this wine which the King of Egypt sends thee, and drink it, for to this pinnacle of honour he will have thee raised, as he hath long ago desired; and this wine itself is like the desire of the King, for it is old, and by reason of length of time is become muddy and dark.

"At this Moses smiled, and took the cup and signed it in the name of God and drank the wine without any hurt. But that they might know that their deceit was not hidden from him, he turned to them and said: Come, tell the King, who hath sent me to drink wine mingled with the poison of serpents, that none of these things do any hurt to the servants of God.

"Thus far concerning Moses and the Magicians."

The elegancies of the poetic form are not so excessive as to disguise the story, and it is one which I do not find elsewhere. The drinking of the poison is like, or has been made like, the famous miracle of St. John the Evangelist: the "signing" of the cup may well be a touch of the poet's; it is the only one that is obviously Christian. I should not be at all surprised to find that we had here a paraphrase of part of the story of Jannes and Mambres. Note that the unsuccessful attacks of the demons are just such as occur in the *Penitence of Cyprian*, which is linked with that of the Egyptian wizards. The

(Latin) *Acts of St. James the Great* contain something similar, in the tale of Hermogenes and Philetus.

The Ethiopian Book of the Cross

An Ethiopian manuscript of the Miracles of Jesus written in Geez, the ancient liturgical language of the Ethiopian church.

The Miracles of Jesus is one of the apocryphal books of the Bible which do not feature in the canonical text but have always been accepted as undisputed elements of the Bible in its Ethiopian (Geez) translation. The Ethiopian Bible is thought to have been translated into Geez largely from the Greek and Syriac texts of the Syrian church from the 4th to the 7th centuries, likely by Syrian monks who founded monasteries in Ethiopia.

The Miracles of Jesus (ff. 8-156, written in a large clear hand) consist largely of the Infancy Gospel of Thomas, describing the Miracles Jesus performed as a young child. This manuscript also includes the beginning of the Book of Miracles of the Virgin Mary (f.2); a hymn to Abba Salama, the fourteenth century head of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (ff. 3-6) and some Miracles of the Ethiopian Saint Abuna Takla Haymanot (ff. 156-9); all later additions written in different hands.

References to King Bakaffa (d.1730) supports the early 18th century date of the main text. This section of the manuscript opens with a full page painting of the Trinity labelled 'Father, Son, and Holy Ghost' (f. 6v) opposite a full page picture of the Virgin Mary and Child (f. 7r). Below the figures are portraits of the manuscript's patrons, a husband and wife, prostrated at their feet. 61 other paintings illustrate the text including a full page image of the crucifixion (f.121v).

The bindings comprise wooden boards covered with stamped leather tooled with large crosses at the centre and the inner cover has a textile inlay. The manuscript was rebound and re-backed by the India Office in the late 19th century.

This manuscript was among a group of an estimated 1000 manuscripts acquired from churches across Ethiopia by Emperor Tewodros II (d. 1868) intended for the church and library he planned to build at Maqdala, his fortress in Northern Ethiopia. In April 1868 British forces led by Lieutenant General Sir Robert Napier laid siege to the fortress to secure the release of British hostages held there (see RCIN 2500869) and Tewodros took his own life. Tewodros's manuscripts, then stored in huts near his temporary church at Maqdala, were among the items subsequently auctioned as spoils of war. Many of these (approximately 400) were bought by Richard Holmes (see RCINs 917350-2 and 922419) who had been sent by the British Museum as part of the Abyssinian Expedition specifically to acquire antiquities and manuscripts in Ethiopia. Richard Holmes presented sixteen of the manuscripts to Queen Victoria who retained six for the Royal Library

(RCINs 1005079-1005084) and in 1869 offered ten back to the Trustees of the British Museum. In 1973 those manuscripts were transferred to the British Library.

The Story of Abba Samuel

St. **Sanuel the Confessor** was born in 597 AD in the city of Daklube, Egypt. His father was a priest.

Abba Samuel spent most of his early years at the monastery of St. Macarius the Great in Wadi Natrun, Egypt, and was a disciple of Abba Aghathon. He was ordained a priest, and God gave him the gift of healing and performing miracles.

While at St. Macarius Monastery, St. Samuel was severely tortured and lost one of his eyes at the hands of imperial officers because of his Non-Chalcedonian faith. Later the Angel of the Lord appeared to him and commanded him to depart and dwell in Mount Qalamon in the region of the Fayoum Oasis in Egypt. St. Samuel obeyed, went there and built a monastery dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Many of his spiritual sons gathered around him and they increased in number until they became thousands of monks.

St. Samuel also suffered at the hands of sun-worshipping Berbers who took him captive for some time before releasing him to return back to his monastery in Mount Qalamon. The Blessed Holy Virgin Mary then appeared to him and told him, "*This place shall be my abode forever,*" and from that day the Berbers never attacked this monastery again.

Abba Samuel the Confessor departed in 693 AD. The al-Qalamoun Monastery he built continues to flourish to this day.

The Prayers of the Ark

Sister Carmen Bernos de Gasztold was a Benedictine nun and gifted writer. In her book entitled *Prayers from the Ark*, the French poet gave voice to God's creatures who sailed with Noah.

During a season of summer reruns, I am sharing again a sampling of my favorite poems. Today's selection features the flutter, flutter, flailing of *The Prayer of the Butterffy*.

Lord!

Where was I?

Oh, yes! This fflower, this sun, thank you!

Your world is beautiful!

This scent of roses . . .

Where was I?

A drop of dew

rolls to sparkle in a lily's heart.

I have to go . . .

Where? I do not know!

The wind has painted fancies

on my wings.

Fancies . . .

Where was I?

Oh, yes! Lord,

I had something to tell you.

Amen!

The Ethiopian Book of Creation

The first Amharic (Ethiopian) translation of the Book of Genesis, presented to George IV when Prince Regent.

This manuscript is the first book of the Bible that was translated into Amharic (the national language of Ethiopia) by Abu Rumi (c. 1750-1819), an Ethiopian linguist and translator. Abu Rumi embarked on the project to translate the entire Bible into Amharic after falling ill in Cairo in 1808. The French Consul, Jean-Louis Asselin de Cherville (1772–1822) provided him with medical care and sponsored the venture. The Ethiopian Bible did not exist in the vernacular at that time, only in Geez (the ancient liturgical language of the Ethiopian church). Over a period of ten years (1808-1818) Abu Rumi made his Amharic translation from an Arabic copy of the Bible. Asselin's aim for the project was more linguistic than religious: to have a comparison text in order to compare the differences between Amharic and Geez.

Asselin sent this manuscript of the Book of Genesis to George IV when Prince Regent on 1 August 1814. He mentioned in his presentation letter that the Scottish traveller Sir James Bruce (1730-1794, who had employed Abu Rumi during his time in Ethiopia) gave Louis XV an Ethiopian manuscript of the Book of Enoch (an apocryphal text preserved only in the canon of the Ethiopian Bible). Bruce also presented George III with sketches he made of the antiquities of Africa (RCINs 911628- 911714) and wrote up his travels in five volumes (RCINs 1124369-1124373).

In order to reimburse the expenses incurred in its preparation, Asselin sold the finished Amharic Bible manuscript to William Jowett on behalf of the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1820 for £1,250. From this they published printed Amharic copies of the Gospels in 1824, the entire New Testament in 1829, and Abu Rumi's complete Bible translation in 1840. This was the only Amharic bible available until Emperor Haile Sellassie commissioned another more than a century later, printed in 1960.

The Ethiopian Liturgy of the Hours

Dear Children of God, how are you? How is life and school? How are you doing in your education? Are you studying well and getting good grades? How about house chores? Are you helping your families by obeying their house rule? Hope you have become an obedient child to your families and God more than anything.

Children, we hope you remember our last lesson about prayer because today we have presented to you the second part. We will see the seven times of prayer which are Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers/Compline/, Bed time and Midnight.

12th Hour - Prime

At the 12th hour, we pray first because it is the hour of creation of Adam. The first mankind was created by the image and likeness of Holy Trinity. The second reason is about the guardian angels who watches us from any harm and evil for the salvation of our souls. It is the hour of which our guardian angels meet as it is the hour exchange shifts. The angel who watches over the night leave the place for the day watcher. The other reason is in the commemoration of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who stood in front of Pilate for a trail.

3rd Hour- Terce

We pray at this hour because it is the time that our mother Eve was created. Second, it is the time of which our Holy Mother Saint Virgin Mary received the good news from Archangel Saint Gabriel, who announced to her to be the Mother of God and it is the hour that Our Lord Jesus Christ was whipped in the Pilate square. This is also the hour which Holy Spirit descended upon the Holy Apostles.

6th Hour - Sext

This hour is the commemoration of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ suffering and in Calvary. It is also the hour where the sun's heat increases, the devils become strong and men weak and thus we shall pray to defeat our enemies.

9th Hour - None

We pray in this hour since it is the time of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ the parting of His Holy soul from His Holy Body. The other reason is about the angels and our deeds. Be it bad or good deed, our guardian angels ascended our deed to the Lord.

11th Hour - Vespers

The Vespers (Sunset) is associated (related) with taking down Lord Jesus Christ's body from the cross. After He died upon the Cross for us, they took Him down at this eleventh hour and was buried.

3rd Hour- Bed time

All of us shall pray before going to bed for sleep in thanking God for everything He gave us in our life. We thank Him for keeping us in peace, healthy and safe. In this hour, we must also pray asking God His protection from devils that comes at night whilst we are sleeping because they bring bad dreams and anxiety (distress, worry). We pray so that God could give us another day on earth for we could see another sun rise.

At this hour Lord Jesus taught the disciples about prayer in Gethsemane and thus we shall pray realizing the value of prayer.

The Midnight (6th) Hour:

Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was born at this hour at Bethlehem. It is the hour of His Resurrection (rising from the death) and His second coming for Judgment.

Dear Children of God, it is very important to know these hours of prayers and pray to be protected from any harm and evil. Prayers help us get what we want and live in peace, love and happiness.

Farewell Children, we hope you have understood our lesson on prayer and pray hard. Good, we leave you with much love until we meet next time.

May God be with you, Amen!

The Ethiopian Hymn to the Virgin

The Veneration of the Blessed Mary

The Church honors the Blessed Virgin Mary most of all the saints. She is venerated especially for her supreme grace and the call she received from God. It is believed that by the grace of God she committed no actual sin. St. Elisabeth cried and said: "Blessed art thou above all women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb . . ." (Luke 1, 39, 45). St. Gabriel said to her: "Be joyful, O thou that art full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou above all women" (Luke 1, 28). So we, receiving and believing these words of the Gospel, honor and praise her as the mother of our Lord, our Lady, a lady blessed, holy, exalted, honored and praised.

The Virgin Mother of God has a very special place in the Ethiopian cult, and devotion to our Mother holds the highest place. Ethiopia is known as the country of Mary, her protectress. Among the saints in heaven she is venerated in a special way. She is loved by her Son so dearly that He will grant her every prayer. Because of the mission she received from God, her life is most closely linked with the mysteries of Jesus Christ, and there is no one who has followed in the footsteps of the Incarnate Word more closely and with more merit than she; and no one has more grace and power over the heart of the Son of God, and through Him with the Heavenly Father. Holier than the Cherubim and Seraphim she enjoys unquestionably greater glory than all the other saints for she is full of grace, she is the Mother of God, who happily gave birth to the Redeemer for us.

She is a glorified human soul, more perfect and more lovable than any other. She is worthy of the highest place and the most exalted honor that a creature can attain to in heaven, for through God's choosing of her for the destiny of being His Mother, through abundance of grace which He bestowed upon her, and through her fidelity in corresponding with this grace, she has reached a degree of glory which place her higher than God's angels or His other Saints.

The Blessed Virgin Mary is constantly referred to in the Liturgy. Special prayer to her in the form of Ave Maria or Hail Mary is recited during the Liturgy immediately before the Lections:

Hail, O Mary, full of grace,
The Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.
Pray and intercede for us with thy beloved Son,
That he forgives our sins.

Very moving is the prayer of the priest after the reading of the Acts of Apostles. Here it is:
"Rejoice, O thou of whom we ask healing, O Holy, full of honor, ever-virgin, parent of God, mother of Christ, offer up our prayer on high to thy beloved Son that he may forgive us our sins.

"Rejoice, O thou who didst bear for us the Very light of Righteousness, even Christ our God. O Virgin pure, plead for us unto our Lord that he may have mercy upon our souls and forgive us our sins.

"Rejoice, O Virgin Mary, very Queen; rejoice, O pride of our kind; rejoice O thou that barest for us Emmanuel our God. We ask thee to remember us, O true Mediatrix, before our Lord Jesus Christ that he may have mercy upon our souls and forgive us our sins."

Our Lady is commemorated every month and there are more than thirty feasts of Mary in one year. The name of Mary is the most popular, both for men and women. Innumerable churches are erected in her honour. The Nagara Maryam, or History of Mary, is a collection of stories about her life arranged for the twelve months of the year. There are two collections of homilies to be read on the Festivals of the Virgin, arranged for the different days of the week: the Praises of Mary (Weddase Maryam) and the Organ of the Virgin or Organ of Praises (Arganona Dengel, Arganona Weddase). One of the Anaphoras is called "Of our Lady Mary". Plenty of pictures of the Virgin are to be seen in the churches and sleeping places. Another important book we have in connection with the Mother of God is called the Wonders of Mary. Ethiopia is a daughter of Mary, her star in peace and war and her last resort in everything. Nothing can be taught to the Church in devotion and honor to the Blessed Virgin. Finally the Church teaches that our Lady was taken to Heaven soul and body where she prays for us until the last Judgement

The Invocation of Angels

Angels are venerated and honored in the Ethiopian Church. There exists a Holy Book known as the Homilies of the angels which shows how they are sent by God and come down from heaven to help and guard the faithful and destroy the wicked by divine punishment (.....). From the Homilies of the Angels we learn how God in His goodness sends His Angels and saves from evil the faithful who fear Him and believe in His name, and guards and helps them in the time of affliction. We pray to God that he will send His holy angels to save us from all evil, and that in times of trouble His angels will help us. They repel the demons from the church and guard the priests lest the devils snatch away the Flesh and blood of our Master. So also when the priests depart, one or more angels remain to guard the church and the Ark (tabot).

There are nine orders of the Angels ascending in the following order: Angels, Archangels, Princedoms, Authorities, Powers, Dominions, Thrones, Cherubim and Seraphim. Devoutly are kept

the feasts of all Angels including St. Michael, St. Gabriel and St. Raphael. Many churches are built and named after them. The feast of St. Michael is a national and religious celebrated on 20th January (Ter 12, Ethiopian Calendar) and follows immediately Epiphany (Timeket, the commemoration of the Baptism of Jesus in Jordan). The feasts of Gabriel are on 26th March, 6th June, 26th July, 28th December. There is a celebrated church in Harar named after St. Gabriel; there miracles occur and his feast is celebrated every year on 28th December and attended by thousands of pilgrims. The feast of St. Michael the Archangel is celebrated on the 12th day of each month. Uriel, Regel, Remiel and Phanuel are other revered angels.

The Invocation of Saints and feasts

Our church believes in the ancient customs of honoring the heroic servants of God but it does not offer them the adoration which befits God. It has on its list of known saints hundreds of names – men and women. The saints are chosen friends of God; they are souls which have served Him well. They are deserving of our homage, because of their holiness. They are united to us, we honor them and they pray for us. They present our prayers to the Almighty and unite them to their own; we honor them with religious homage in order that thereby we may obtain the assistance of those beloved friends of God. When we offer homage to them, when we build churches and institute feasts in their honor, we are not depriving God of adoration, we are adoring Him the more because we are honoring the results of the work of His grace.

We have a prodigious number of saints and martyrs in the Church and every day has a saint. Among the Saints the most celebrated are St. George, Tekla Haymanote, Gabra Manfas Qiddus, John the Baptist, the Apostle, Frumentius, Yared, Pantalewon, Basalota Mikael, Anorewos (Honorius). St. Aaron. Filipos, St. Stefanos, St. Ewostatewos (Eustathius), St. Marqorewos, SS. Fere Mikael and Zara Abraham. St. Aba Kemzun, St. Takla Hawaryat, St. Waltala Petros, the 'Nine Saints', St. Qirqos, St. Aragawi, King Caleb, St. Lalibela, St. Tewodros, St. Amba Mikael, St. Mabaa Seyon, St. Helena, St. Martha, St. Esther, St. Judith, St. Elisabeth, St. Anna, St. Magdalawit, St. Maryam (of Course). Each family has its own patron saint or angel whose feast it celebrates every year both in church and at home when friends and neighbors are invited.

Various feasts of the Blessed Virgin and the angels and Saints and Martyrs are celebrated. They are usually dated in accordance with the secular calendar and are commemorated on a definite date each year. According to the Ethiopian calendar the feasts of some saints are celebrated as follows: St. John on Jan. 4., St. Stephan Jan. 1. St. George April 23, the Days of Baptism Jan. 11, the 318 Nicean Fathers September 21, Dioscorus Sep. 7, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob 28th of each month, Cyril of Alexandria Feb. 14

Senkesar or seneksar is the calendar of Ethiopian Church. In this we have notices of the saints and Martyrs. A short rhymed poem, known as a Salam, is added at the end of each notice. As example, on the 28th of Sene the list of notice (each followed by a Salam) is as follow:

- (1) Memorial of the Feast of Nativity of our Lord,
- (2) The Holy Martyrs, the seven ascetics of Tuna and their 140 companions,
- (3) The Holy Martyrs, Abba, Hor, Abba Besoy and Daydarn their mother,
- (4) Tewodros (Theodore), son of David, king of Ethiopia ,
- (5) mark, king of Rome,

(6) The two fold translation of the body of St. Amda Mikael, once in the reign of Eskander and again in the reign of Lebna Dengel

Another Example:

Sene 12 (June 6) Lalibela. ' On this day is also (the feast of) Lalibela king of Ethiopia, the blessed and pure , and the seer of the mystery of heaven. This Saint his parents reared from the day of his birth in the fear of God. Then follows, as usual, the short rhymed poem known as the Salam:

'Hail King Lalibela, who in dry stone.

With wisdom churches built, nor mortar used.

To show that his should be the kingly power,

(People and kings he charmed with honey sweet)

Bees round him swarmed the day that he was born'.

Among the churches built in honor of saints are St. George's Cathedral, St Stephan and St. Mary churches in Addis Ababa.

The Canonization of a Saint

The saints whose names are on the authoritative list of the church are not the only saints. They are only the declared ones. Their virtues were so great that the fame of them became widespread and a spirit of devotion sprang up in the hearts of the faithful which in time led the church authorities to examine their lives and works and command public veneration of them.

A person canonized as a saint of the Ethiopian Church by the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate.

The Veneration of Relics

The veneration of relics which the Ethiopian Orthodox Church faithful show is not a superstition, a form of idolatry or a survival of paganism. By relics we mean the bodies of the departed saints, fragments of their bodies and the like. Through these bodies benefits are bestowed by God on men. If we honor the saints whose souls are in Paradise, we must also honor their bodies which labored and suffered with their souls. We anticipated the glory which God will give to these bodies at the last day. We also honor the things that were closely connected with the earthly life of those servants of God. The relics of St. Tekla Haimanot and some of his utensils are still preserved and honored. Sometimes God makes these relics instruments of healing and of other miracles and he bestows favour and grace on those who venerate them.

The Veneration of Images

The veneration of Images (icons) is part of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church tradition. But this veneration is directed not to the images as such, but to the holy persons whom they represent. The Orthodox venerates flat, two-dimensional icons; they do not pray to three-dimensional statues because these representations may be realistic and may become in themselves idols of veneration. Images of our Blessed Virgin Mother; Her son Jesus Christ, the Apostles, the Angels and saints are not worshipped at all. The Orthodox adores no one but God. The image venerated is honored only as a means for directing and increasing our homage and veneration towards that person and through him to God by whose grace he became what he was. We do not adore the figure of the sacred cross. Offerings of incense and light are given to the figure of the cross, to the holy books of

the gospels, and to other sacred objects in order to do them an honor which passes to the person represented. By kissing or uncovering heads to the image of Christ, the Cross, the Virgin Mother of God and other saints we adore Christ and honor His mother and saints and angels.

Pilgrimage

The ancient pious practice of making journeys to distant shrines, of arousing or increasing devotion by visiting a holy place, is still in vogue in Ethiopia.

A pilgrimage is often the fulfillment of a vow and sometimes the performing of an imposed penance. Scenes of apparitions, hermitages of saints, churches which possess the treasured relics of saints and martyrs, are centres of pilgrimages. The church recommends pilgrimage and looks upon them as an excellent means of devotion and penance and of consequent purification and spiritual benefit. God often grants favours in the form of graces, miracles and wordily blessings at a particular places as a reward for perseverance and fervor of those who have journeyed thither and as an aid in increasing devotion to our Lord, His Virgin Mother, His servants, and angels who are specially honored at certain shrines.

The Christians of Ethiopia make pilgrimages to Jerusalem where there is an ancient Ethiopian Monastery and special portion in the Cathedral of the Sepulchre. Formerly vast numbers went on foot annually making frequent halts along the way for divine services. Among the celebrated centres of pilgrimage domestically are: Debra Libanos in Shoa, the monastery containing the shrine of St. Tekla Haimanot; the Church of Tsion at Axum, the oldest in the country; the church of Egziaber Ab in the monastery of Gishen, home of the fragment of the True Cross; the church of St. Gabriel at Kulubi, the place of miracles where many faithful go to fulfil a "silet" or vow to the Angel in return for a request already granted.

Celibacy of the clergy

A secular clergyman is allowed to marry before ordination but a wife may not be put away after his ordination. The priest who lays claim to a higher spiritual state because he is unmarried is advised to seek monastic vows. The status of unmarried priests is recognized. Bishops are celibate. A deacon marries before he becomes a priest. A priest is not allowed to marry again after the death of his wife. The Ethiopic Didascalia states that "a first marriage is pure God, but those that marry a second time are transgressors of the law." Happily there is no celibacy problem in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, the practice of the early church has been well preserved to the satisfaction of the clergy with the division into the regular clergy who are celibate and married secular clergy. Some particular churches are served by the celibate priests exclusively. The people prefer married priesthood.

Church Buildings

A church is a building set apart for worship, and the name is used only for such structures as are for the general use of the faithful, as distinguished from chapels, which are for some community or family.

The number of churches in Ethiopia is immense, from the little round village church on a hill to large rectangular and octagonal buildings or modern cathedral in the main cities. The round churches are more numerous.

All churches have a three-fold division. The outside ambulatory of the three concentric parts of the Ethiopian Church is called Qene Mahelet, i.e. the place where the hymns are sung and where the debteras or cantors (singers) stand. The next chamber is the kidist, the Nave, where communion is administered to the people, and the third part is the innermost one, the mekdes where the tabot (Ark) rests. The form of the Hebrew sanctuary was preferred by Ethiopians to the basilica type. Churches usually built upon a small hill overlooking the village.

None may enter the sanctuary except the ordained person. The entrance of the woman looks towards the south and that of the men towards the north; the service entrance through which the priests go in is towards the east. Bethlehem is where the sacrifice prepared for the Eucharist which is at the back of the church.

There are grades of churches according to their importance and honour. Some parish churches are called dabir churches, those served by married priests; some are geddam, serviced by monks (unmarried priests). Churches are consecrated but it is the tabot which gives sanctity to the church in which it is placed and if it is desecrated in one way or another it is blessed again either by the bishop or by other church officials like the Qomos.

Among the celebrated churches of Ethiopia are the churches of Debra Damo, situated on the lofty and almost inaccessible flat top mountain of that name in Tigre, the monolithic Churches of Lalibela, eleven massive sanctuaries carved out of solid rock; the rectangular sanctuary of St. Mary of Zion at Axum known already in the sixth century; St. Mary's church at Addis Alem; the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity and St. George in Addis Ababa; the celebrated sanctuary of Debra Libanos; St. Gabriel church at Kulubi where miracles take place; the sanctuary in Jerusalem; the shrine of the monastery of Gishen in the mountains of Ambasel deep in Wollo.

The altars which are of hollow brick or stone, are covered with wood and adorned with crosses and images of saints. Wood covered with stone is sometimes used to form a portable altar. In practically all churches there is a marble basin for the ceremony of the washing of the Feet on Maunday Thursday, and on the West Side there is a cistern for use on the twelfth Night. Churches are usually built in pleasant spots and are surrounded with walls of massive stone which add to the solemnity and the quietude of the building. The right hand side of each church is reserved for women, as they are not expected to mingle with men. As a rule shoes should be removed before entering the church and silence kept there. There are a variety of pictures in the churches including our Lord, the Blessed Virgin, the apostles and the angels. There is always a bell or gong. Each church has its boundary and its parish.

It is customary for the faithful to bow when passing a church at a distance and when near to kiss the lintels of the church door. This testifies to the deep respect which the Ethiopians give to places reserved for the worship of the Almighty.

The Consecration of a Church

The consecration of a church is a solemn and impressive ceremony with rites symbolic of the sacred uses to which the edifice is dedicated. The various parts of this service are of very ancient date. The building is sanctified by prayer. Many psalms, responses and antiphons form part of the service. The Tabot or the Ark, previously consecrated by the Patriarch, is installed with grandeur and is the chief feature of the ceremony. It is conducted by the bishop and priests. God's protection on the new house which He has founded is asked for, that true service may always be rendered to Him there. At the consecration of a new church a solemn Mass is celebrated and the anaphora of John, son of Thunder, is used on the occasion.

The consecrated tabot is brought and taken in procession around the church. The intercession of the saints is invoked. During the entry into the church beautiful anthems are intoned. A most important feature of the ceremonies is the consecration of the altar, a very important part of the Ethiopian Church where the Sacrifice of the Mass is offered. Holy water is used and the sign of the cross is made with holy oil or chrism on the altar which is anointed. The odour of incense fills the house of God and a special Mass is said for the dedication of the church.

Eschatology

In an equivocal term, the traditional Apostles' Creed sums up one of the central mysteries of Christianity: God promise of eternal paradise or perdition beyond the grave. The Ethiopian Church does not countenance those Christian theologians who readily agree the eschatology – the doctrine of death and the after life – owes more to superstition than to super natural wisdom. Here is the doctrine of the church on this mystery.

Where are the souls of the dead? The souls of the righteous shall abide in Paradise – Eccl. 12:7; Luke 23:43; Luke. 14, 22 – and the soul of sinners in Sheol until the advent Luke 16:1, 3, 31. But at the last day, when our Lord Jesus Christ has come in the majesty of His kingdom, their souls shall be united to their bodies on the day of resurrection and they shall arise from the earth and their works shall separate them, the righteous shall stand on the right and the sinners on the left before the Lord. Judgment shall be given in favour of the righteous and they shall inherit the kingdom of heaven and the everlasting life. The sinners shall be condemned and enter into everlasting torment and the fire of Hell (John 5:28, 29; Thess. 4:13, 18; kidan 12, 2, 3).

Definition of the places where the souls of the righteous and unrighteous go after death will help for a clear understanding of the church's stance. Sheol or gehanem, corresponding to the purgatory of the Roman Catholic Church, is the place of suffering where after the private judgement, the souls of the unjust are detained till the Last judgment day. They may be delivered from this suffering through the prayers of the faithful, mass, alms to the poor on their behalf and then go to Gennet where they live happily until the Last judgment. Gennet or paradise is the place of happiness where the just, righteous or holy souls live until judgment day when they will join heaven itself, the abode of God. Gehanem is the permanent place for the unjust after the last Judgment.

With these definition the belief of the church will be clear. Accordingly, after a particular judgment the soul either goes to the place of happiness called the Paradise or a place of suffering called Sheol. The souls remain in these places till the last Judgment day for the final Hell or the eternal happiness place Heaven. The prayers, Masses for the dead, alms giving or other good deeds of the faithful may incline God to have mercy on those sinners and deliver them from the misery to Paradise where they will wait for full happiness in mengiste semayat, the home of God. This

account explains the momentous significance of the last Absolution by the priest or state of righteousness before death.

To sum up, at the death of a person, his soul enters some intermediate state where shall remain until the resurrection of the body at the last day and the final decision will be made for everlasting bliss or hell. As to the mode and manner of the origin of the soul different opinions have been advanced. Pre-existentialism teaches that souls exist before their connection with the bodies; Emanatism teaches that individual souls proceed by emanation (out flowing) from the Divine Substance and so the soul is part of God. Creationism holds that each individual soul is created by God out of nothing at the moment of its unification with the body; the creation and infusion of the spiritual souls coincides with the moment of conception. Generationism traces the origin of the human soul, as well as the origin of the body, back to the act of generation performed by the parents. According to it, parents are the originators of both body and soul. The cruder form of generationism, i.e. the traducianism expounded by Tertullian, teaches that with the corporeal semen, a part of the soul-substance of the parents (tradux) is transmitted to the child. A less crude form (held by St. Augustine as possible) holds fast to the spirituality of the soul and makes the soul of the child emerge from semen spiritual of the parents. It is difficult to reconcile the immediate creation of the soul by God with the hanging-on of the sin of Adam to the posterity.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church teaches Traducianism. God created Adam and Eve and gave them a command to multiply. The soul and body are transmitted to children from parents, there is no separate creation of souls. Body and soul will together be rewarded or punished as one inseparable entity in conformity with the mode and manner of the traducian origin of the soul.

The Second Treatise of the Great Seth

And the perfect Majesty is at rest in the ineffable light, in the truth of the mother of all these, and all of you that attain to me, to me alone who am perfect, because of the Word. For I exist with all the greatness of the Spirit, which is a friend to us and our kindred alike, since I brought forth a word to the glory of our Father, through his goodness, as well as an imperishable thought; that is, the Word within him - it is slavery that we shall die with Christ - and an imperishable and undefiled thought, an incomprehensible marvel, the writing of the ineffable water which is the word from us. It is I who am in you, and you are in me, just as the Father is in you in innocence.

Let us gather an assembly together. Let us visit that creation of his. Let us send someone forth in it, just as he visited (the) Ennoias, the regions below. And I said these things to the whole multitude of the multitudinous assembly of the rejoicing Majesty. The whole house of the Father of Truth rejoiced that I am the one who is from them. I produced thought about the Ennoias which came out of the undefiled Spirit, about the descent upon the water, that is, the regions below. And they all had a single mind, since it is out of one. They charged me since I was willing. I came forth to reveal the glory to my kindred and my fellow spirits.

For those who were in the world had been prepared by the will of our sister Sophia - she who is a whore - because of the innocence which has not been uttered. And she did not ask anything from the All, nor from the greatness of the Assembly, nor from the Pleroma. Since she was first, she

came forth to prepare monads and places for the Son of Light and the fellow workers which she took from the elements below to build bodily dwellings from them. But, having come into being in an empty glory, they ended in destruction in the dwellings in which they were, since they were prepared by Sophia. They stand ready to receive the life-giving word of the ineffable Monad and of the greatness of the assembly of all those who persevere and those who are in me.

I visited a bodily dwelling. I cast out the one who was in it first, and I went in. And the whole multitude of the archons became troubled. And all the matter of the archons, as well as all the begotten powers of the earth, were shaken when it saw the likeness of the Image, since it was mixed. And I am the one who was in it, not resembling him who was in it first. For he was an earthly man, but I, I am from above the heavens. I did not refuse them even to become a Christ, but I did not reveal myself to them in the love which was coming forth from me. I revealed that I am a stranger to the regions below.

There was a great disturbance in the whole earthly area, with confusion and flight, as well as (in) the plan of the archons. And some were persuaded, when they saw the wonders which were being accomplished by me. And all these, with the race, that came down, flee from him who had fled from the throne to the Sophia of hope, since she had earlier given the sign concerning us and all the ones with me - those of the race of Adonaios. Others also fled, as if from the Cosmocrator and those with them, since they have brought every (kind of) punishment upon me. And there was a flight of their mind about what they would counsel concerning me, thinking that she (Sophia) is the whole greatness, and speaking false witness, moreover, against the Man and the whole greatness of the assembly.

It was not possible for them to know who the Father of Truth, the Man of the Greatness, is. But they who received the name because of contact with ignorance - which (is) a burning and a vessel - having created it to destroy Adam, whom they had made, in order to cover up those who are theirs in the same way. But they, the archons, those of the place of Yaldabaoth, reveal the realm of the angels, which humanity was seeking in order that they may not know the Man of Truth. For Adam, whom they had formed, appeared to them. And a fearful motion came about throughout their entire dwelling, lest the angels surrounding them rebel. For without those who were offering praise - I did not really die lest their archangel become empty.

And then a voice - of the Cosmocrator - came to the angels: "I am God and there is no other beside me." But I laughed joyfully when I examined his empty glory. But he went on to say, "Who is man?" And the entire host of his angels, who had seen Adam and his dwelling, were laughing at his smallness. And thus did their Ennoia come to be removed outside the Majesty of the heavens, i.e., the Man of Truth, whose name they saw since he is in a small dwelling place, since they are small (and) senseless in their empty Ennoia, namely their laughter. It was contagion for them.

The whole greatness of the Fatherhood of the Spirit was at rest in his places. And I am he who was with him, since I have an Ennoia of a single emanation from the eternal ones and the undefiled and immeasurable incomprehensibilities. I placed the small Ennoia in the world, having disturbed them and frightened the whole multitude of the angels and their ruler. And I was visiting them all with fire and flame because of my Ennoia. And everything pertaining to them was brought about because of me. And there came about a disturbance and a fight around the Seraphim and Cherubim, since their glory will fade, and the confusion around Adonaios on both sides and their dwelling - to the

Cosmocrator and him who said, "Let us seize him"; others again, "The plan will certainly not materialize."

For Adonaios knows me because of hope. And I was in the mouths of lions. And the plan which they devised about me to release their Error and their senselessness - I did not succumb to them as they had planned. But I was not afflicted at all. Those who were there punished me. And I did not die in reality but in appearance, lest I be put to shame by them because these are my kinsfolk. I removed the shame from me and I did not become fainthearted in the face of what happened to me at their hands. I was about to succumb to fear, and I <suffered> according to their sight and thought, in order that they may never find any word to speak about them. For my death, which they think happened, (happened) to them in their error and blindness, since they nailed their man unto their death. For their Ennoias did not see me, for they were deaf and blind. But in doing these things, they condemn themselves. Yes, they saw me; they punished me. It was another, their father, who drank the gall and the vinegar; it was not I. They struck me with the reed; it was another, Simon, who bore the cross on his shoulder. I was another upon Whom they placed the crown of thorns. But I was rejoicing in the height over all the wealth of the archons and the offspring of their error, of their empty glory. And I was laughing at their ignorance.

And I subjected all their powers. For as I came downward, no one saw me. For I was altering my shapes, changing from form to form. And therefore, when I was at their gates, I assumed their likeness. For I passed them by quietly, and I was viewing the places, and I was not afraid nor ashamed, for I was undefiled. And I was speaking with them, mingling with them through those who are mine, and trampling on those who are harsh to them with zeal, and quenching the flame. And I was doing all these things because of my desire to accomplish what I desired by the will of the Father above.

And the Son of the Majesty, who was hidden in the regions below, we brought to the height where I <was> in all these aeons with them, which (height) no one has seen nor known, where the wedding of the wedding robe is, the new one and not the old, nor does it perish. For it is a new and perfect bridal chamber of the heavens, as I have revealed (that) there are three ways: an undefiled mystery in a spirit of this aeon, which does not perish, nor is it fragmentary, nor able to be spoken of; rather, it is undivided, universal, and permanent. For the soul, the one from the height, will not speak about the error which is here, nor transfer from these aeons, since it will be transferred when it becomes free and when it is endowed with nobility in the world, standing before the Father without weariness and fear, always mixed with the Nous of power (and) of form. They will see me from every side without hatred. For since they see me, they are being seen (and) are mixed with them. Since they did not put me to shame, they were not put to shame. Since they were not afraid before me, they will pass by every gate without fear and will be perfected in the third glory.

It was my going to the revealed height which the world did not accept, my third baptism in a revealed image. When they had fled from the fire of the seven Authorities, and the sun of the powers of the archons set, darkness took them. And the world became poor when he was restrained with a multitude of fetters. They nailed him to the tree, and they fixed him with four nails of brass. The veil of his temple he tore with his hands. It was a trembling which seized the chaos of the earth, for the souls which were in the sleep below were released. And they arose. They went about boldly, having shed zealous service of ignorance and unlearnedness beside the dead tombs, having put on the

new man, since they have come to know that perfect Blessed One of the eternal and incomprehensible Father and the infinite light, which is I, since I came to my own and united them with myself. There is no need for many words, for our Ennoia was with their Ennoia. Therefore they knew what I speak of, for we took counsel about the destruction of the archons. And therefore I did the will of the Father, who is I.

After we went forth from our home, and came down to this world, and came into being in the world in bodies, we were hated and persecuted, not only by those who are ignorant, but also by those who think that they are advancing the name of Christ, since they were unknowingly empty, not knowing who they are, like dumb animals. They persecuted those who have been liberated by me, since they hate them - those who, should they shut their mouth, would weep with a profitless groaning because they did not fully know me. Instead, they served two masters, even a multitude. But you will become victorious in everything, in war and battles, jealous division and wrath. But in the uprightness of our love we are innocent, pure, (and) good, since we have a mind of the Father in an ineffable mystery.

For it was ludicrous. It is I who bear witness that it was ludicrous, since the archons do not know that it is an ineffable union of undefiled truth, as exists among the sons of light, of which they made an imitation, having proclaimed a doctrine of a dead man and lies so as to resemble the freedom and purity of the perfect assembly, (and) <joining> themselves with their doctrine to fear and slavery, worldly cares, and abandoned worship, being small (and) ignorant, since they do not contain the nobility of the truth, for they hate the one in whom they are, and love the one in whom they are not. For they did not know the Knowledge of the Greatness, that it is from above and (from) a fountain of truth, and that it is not from slavery and jealousy, fear and love of worldly matter. For that which is not theirs and that which is theirs they use fearlessly and freely. They do not desire, because they have authority, and a law from themselves over whatever they will wish.

But those who have not are poor, that is, those who do not possess him. And they desire him and lead astray those, who through them have become like those who possess the truth of their freedom, just as they bought us for servitude and constraint of care and fear. This person is in slavery. And he who is brought by constraint of force and threat has been guarded by God. But the entire nobility of the Fatherhood is not guarded, since he guards only him who is from him, without word and constraint, since he is united with his will, he who belongs only to the Ennoia of the Fatherhood, to make it Perfect and ineffable through the living water, to be with you mutually in wisdom, not only in word of hearing but in deed and fulfilled word. For the perfect ones are worthy to be established in this way and to be united with me, in order that they may not share in any enmity, in a good friendship. I accomplish everything through the Good One, for this is the union of the truth, that they should have no adversary. But everyone who brings division - and he will learn no wisdom at all because he brings division and is not a friend - is hostile to them all. But he who lives in harmony and friendship of brotherly love, naturally and not artificially, completely and not partially, this person is truly the desire of the Father. He is the universal one and perfect love.

For Adam was a laughingstock, since he was made a counterfeit type of man by the Hebdomad, as if he had become stronger than I and my brothers. We are innocent with respect to him, since we have not sinned. And Abraham and Isaac and Jacob were a laughingstock, since they, the counterfeit fathers, were given a name by the Hebdomad, as if he had become stronger than I and

my brothers. We are innocent with respect to him, since we have not sinned. David was a laughingstock in that his son was named the Son of Man, having been influenced by the Hebdomad, as if he had become stronger than I and the fellow members of my race. But we are innocent with respect to him; we have not sinned. Solomon was a laughingstock, since he thought that he was Christ, having become vain through the Hebdomad, as if he had become stronger than I and my brothers. But we are innocent with respect to him. I have not sinned. The 12 prophets were laughingstocks, since they have come forth as imitations of the true prophets. They came into being as counterfeits through the Hebdomad, as if he had become stronger than I and my brothers. But we are innocent with respect to him, since we have not sinned. Moses, a faithful servant, was a laughingstock, having been named "the Friend," since they perversely bore witness concerning him who never knew me. Neither he nor those before him, from Adam to Moses and John the Baptist, none of them knew me nor my brothers.

For they had a doctrine of angels to observe dietary laws and bitter slavery, since they never knew truth, nor will they know it. For there is a great deception upon their soul, making it impossible for them ever to find a Nous of freedom in order to know him, until they come to know the Son of Man. Now concerning my Father, I am he whom the world did not know, and because of this, it (the world) rose up against me and my brothers. But we are innocent with respect to him; we have not sinned.

For the Archon was a laughingstock because he said, "I am God, and there is none greater than I. I alone am the Father, the Lord, and there is no other beside me. I am a jealous God, who brings the sins of the fathers upon the children for three and four generations." As if he had become stronger than I and my brothers! But we are innocent with respect to him, in that we have not sinned, since we mastered his teaching. Thus he was in an empty glory. And he does not agree with our Father. And thus through our fellowship we grasped his teaching, since he was vain in an empty glory. And he does not agree with our Father, for he was a laughingstock and judgment and false prophecy.

O those who do not see, you do not see your blindness, i.e., this which was not known, nor has it ever been known, nor has it been known about him. They did not listen to firm obedience. Therefore they proceeded in a judgment of error, and they raised their defiled and murderous hands against him, as if they were beating the air. And the senseless and blind ones are always senseless, always being slaves of law and earthly fear.

I am Christ, the Son of Man, the one from you who is among you. I am despised for your sake, in order that you yourselves may forget the difference. And do not become female, lest you give birth to evil and (its) brothers: jealousy and division, anger and wrath, fear and a divided heart, and empty, non-existent desire. But I am an ineffable mystery to you.

Then before the foundation of the world, when the whole multitude of the Assembly came together upon the places of the Ogdoad, when they had taken counsel about a spiritual wedding which is in union, and thus he was perfected in the ineffable places by a living word, the undefiled wedding was consummated through the Mesotes of Jesus, who inhabits them all and possesses them, who abides in an undivided love of power. And surrounding him, he appears to him as a Monad of all these, a thought and a father, since he is one. And he stands by them all, since he as a whole came forth alone. And he is life, since he came from the Father of ineffable and perfect Truth, (the father) of those who are there, the union of Peace and a friend of good things, and life eternal and undefiled joy, in a great harmony of life and faith, through eternal life of fatherhood and motherhood and

sisterhood and rational wisdom. They had agreed with Nous, who stretches out (and) will stretch out in joyful union and is trustworthy and faithfully listens to someone. And he is in fatherhood and motherhood and rational brotherhood and wisdom. And this is a wedding of truth, and a repose of incorruption, in a spirit of truth, in every mind, and a perfect light in an unnameable mystery. But this is not, nor will it happen among us in any region or place in division and breach of peace, but (in) union and a mixture of love, all of which are perfected in the one who is.

It also happened in the places under heaven for their reconciliation. Those who knew me in salvation and undividedness, and those who existed for the glory of the father and the truth, having been separated, blended into the one through the living word. And I am in the spirit and the truth of the motherhood, just as he has been there; I was among those who are united in the friendship of friends forever, who neither know hostility at all, nor evil, but who are united by my Knowledge in word and peace which exists in perfection with everyone and in them all. And those who assumed the form of my type will assume the form of my word. Indeed, these will come forth in light forever, and (in) friendship with each other in the spirit, since they have known in every respect (and) indivisibly that what is, is One. And all of these are one. And thus they will learn about the One, as (did) the Assembly and those dwelling in it. For the father of all these exists, being immeasurable (and) immutable: Nous and Word and Division and Envy and Fire. And he is entirely one, being the All with them all in a single doctrine, because all these are from a single spirit. O unseeing ones, why did you not know the mystery rightly?

But the archons around Yaldabaoth were disobedient because of the Ennoia who went down to him from her sister Sophia. They made for themselves a union with those who were with them in a mixture of a fiery cloud, which was their Envy, and the rest who were brought forth by their creatures, as if they had bruised the noble pleasure of the Assembly. And therefore they revealed a mixture of ignorance in a counterfeit of fire and earth and a murderer, since they are small and untaught, without knowledge having dared these things, and not having understood that light has fellowship with light, and darkness with darkness, and the corruptible with the perishable, and the imperishable with the incorruptible.

Now these things I have presented to you - I am Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, who is exalted above the heavens - O perfect and incorruptible ones, because of the incorruptible and perfect mystery and the ineffable one. But they think that we decreed them before the foundation of the world, in order that, when we emerge from the places of the world, we may present there the symbols of incorruption from the spiritual union unto knowledge. You do not know it, because the fleshly cloud overshadows you. But I alone am the friend of Sophia. I have been in the bosom of the father from the beginning, in the place of the sons of the truth, and the Greatness. Rest then with me, my fellow spirits and my brothers, forever.

The Hymn of the Savior

*Pass me not, O gentle Savior,
here my humble cry;
while on others thou art calling,
do not pass me by.*

Fanny Jane Crosby (1820-1915) "set the standard for the 'successful' writing of gospel hymns," according to *UM Hymnal* editor Carlton R. Young. She was the author of over 8,500 gospel songs.

Blind at six weeks of age, Crosby began composing texts at age 6. She began her study at age 12 at the New York School for the Blind, a school she later served as a teacher. A friend of several presidents, Crosby became one of the most important advocates for the cause of the blind in the United States, addressing a session of Congress on the topic.

Her texts were set to the compositions of some of the most prominent gospel composers of the day including William Bradbury, William Doane, Robert Lowry and Ira Sankey. Crosby composed under a number of pen names. She married blind musician Alexander Van Alstyne, and British hymnals insist on using her married name, Frances Van Alstyne.

"Pass me not" (1868) first appeared in *Songs of Devotion* for Christian Associations (1870), a collection compiled by William H. Doane (1832-1915). The late hymnologist William J. Reynolds discovered that the inspiration for this hymn was the result of a visit to a prison by the poet during spring 1868. He notes: "After she had spoken and some of her hymns had been sung, she heard one of the prisoners cry out in a pleading voice, 'Good Lord, do not pass me by'; Following Doane's suggestion, she wrote a hymn that evening incorporating the line, 'Pass me not, O gentle Savior.'"

The hymn gained international recognition when introduced by Dwight L. Moody and Ira D. Sankey during their London revivals. According to Dr. Young, "This is Crosby's first hymn to win worldwide acclaim."

The text would seem to have a biblical basis on the blind beggars' plea to Christ: "And, behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David. And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David" (Matthew 20:29-31; See also Mark 10:46-52 and Luke 18: 35-43).

"The hymn has been rightly criticized for its faulty exegesis," says Dr. Young. "It is contrary to the scriptural account to suggest that Jesus Christ, God's universal gift of salvation (John 3:16), could, should, would—and in this instance did—pass anyone by. These complaints were exacerbated, not diminished, when the poet changed the refrain from 'while on others thou art smiling' to 'while on others thou art calling.'"

Crosby, a lifelong Methodist, demonstrates in other hymns that she is aware that God's grace is given to all. Note, for example, Crosby's hymn, "To God be the glory" (UMH 98) where the author concludes the first stanza with: "[Christ] yielded his life an atonement for sin,/and opened the life gate that all may go in." The universality of the gospel was at the core of her faith and songs.

Gospel songs are not known for theological subtlety, and on occasion, skirt the edges of heresy to make a personal point. It is likely that the plea of the prisoner in Manhattan conflated with the

passage of scripture, distorting the nuance of the biblical message. Indeed, many suffering souls have been passed.

Putting herself in the place of the suffering and disregarded, Crosby understood that some had been so rejected that it took faith to realize that Christ is the one who would never pass anyone by. His actions in so many cases bore witness that he cared for those forgotten by others including women, Samaritans and lepers, to name a few, who were deemed to be outcasts in their day.

The Apocalypse of Adam (Expanded)

The revelation which Adam taught his son Seth in the seven hundreth year, saying:

Listen to my words, my son Seth. When God had created me out of the earth, along with Eve, your mother, I went about with her in a glory which she had seen in the aeon from which we had come forth. She taught me a word of knowledge of the eternal God. And we resembled the great eternal angels, for we were higher than the god who had created us and the powers with him, whom we did not know.

Then God, the ruler of the aeons and the powers, divided us in wrath. Then we became two aeons. And the glory in our heart(s) left us, me and your mother Eve, along with the first knowledge that breathed within us. And it (glory) fled from us; it entered into [...] great [...] which had come forth, not from this aeon from which we had come forth, I and Eve your mother. But it (knowledge) entered into the seed of great aeons. For this reason I myself have called you by the name of that man who is the seed of the great generation or from whom (it comes). After those days, the eternal knowledge of the God of truth withdrew from me and your mother Eve. Since that time, we learned about dead things, like men. Then we recognized the God who had created us. For we were not strangers to his powers. And we served him in fear and slavery. And after these things, we became darkened in our heart(s). Now I slept in the thought of my heart.

And I saw three men before me whose likeness I was unable to recognize, since they were not the powers of the God who had created us. They surpassed [...] glory, and [...] men [...] saying to me, "Arise, Adam, from the sleep of death, and hear about the aeon and the seed of that man to whom life has come, who came from you and from Eve, your wife."

When I had heard these words from the great men who were standing before me, then we sighed, I and Eve, in our heart(s). And the Lord, the God who had created us, stood before us. He said to us, "Adam, why were you (both) sighing in your hearts? Do you not know that I am the God who created you? And I breathed into you a spirit of life as a living soul." Then darkness came upon our eyes.

Then the God who created us, created a son from himself and Eve, your mother. I knew sweet desire for your mother, for [...] in the thought of my [...] I knew a sweet desire for your mother. Then the vigor of our eternal knowledge was destroyed in us, and weakness pursued us. Therefore the days of our life became few. For I knew that I had come under the authority of death.

Now then, my son Seth, I will reveal to you the things which those men whom I saw before me at first revealed to me: after I have completed the times of this generation and the years of the generation have been accomplished, then [...] slave [...]. (p.68 blank)

For rain-showers of God the almighty will be poured forth, so that he might destroy all flesh [of God the almighty, so that he might destroy all flesh] from the earth on account of the things that it seeks after, along with those from the seed of the men to whom passed the life of the knowledge which came from me and Eve, your mother. For they were strangers to him. Afterwards, great angels will come on high clouds, who will bring those men into the place where the spirit of life dwells [...] glory [...] there, [...] come from heaven to earth. Then the whole multitude of flesh will be left behind in the waters.

Then God will rest from his wrath. And he will cast his power upon the waters, and he will give power to his sons and their wives by means of the ark along with the animals, whichever he pleased, and the birds of heaven, which he called and released upon the earth. And God will say to Noah - whom the generations will call 'Deucalion' - "Behold, I have protected <you> in the ark, along with your wife and your sons and their wives and their animals and the birds of heaven, which you called and released upon the earth. Therefore I will give the earth to you - you and your sons. In kingly fashion you will rule over it - you and your sons. And no seed will come from you of the men who will not stand in my presence in another glory."

Then they will become as the cloud of the great light. Those men will come who have been cast forth from the knowledge of the great aeons and the angels. They will stand before Noah and the aeons. And God will say to Noah, "Why have you departed from what I told you? You have created another generation so that you might scorn my power." Then Noah will say, "I shall testify before your might that the generation of these men did not come from me nor from my sons. [...]

knowledge.

And he will [...] those men and bring them into their proper land, and build them a holy dwelling place. And they will be called by that name and dwell there six hundred years in a knowledge of imperishability. And the angels of the great Light will dwell with them. No foul deed will dwell in their heart(s), but only the knowledge of God.

Then Noah will divide the whole earth among his sons, Ham and Japheth and Shem. He will say to them, "My sons, listen to my words. Behold, I have divided the earth among you. But serve him in fear and slavery all the days of your life. Let not your seed depart from the face of God the Almighty. [...] I and your [...] son of Noah, "My seed will be pleasing before you and before your power. Seal it by your strong hand, with fear and commandment, so that the whole seed which came forth from me may not be inclined away from you and God the Almighty, but it will serve in humility and fear of its knowledge."

Then others from the seed of Ham and Japheth will come, four hundred thousand men, and enter into another land and sojourn with those men who came forth from the great eternal knowledge. For the shadow of their power will protect those who have sojourned with them from every evil thing and every unclean desire. Then the seed of Ham and Japheth will form twelve kingdoms, and their seed also will enter into the kingdom of another people.

Then [...] will take counsel [...] who are dead, of the great aeons of imperishability. And they will go to Sakla, their God. They will go in to the powers, accusing the great men who are in their glory.

They will say to Sakla, "What is the power of these men who stood in your presence, who were taken from the seed of Ham and Japheth, who will number four hundred <thousand> men? They have been received into another aeon from which they had come forth, and they have overturned all the glory of your power and the dominion of your hand. For the seed of Noah through his sons has done all your will, and (so have) all the powers in the aeons over which your might rules, while both those men and the ones who are sojourners in their glory have not done your will. But they have turned (aside) your whole throng."

Then the god of the aeons will give them (some) of those who serve him [...]. They will come upon that land where the great men will be who have not been defiled, nor will be defiled, by any desire. For their soul did not come from a defiled hand, but it came from a great commandment of an eternal angel. Then fire and sulphur and asphalt will be cast upon those men, and fire and (blinding) mist will come over those aeons, and the eyes of the powers of the illuminators will be darkened, and the aeons will not see them in those days. And great clouds of light will descend, and other clouds of light will come down upon them from the great aeons.

Abrasax and Sablo and Gamaliel will descend and bring those men out of the fire and the wrath, and take them above the aeons and the rulers of the powers, and take them away [...] of life [...] and take them away [...] aeons [...] dwelling place of the great [...] there, with the holy angels and the aeons. The men will be like those angels, for they are not strangers to them. But they work in the imperishable seed.

Once again, for the third time, the illuminator of knowledge will pass by in great glory, in order to leave (something) of the seed of Noah and the sons of Ham and Japheth - to leave for himself fruit-bearing trees. And he will redeem their souls from the day of death. For the whole creation that came from the dead earth will be under the authority of death. But those who reflect upon the knowledge of the eternal God in their heart(s) will not perish. For they have not received spirit from this kingdom alone, but they have received (it) from a [...] eternal angel. [...] illuminator [...] will come upon [...] that is dead [...] of Seth. And he will perform signs and wonders in order to scorn the powers and their ruler.

Then the god of the powers will be disturbed, saying, "What is the power of this man who is higher than we?" Then he will arouse a great wrath against that man. And the glory will withdraw and dwell in holy houses which it has chosen for itself. And the powers will not see it with their eyes, nor will they see the illuminator either. Then they will punish the flesh of the man upon whom the holy spirit came.

Then the angels and all the generations of the powers will use the name in error, asking, "Where did it (the error) come from?" or "Where did the words of deception, which all the powers have failed to discover, come from?"

Now the first kingdom says of him that he came from [...]. A spirit [...] to heaven. He was nourished in the heavens. He received the glory of that one and the power. He came to the bosom of his mother. And thus he came to the water.

And the second kingdom says about him that he came from a great prophet. And a bird came, took the child who was born, and brought him onto a high mountain. And he was nourished by the bird of heaven. An angel came forth there. He said to him "Arise! God has given glory to you." He received glory and strength. And thus he came to the water.

The third kingdom says of him that he came from a virgin womb. He was cast out of his city, he and his mother. He was brought to a desert place. He was nourished there. He came and received glory and strength. And thus he came to the water.

The fourth kingdom says of him that he came from a virgin. [...] Solomon sought her, he and Phersalo and Sauei and his armies, which had been sent out. Solomon himself sent his army of demons to seek out the virgin. And they did not find the one whom they sought, but the virgin who was given them. It was she whom they fetched. Solomon took her. The virgin became pregnant and gave birth to the child there. She nourished him on a border of the desert. When he had been nourished, he received glory and power from the seed from which he was begotten. And thus he came to the water.

And the fifth kingdom says of him that he came from a drop from heaven. He was thrown into the sea. The abyss received him, gave birth to him, and brought him to heaven. He received glory and power. And thus he came to the water.

And the sixth kingdom says that [...] down to the aeon which is below, in order to gather flowers. She became pregnant from the desire of the flowers. She gave birth to him in that place. The angels of the flower garden nourished him. He received glory there, and power. And thus he came to the water.

And the seventh kingdom says of him that he is a drop. It came from heaven to earth. Dragons brought him down to caves. He became a child. A spirit came upon him and brought him on high to the place where the drop had come forth. He received glory and power there. And thus he came to the water.

And the eighth kingdom says of him that a cloud came upon the earth and enveloped a rock. He came from it. The angels who were above the cloud nourished him. He received glory and power there. And thus he came to the water.

And the ninth kingdom says of him that from the nine Muses one separated away. She came to a high mountain and spent (some) time seated there, so that she desired herself alone in order to become androgynous. She fulfilled her desire and became pregnant from her desire. He was born. The angels who were over the desire nourished him. And he received glory there, and power. And thus he came to the water.

The tenth kingdom says of him that his god loved a cloud of desire. He begot him in his hand and cast upon the cloud above him (some) of the drop, and he was born. He received glory and power there. And thus he came to the water.

And the eleventh kingdom says that the father desired his own daughter. She herself became pregnant from her father. She cast [...] tomb out in the desert. The angel nourished him there. And thus he came to the water.

The twelfth kingdom says of him that he came from two illuminators. He was nourished there. He received glory and power. And thus he came to the water.

And the thirteenth kingdom says of him that every birth of their ruler is a word. And this word received a mandate there. He received glory and power. And thus he came to the water, in order that the desire of those powers might be satisfied.

But the generation without a king over it says that God chose him from all the aeons. He caused a knowledge of the undefiled one of truth to come to be in him. He said, "Out of a foreign air, from a great aeon, the great illuminator came forth. And he made the generation of those men whom he had chosen for himself shine, so that they could shine upon the whole aeon"

Then the seed, those who will receive his name upon the water and (that) of them all, will fight against the power. And a cloud of darkness will come upon them.

Then the peoples will cry out with a great voice, saying, "Blessed is the soul of those men because they have known God with a knowledge of the truth! They shall live forever, because they have not been corrupted by their desire, along with the angels, nor have they accomplished the works of the powers, but they have stood in his presence in a knowledge of God like light that has come forth from fire and blood.

"But we have done every deed of the powers senselessly. We have boasted in the transgression of all our works. We have cried against the God of truth because all his works [...] is eternal. These are against our spirits. For now we have known that our souls will die the death."

Then a voice came to them, saying "Micheu and Michar and Mnesinous, who are over the holy baptism and the living water, why were you crying out against the living God with lawless voices and tongues without law over them, and souls full of blood and foul deeds? You are full of works that are not of the truth, but your ways are full of joy and rejoicing. Having defiled the water of life, you have drawn it within the will of the powers to whom you have been given to serve them.

"And your thought is not like that of those men whom you persecute [...] desire [...]. Their fruit does not wither. But they will be known up to the great aeons, because the words they have kept, of the God of the aeons, were not committed to the book, nor were they written. But angelic (beings) will bring them, whom all the generations of men will not know. For they will be on a high mountain, upon a rock of truth. Therefore they will be named "The Words of Imperishability and Truth," for those who know the eternal God in wisdom of knowledge and teaching of angels forever, for he knows all things."

These are the revelations which Adam made known to Seth, his son, And his son taught his seed about them. This is the hidden knowledge of Adam, which he gave to Seth, which is the holy baptism of those who know the eternal knowledge through those born of the word and the imperishable illuminators, who came from the holy seed: Yesseus, Mazareus, Yessedekus, the Living Water.

The Gospel of the Savior

The Gospel of the Savior is an ancient text allegedly citing statements made by Jesus during his years with the disciples. But, is this non-biblical text reliable? Was it really written by an eyewitness who observed the ministry of Jesus and heard him speak? There are four attributes of reliable eyewitness testimony, and the first requirement is simply that the account be *old enough* to actually be written by someone who was present to see what he or she reported. *The Gospel of the Savior* was written too late in history to have been written by anyone who would have truly known Jesus, and like other late non-canonical texts, this fictional account was rejected by the early Church. In spite of this, *The Gospel of the Savior* still references accurate details related to Jesus. Although it is a legendary fabrication written by an author hoped to provide detail about the childhood and family history of Jesus, much can still be learned about the historic Jesus from this late text:

The Gospel of the Savior (120-180AD)

This Gnostic text was discovered by two American scholars in a Berlin museum. It is only a fragment, and scholars date the fragment to somewhere between the 4th and 7th century, although the date of writing has been attributed to the 2nd century. The manuscript was discovered on "calfskin" and only 15 pages remain from the original document which appears to have been damaged in a fire. It is a "sayings" document, much like *The Gospel of Thomas*, in which Jesus is quoted as the source for a number of statements.

Why Isn't It Considered Reliable?

The Gospel of the Savior was originally written in Coptic. It contains a number of Gnostic statements and concepts related to the nature of Salvation and the material world, and numerous Gnostic terms commonly found in other heretical documents from the 2nd century. There is, therefore, good reason to believe that *The Gospel of the Savior* is yet another late Gnostic Gospel corrupted (like other Gnostic documents) by the prior heretical beliefs of Gnostic communities. The text clearly appears in history far too late to be a reliable eyewitness account of Jesus' statements. Both Eusebius and Irenaeus were familiar with Gnostic groups (and their late texts), and considered Gnostic scriptures to be heretical forgeries. Tertullian believed that the Gnostics based their texts more on contemporary philosophy than Biblical revelation.

How Does It Corroborate the Life of Jesus?

Much of *The Gospel of the Savior* is lost or damaged, but what remains is strikingly similar to the canonical Gospels in many ways. Jesus is referred to as the "Savior" and as "Lord", and the text recognizes that Jesus had a number of apostles and disciples. Andrew, John and Jude are mentioned by name. The "Savior" talks about the "cross" repeatedly and the fact that He will die for his friends. Much of the canonical teaching of Jesus is assumed by *The Gospel of the Savior*, and many phrases from the canonical Gospels of Mark, Matthew and John are either referenced or inferred (examples from *The Gospel of the Savior*: "But I do not remain alone, for my Father is with me, I and my Father are a single one," "I am the Good Shepherd," "You will flee, all of you, and leave me alone," "For it is written, I will strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered." In addition, *The Gospel of the Savior* includes references to the narrative portions of the canonical Gospels (including a quote from the passion narrative: "get up, let's go, the betrayer is at hand.") *The Gospel of the Savior* acknowledges that Jesus was God before he ever became a man ("I [was]

divine, I became [human]”), and that He ascended to the heavens, where He took His place at the “right hand of the Father” and will sit upon His throne and judge the world.

Where (and Why) Does It Differ from the Reliable Accounts?

The fragmentary *Gospel of the Savior* has more in common with the canonical Gospels than it has in opposition, but like other Gnostic documents, it does demonstrate a number of Gnostic tendencies. *The Gospel of the Savior* does tend to offer a view of Salvation through the understanding of secret, esoteric teachings, and it also exhibits a Gnostic view of matter (considering it to be fallen and evil). For this reason, much of the text seems to be preoccupied with a conversation between Jesus and his apostles in which Jesus reveals secret “visionary” truths about the universe.

The Trimorphic Protennoia

I am Protennoia, the Thought that dwells in the Light. I am the movement that dwells in the All, she in whom the All takes its stand, the first-born among those who came to be, she who exists before the All. She (Protennoia) is called by three names, although she dwells alone, since she is perfect. I am invisible within the Thought of the Invisible One. I am revealed in the immeasurable, ineffable (things). I am incomprehensible, dwelling in the incomprehensible. I move in every creature.

I am the life of my Epinoia that dwells within every Power and every eternal movement, and (in) invisible Lights and within the Archons and Angels and Demons, and every soul dwelling in Tartaros, and (in) every material soul. I dwell in those who came to be. I move in everyone and I delve into them all. I walk uprightly, and those who sleep, I awaken. And I am the sight of those who dwell in sleep.

I am the Invisible One within the All. It is I who counsel those who are hidden, since I know the All that exists in it. I am numberless beyond everyone. I am immeasurable, ineffable, yet whenever I wish, I shall reveal myself of my own accord. I am the head of the All. I exist before the All, and I am the All, since I exist in everyone.

I am a Voice speaking softly. I exist from the first. I dwell within the Silence that surrounds every one of them. And it is the hidden Voice that dwells within my, within the incomprehensible, immeasurable Thought, within the immeasurable Silence.

I descended to the midst of the underworld, and I shone down upon the darkness. It is I who poured forth the water. It is I who am hidden within radiant waters. I am the one who gradually put forth the All by my Thought. It is I who am laden with the Voice. It is through me that Gnosis comes forth. I dwell in the ineffable and unknowable ones. I am perception and knowledge, uttering a Voice by means of thought. I am the real Voice. I cry out in everyone, and they recognize it (the voice), since a seed indwells them. I am the Thought of the Father, and through me proceeded the Voice, that is, the knowledge of the everlasting things. I exist as Thought for the All -- being joined to the unknowable and incomprehensible Thought -- I revealed myself -- yes, I -- among all those who recognize me. For it is I who am joined with everyone by virtue of the hidden Thought and an exalted <Voice>, even a Voice from the invisible Thought. And it is immeasurable, since it dwells in the

Immeasurable One. It is a mystery; it is unrestrainable by the Incomprehensible One. It is invisible to all those who are visible in the All. It is a Light dwelling in Light.

It is we also who alone have separated from the visible world, since we are saved by the hidden wisdom, by means of the ineffable, immeasurable Voice. And he who is hidden within us pays the tributes of his fruit to the Water of Life.

Then the Son who is perfect in every respect -- that is, the Word who originated through that Voice; who proceeded from the height; who has within him the Name; who is a Light -- he revealed the everlasting things, and all the unknowns were known. And those things difficult to interpret and secret, he revealed. And as for those who dwell in Silence with the First Thought, he preached to them. And he revealed himself to those who dwell in darkness, and he showed himself to those who dwell in the abyss, and to those who dwell in the hidden treasures, he told ineffable mysteries, and he taught unrepeatable doctrines to all those who became Sons of the Light.

Now the Voice that originated from my Thought exists as three permanences: the Father, the Mother, the Son. Existing perceptibly as Speech, it (Voice) has within it a Word endowed with every <glory>, and it has three masculinities, three powers, and three names. They exist in the manner of Three ... -- which are quadrangles -- secretly within a silence of the Ineffable One.

It is he alone who came to be, that is, the Christ. And, as for me, I anointed him as the glory of the Invisible Spirit, with goodness. Now the Three, I established alone in eternal glory over the Aeons in the Living Water, that is, the glory that surrounds him who first came forth to the Light of those exalted Aeons, and it is in glorious Light that he firmly perseveres. And he stood in his own Light that surrounds him, that is, the Eye of the Light that gloriously shines on me. He perpetuated the Father of all Aeons, who am I, the Thought of the Father, Protennoia, that is, Barbelo, the perfect Glory, and the immeasurable Invisible One who is hidden. I am the Image of the Invisible Spirit, and it is through me that the All took shape, and (I am) the Mother (as well as) the Light which she appointed as Virgin, she who is called 'Meirothea', the incomprehensible Womb, the unrestrainable and immeasurable Voice.

Then the Perfect Son revealed himself to his Aeons, who originated through him, and he revealed them and glorified them, and gave them thrones, and stood in the glory with which he glorified himself. They blessed the Perfect Son, the Christ, the only-begotten God. And they gave glory, saying, "He is! He is! The Son of God! The Son of God! It is he who is! The Aeon of Aeons, beholding the Aeons which he begot. For thou hast begotten by thine own desire! Therefore we glorify thee: ma mo o o o eia ei on ei! The Aeon of Aeons! The Aeon which he gave!"

Then, moreover, the God who was begotten gave them (the Aeons) a power of life on which they might rely, and he established them. The first Aeon he established over the first: Armodon, Nousanios, Armodel; the second he established over the second Aeon: Phaionios, Ainios, Oroiael; the third over the third Aeon: Mellephaneus, Loios, Daveithai; the fourth over the fourth: Mousanios, Amethes, Eleleth. Now those Aeons were begotten by the God who was begotten - the Christ - and these Aeons received as well as gave glory. They were the first to appear, exalted in their thought, and each Aeon gave myriads of glories within great untraceable lights, and they all together blessed the perfect Son, the God who was begotten.

Then there came forth a word from the great Light Eleleth, and said, "I am king! Who belongs to Chaos and who belongs to the underworld?" And at that instant, his Light appeared, radiant, endowed with the Epinoia. The Powers of the Powers did not entreat him, and likewise immediately there appeared the great Demon who rules over the lowest part of the underworld and Chaos. He has neither form nor perfection, but, on the contrary, possesses the form of the glory of those begotten in the darkness. Now he is called 'Saklas', that is, 'Samael', 'Yaltabaoth', he who had taken power; who had snatched it away from the innocent one (Sophia); who had earlier overpowered her who is the Light's Epinoia who had descended, her from whom he had come forth from originally.

Now when the Epinoia of the Light realized that he (Yaltabaoth) had begged him (the Light) for another order, even though he was lower than she, she said, "Give me another order, so that you may become for me a dwelling place, lest I dwell in disorder forever." And the order of the entire house of glory was agreed upon her word. A blessing was brought for her and the higher order released it to her.

And the great Demon began to produce aeons in the likeness of the real Aeons, except that he produced them out of his own power.

Then I too revealed my Voice secretly, saying, "Cease! Desist, (you) who tread on matter; for behold, I am coming down to the world of mortals for the sake of my portion that was in that place from the time when the innocent Sophia was conquered, she who descended, so that I might thwart their aim which the one revealed by her appoints." And all were disturbed, each one who dwells in the house of the ignorant light, and the abyss trembled. And the Archigenetor of ignorance reigned over Chaos and the underworld, and produced a man in my likeness. But he neither knew that that one would become for him a sentence of dissolution, nor does he recognize the power in him.

But now I have come down and reached down to Chaos. And I was with my own who were in that place. I am hidden within them, empowering them, giving them shape. And from the first day until the day when I will grant mighty glory to those who are mine, I will reveal myself to those who have heard my mysteries, that is, the Sons of the Light.

I am their Father, and I shall tell you a mystery, ineffable and indivulgeable by any mouth: Every bond I loosed from you, and the chains of the demons of the underworld I broke, these things which are bound on my members, restraining them. And the high walls of darkness I overthrew, and the secure gates of those pitiless ones I broke, and I smashed their bars. And the evil force, and the one who beats you, and the one who hinders you, and the tyrant, and the adversary, and the one who is King, and the present enemy, indeed all these I explained to those who are mine, who are the Sons of the Light, in order that they might nullify them all, and be saved from all those bonds, and enter into the place where they were at first.

I am the first one who descended on account of my portion which remains, that is, the Spirit that dwells in the soul, which originated from the Water of Life, and out of the immersion of the mysteries. And I spoke, I, together with the Archons and Authorities. For I had gone down below their language, and I spoke my mysteries to my own - a hidden mystery - and the bonds and eternal oblivion were nullified. And I bore fruit in them, that is, the Thought of the unchanging Aeon, and my house, and their Father. And I went down to those who were mine from the first, and I reached them

and broke the first strands that enslaved them. Then everyone of those within me shone, and I prepared a pattern for those ineffable Lights that are within me. Amen.

The Discourse of Protennoia: One

I am the Voice that appeared through my Thought, for I am 'He who is syzygetic' since I am called 'the Thought of the Invisible One'. Since I am called 'the unchanging Speech', I am called 'She who is syzygetic'.

I am a single one, since I am undefiled. I am the Mother of the Voice, speaking in many ways, completing the All. It is in me that knowledge dwells, the knowledge of <things> everlasting. It is I who speak within every creature, and I was known by the All. It is I who lift up the Speech of the Voice to the ears of those who have known me, that is, the Sons of the Light.

Now I have come the second time in the likeness of a female, and have spoken with them. And I shall tell them of the coming end of the Aeon and teach them of the beginning of the Aeon to come, the one without change, the one in which our appearance will be changed. We shall be purified within those Aeons from which I revealed myself in the Thought of the likeness of my masculinity. I settled among those who are worthy in the Thought of my changeless Aeon.

For I shall tell you a mystery of this particular Aeon, and tell you about the forces that are in it. The birth beckons; hour begets hour, day begets day. The months made known the month. Time has gone round succeeding time. This particular Aeon was completed in this fashion, and it was estimated, and it (was) short, for it was a finger that released a finger, and a joint that was separated from a joint. Then, when the great Authorities knew that the time of fulfillment had appeared - just as in the pangs of the parturient it (the time) has drawn near, so also had the destruction approached - all together the elements trembled, and the foundations of the underworld and the ceilings of Chaos shook, and a great fire shone within their midst, and the rocks and the earth were shaken like a reed shaken by the wind. And the lots of Fate and those who apportion the domiciles were greatly disturbed over a great thunder. And the thrones of the Powers were disturbed, since they were overturned, and their King was afraid. And those who pursue Fate paid their allotment of visits to the path, and they said to the Powers, "What is this disturbance and this shaking that has come upon us through a Voice <belonging> to the exalted Speech? And our entire habitation has been shaken, and the entire circuit of the path of ascent has met with destruction, and the path upon which we go, which takes us up to the Archgenitor of our birth, has ceased to be established for us."

Then the Powers answered, saying, "We too are at loss about it, since we did not know what was responsible for it. But arise, let us go up to the Archgenitor and ask him." And the powers all gathered and went up to the Archgenitor. They said to him, "Where is your boasting in which you boast? Did we not hear you say, 'I am God, and I am your Father, and it is I who begot you. and there is none beside me'? Now behold, there has appeared a Voice belonging to that invisible Speech of the Aeon which we know not. And we ourselves did not recognize to whom we belong, for that Voice which we listened to is foreign to us, and we did not recognize it; we did not know whence it was. It came and put fear in our midst and weakening in the members of our arms. So now let us weep and mourn most bitterly! As for the future, let us make our entire flight before we are imprisoned perforce, and taken down to the bosom of the underworld. For already the slackening of our

bondage has approached, and the times are cut short, and the days have shortened, and our time has been fulfilled, and the weeping of our destruction has approached us, so that we may be taken to the place we recognize. For as for our tree from which we grew, a fruit of ignorance is what it has; and also its leaves, it is death that dwells in them, and darkness dwells under the shadow of its boughs. And it was in deceit and lust that we harvested it, this (tree) through which ignorant Chaos became for us a dwelling place. For behold, even he, the Archgenitor of our birth, about whom we boast, even he did not know this Speech."

So now, O sons of the Thought, listen to me, to the Speech of the Mother of your mercy, for you have become worthy of the mystery hidden from the Aeons, so that you might receive it. And the consummation of this particular Aeon and of the evil life has approached, and there dawns the beginning of the Aeon to come, which has no change forever.

I am androgynous. I am Mother (and) I am Father, since I copulate with myself. I copulated with myself and with those who love me, and it is through me alone that the All stands firm. I am the Womb that gives shape to the All by giving birth to the Light that shines in splendor. I am the Aeon to come. I am the fulfillment of the All, that is, Meirothea, the glory of the Mother. I cast voiced Speech into the ears of those who know me.

And I am inviting you into the exalted, perfect Light. Moreover, (as for) this (Light), when you enter it, you will be glorified by those who give glory, and those who enthrone will enthrone you. You will accept robes from those who give robes, and the baptizers will baptize you, and you will become gloriously glorious, the way you first were when you were <Light>.

And I hid myself in everyone and revealed myself within them, and every mind seeking me longed for me, for it is I who gave shape to the All when it had no form. And I transformed their forms into (other) forms, until the time when a form will be given to the All. It is through me that the Voice originated, and it is I who put the breath within my own. And I cast into them the eternally Holy Spirit, and I ascended and entered my Light. I went up upon my branch and sat there among the Sons of the holy Light. And I withdrew to their dwelling place which [...] become glorious [...]. Amen.

On Fate: Two

I am the Word who dwells in the ineffable Voice. I dwell in undefiled Light and a Thought revealed itself perceptibly through the great Speech of the Mother, although it is a male offspring that supports me as my foundation. And it (the Speech) exists from the beginning in the foundations of the All.

But there is a Light that dwells hidden in Silence, and it was first to come forth. Whereas she (the Mother) alone exists as Silence, I alone am the Word, ineffable, unpolluted, immeasurable, inconceivable. It (the Word) is a hidden Light, bearing a fruit of life, pouring forth a living water from the invisible, unpolluted, immeasurable spring, that is, the unreproducible Voice of the glory of the Mother, the glory of the offspring of God; a male virgin by virtue of a hidden Intellect, that is, the Silence hidden from the All, being unreproducible, an immeasurable Light, the source of the All, the root of the entire Aeon. It is the foundation that supports every movement of the Aeons that belong to the mighty glory. It is the foundation of every foundation. It is the breath of the powers. It is the

eye of the three permanences, which exist as Voice by virtue of Thought. And it is a Word by virtue of Speech; it was sent to illumine those who dwell in the darkness.

Now behold! I will reveal to you my mysteries, since you are my fellow brethren, and you shall know them all.

(5 lines missing)

I told all of them about my mysteries that exist in the incomprehensible, inexpressible Aeons. I taught them the mysteries through the Voice that exists within a perfect Intellect, and I became a foundation for the All, and I empowered them.

The Second time I came in the Speech of my Voice. I gave shape to those who took shape, until their consummation.

The Third time I revealed myself to them in their tents as Word, and I revealed myself in the likeness of their shape. And I wore everyone's garment, and I hid myself within them, and they did not know the one who empowers me. For I dwell within all the Sovereignities and Powers, and within the angels, and in every movement that exists in all matter. And I hid myself within them until I revealed myself to my brethren. And none of them (the Powers) knew me, although it is I who work in them. Rather, they thought that the All was created by them, since they are ignorant, not knowing their root, the place in which they grew.

I am the Light that illumines the All. I am the Light that rejoices in my brethren, for I came down to the world of mortals on account of the Spirit that remains in that which descended (and) came forth from the innocent Sophia. I came, and I delivered [...], and I went to ...

(5 lines missing)

... which he had formerly, and I gave to him from the Water of Life, which strips him of the chaos that is in the uttermost darkness that exists inside the entire abyss, that is, the thought of the corporeal and the psychic. All these I put on. And I stripped him of it, and I put upon him a shining Light, that is, the knowledge of the Thought of the Fatherhood.

And I delivered him to those who give robes - Yammon, Elasso, Amenai - and they covered him with a robe from the robes of the Light; and I delivered him to the baptizers, and they baptized him - Micheus, Michar, Mnesinous - and they immersed him in the spring of the Water of Life. And I delivered him to those who enthrone - Bariel, Nouthan, Sabenai - and they enthroned him from the Throne of Glory. And I delivered him to those who glorify - Ariom, Elien, Phariel - and they glorified him with the glory of the Fatherhood. And those who snatch away snatched away - Kamaliel, [...], Janen, Samblo, and the servants of <the> great holy luminaries - and they took him into the light-place of his Fatherhood. And he received the Five seals from the Light of the Mother, Protennoia, and it was granted him to partake of the mystery of knowledge, and he became a Light in Light.

So now ...

(5 lines missing)

... I was dwelling in them in the form of each one. The Archons thought that I was their Christ. Indeed, I dwell in everyone. Indeed, within those in whom I revealed myself as Light, I eluded the Archons. I am their beloved, for in that place I clothed myself as the son of the Archgenitor, and I was like him until the end of his decree, which is the ignorance of Chaos. And among the angels I

revealed myself in their likeness, and among the Powers, as if I were one of them; but among the Sons of Man, as if I were a Son of Man, even though I am Father of everyone.

I hid myself within them all until I revealed myself among my members, which are mine, and I taught them about the ineffable ordinances, and (about) the brethren. But they are inexpressible to every Sovereignty and every ruling Power, except the Sons of the Light alone, that is, the ordinances of the Father. These are the glories that are higher than every glory, that is, the Five Seals, complete by virtue of Intellect. He who possesses the Five Seals of these particular names has stripped off <the> garments of ignorance and put on a shining Light. And nothing will appear to him that belongs to the Powers of the Archons. Within those of this sort, darkness will dissolve and ignorance will die. And the thought of the creature, which is scattered, will present a single appearance and dark Chaos will dissolve and ...

(6 lines fragmentary)

... until I reveal myself to all my fellow brethren, and until I gather together all my fellow brethren within my eternal kingdom. And I proclaimed to them the ineffable Five Seals in order that I might abide in them and they also might abide in me.

As for me, I put on Jesus. I bore him from the cursed wood, and established him in the dwelling places of his Father. And those who watch over their dwelling places did not recognize me. For I, I am unrestrainable, together with my seed; and my seed, which is mine, I shall place into the holy Light within an incomprehensible Silence. Amen.

The Homily on Charity by Basil the Great

Thoughts on poverty abound: Why it exists? What can be done? Other thoughts about it we see less often: "The willingness to give should accord with one's means, nor to go beyond them," Paul writes to the Corinthians; "the relief of others ought not to impoverish you; there should be a certain equality." (2 Cor. 8:13)

St. Basil the Great (d. 379), in his third sermon on Charity, writes: "Man should be like the earth and bear fruit; he should not let inanimate matter surpass him." Inanimate matter does not produce much unless man adds his intelligence and labor. The earth is designed to have man with his purpose within it, to perfect it.

Basil, following Genesis, tells us: "The earth bears crops for your benefit, not for its own." He adds: "When we give to the poor, we are bearing fruit." We are to be concerned with our eternal well-being: "You are going to leave your money behind you here whether you wish or not." But what we do take with us is "what we have won through good works." Basil even appeals to our vanity: "In the presence of the universal judge, all people will surround you, acclaim you as a public benefactor." Thus, the Platonic and Christian notion of a last judgment arises out of how we use our goods.

What do people do with their riches? Basil lived no cloistered life: "Do you not see how people throw away their wealth on theatrical performances, boxing contests, mimes, and fights between men and wild beasts, which are sickening to see, and all for the sake of fleeting honor and popular applause?" I will resist the temptation to ask here: "But, granted the abuse, are not the theater and the sports arena also places of human worth indicated by ever-fleeting honor and applause?"

"Your reward for the right use of things of this world will be everlasting glory." It is quite possible that our reward for the "right use of things" will not be in this world, even though we like to think that our making useful things will support us in this world. Basil forges on: "Come, distribute your wealth freely; give generously to those who are in need."

Others have benefited us by their wealth-giving. We tell the poor: "I have nothing to give; I am only a poor man." Basil rejects this excuse: "A poor man you certainly are, and destitute of all real riches; you are poor in love, generosity, faith in God, and hope of eternal happiness."



We noticed above that Paul insisted on a certain cautious prudence. We are not supposed to give everything away. We are not to "impoverish" ourselves. That would just make us poor, objects of someone else's charity.

Basil told us not to spend our money on frivolous things like circuses and gladiator shows. Neither Paul nor Basil speaks much of how wealth comes about in the first place. In fact, we rarely see discussion of this aspect of human life in ecclesiastical documents. As with Basil, we speak of "distribution," but little of how we acquire something to distribute.

Sometimes, we have the impression that anyone who has adequate or a surplus of worldly goods must have acquired them by some unjust means. We can thus justly take away what is unjustly gained. In modern times, civil powers are the "we" entitled to "take away."

In Basil's sense, we can talk of giving to the poor only if some who are not poor exist. Moreover, the acquiring of wealth, its production, is not necessarily a taking-away from somebody. It is possible that we can add wealth to the general weal without taking it away from someone else.

We live in a society in which immigration is a major issue. Why is this? Mostly it is because others live in societies in which policies of government or religion makes wealth producing locally impossible. The poor make every effort to go where other conditions exist in which they may be not poor.

But does everyone have a "right" to be "not poor" by not working to acquire the means to produce wealth? Is everyone to be an object of a social justice that assumes that what is necessary is the responsibility of someone else to give him? The logic of simply distributing wealth to give to the poor is to make everybody poor so that no one will have anything to give.

This is why, I suspect, Paul said that "the willingness to give should be in accordance with one's means." The complaint of Basil's poor man that he has nothing to give will soon be a fact in a society that does not learn how to produce and, through intelligence and work, to distribute its wealth to everyone.

The Epistle of Ignatius to the Romans (Expanded)

Ignatius, who is also called Theophorus, to the Church which has obtained mercy, through the majesty of the Most High Father, and Jesus Christ, His only-begotten Son; the Church which is beloved and enlightened by the will of Him that wills all things which are according to the love of Jesus Christ our God, which also presides in the place of the region of the Romans, worthy of God, worthy of honour, worthy of the highest happiness, worthy of praise, worthy of obtaining her every desire, worthy of being deemed holy, and which presides over love, is named from Christ, and from the Father, which I also salute in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father: to those who are united, both according to the flesh and spirit, to every one of His commandments; who are filled inseparably with the grace of God, and are purified from every strange taint, [I wish] abundance of happiness unblameably, in Jesus Christ our God.

Chapter 1. As a prisoner, I hope to see you

Through prayer to God I have obtained the privilege of seeing your most worthy faces, and have even been granted more than I requested; for I hope as a prisoner in Christ Jesus to salute you, if indeed it be the will of God that I be thought worthy of attaining unto the end. For the beginning has been well ordered, if I may obtain grace to cling to my lot without hindrance unto the end. For I am afraid of your love, lest it should do me an injury. For it is easy for you to accomplish what you please; but it is difficult for me to attain to God, if you spare me.

Chapter 2. Do not save me from martyrdom

For it is not my desire to act towards you as a man-pleaser, but as pleasing God, even as also you please Him. For neither shall I ever have such [another] opportunity of attaining to God; nor will you, if you shall now be silent, ever be entitled to the honour of a better work. For if you are silent concerning me, I shall become God's; but if you show your love to my flesh, I shall again have to run my race. Pray, then, do not seek to confer any greater favour upon me than that I be sacrificed to God while the altar is still prepared; that, being gathered together in love, you may sing praise to

the Father, through Christ Jesus, that God has deemed me, the bishop of Syria, worthy to be sent for from the east unto the west. It is good to set from the world unto God, that I may rise again to Him.

Chapter 3. Pray rather that I may attain to martyrdom

You have never envied any one; you have taught others. Now I desire that those things may be confirmed [by your conduct], which in your instructions you enjoin [on others]. Only request in my behalf both inward and outward strength, that I may not only speak, but [truly] will; and that I may not merely be called a Christian, but really be found to be one. For if I be truly found [a Christian], I may also be called one, and be then deemed faithful, when I shall no longer appear to the world. Nothing visible is eternal. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. For our God, Jesus Christ, now that He is with the Father, is all the more revealed [in His glory]. Christianity is not a thing of silence only, but also of [manifest] greatness.

Chapter 4. Allow me to fall a prey to the wild beasts

I write to the Churches, and impress on them all, that I shall willingly die for God, unless you hinder me. I beseech of you not to show an unseasonable good-will towards me. Allow me to become food for the wild beasts, through whose instrumentality it will be granted me to attain to God. I am the wheat of God, and let me be ground by the teeth of the wild beasts, that I may be found the pure bread of Christ. Rather entice the wild beasts, that they may become my tomb, and may leave nothing of my body; so that when I have fallen asleep [in death], I may be no trouble to any one. Then shall I truly be a disciple of Christ, when the world shall not see so much as my body. Entreat Christ for me, that by these instruments I may be found a sacrifice [to God]. I do not, as Peter and Paul, issue commandments unto you. They were apostles; I am but a condemned man: they were free, while I am, even until now, a servant. But when I suffer, I shall be the freed-man of Jesus, and shall rise again emancipated in Him. And now, being a prisoner, I learn not to desire anything worldly or vain.

Chapter 5. I desire to die

From Syria even unto Rome I fight with beasts, both by land and sea, both by night and day, being bound to ten leopards, I mean a band of soldiers, who, even when they receive benefits, show themselves all the worse. But I am the more instructed by their injuries [to act as a disciple of Christ]; yet am I not thereby justified. 1 Corinthians 4:4 May I enjoy the wild beasts that are prepared for me; and I pray they may be found eager to rush upon me, which also I will entice to devour me speedily, and not deal with me as with some, whom, out of fear, they have not touched. But if they be unwilling to assail me, I will compel them to do so. Pardon me [in this]: I know what is for my benefit. Now I begin to be a disciple. And let no one, of things visible or invisible, envy me that I should attain to Jesus Christ. Let fire and the cross; let the crowds of wild beasts; let tearings, breakings, and dislocations of bones; let cutting off of members; let shatterings of the whole body; and let all the dreadful torments of the devil come upon me: only let me attain to Jesus Christ.

Chapter 6. By death I shall attain true life

All the pleasures of the world, and all the kingdoms of this earth, shall profit me nothing. It is better for me to die on behalf of Jesus Christ, than to reign over all the ends of the earth. For what shall a man be profited, if he gain the whole world, but lose his own soul? Him I seek, who died for us: Him

I desire, who rose again for our sake. This is the gain which is laid up for me. Pardon me, brethren: do not hinder me from living, do not wish to keep me in a state of death; and while I desire to belong to God, do not give me over to the world. Allow me to obtain pure light: when I have gone there, I shall indeed be a man of God. Permit me to be an imitator of the passion of my God. If any one has Him within himself, let him consider what I desire, and let him have sympathy with me, as knowing how I am straitened.

Chapter 7. Reason of desiring to die

The prince of this world would fain carry me away, and corrupt my disposition towards God. Let none of you, therefore, who are [in Rome] help him; rather be on my side, that is, on the side of God. Do not speak of Jesus Christ, and yet set your desires on the world. Let not envy find a dwelling-place among you; nor even should I, when present with you, exhort you to it, be persuaded to listen to me, but rather give credit to those things which I now write to you. For though I am alive while I write to you, yet I am eager to die. My love has been crucified, and there is no fire in me desiring to be fed; but there is within me a water that lives and speaks, saying to me inwardly, Come to the Father. I have no delight in corruptible food, nor in the pleasures of this life. I desire the bread of God, the heavenly bread, the bread of life, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who became afterwards of the seed of David and Abraham; and I desire the drink of God, namely His blood, which is incorruptible love and eternal life.

Chapter 8. Be favourable to me

I no longer wish to live after the manner of men, and my desire shall be fulfilled if you consent. Be willing, then, that you also may have your desires fulfilled. I entreat you in this brief letter; give credit to me. Jesus Christ will reveal these things to you, [so that you shall know] that I speak truly. He is the mouth altogether free from falsehood, by which the Father has truly spoken. Pray for me, that I may attain [the object of my desire]. I have not written to you according to the flesh, but according to the will of God. If I shall suffer, you have wished [well] to me; but if I am rejected, you have hated me.

Chapter 9. Pray for the church in Syria

Remember in your prayers the Church in Syria, which now has God for its shepherd, instead of me. Jesus Christ alone will oversee it, and your love [will also regard it]. But as for me, I am ashamed to be counted one of them; for indeed I am not worthy, as being the very last of them, and one born out of due time. 1 Corinthians 15:8-9 But I have obtained mercy to be somebody, if I shall attain to God. My spirit salutes you, and the love of the Churches that have received me in the name of Jesus Christ, and not as a mere passer-by. For even those Churches which were not near to me in the way, I mean according to the flesh, have gone before me, city by city, [to meet me.]

Chapter 10. Conclusion

Now I write these things to you from Smyrna by the Ephesians, who are deservedly most happy. There is also with me, along with many others, Crocus, one dearly beloved by me. As to those who have gone before me from Syria to Rome for the glory of God, I believe that you are acquainted with them; to whom, [then,] make known that I am at hand. For they are all worthy, both of God and of you; and it is becoming that you should refresh them in all things. I have written these things unto

you, on the day before the ninth of the Kalends of September (that is, on the twenty-third day of August). Fare well to the end, in the patience of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Prayer of Saint Basil

O God and Lord of the Powers, and Maker of all creation, Who, because of Thy clemency and incomparable mercy, didst send Thine Only-Begotten Son and our Lord Jesus Christ for the salvation of mankind, and with His venerable Cross didst tear asunder the record of our sins, and thereby didst conquer the rulers and powers of darkness; receive from us sinful people, O merciful Master, these prayers of gratitude and supplication, and deliver us from every destructive and gloomy transgression, and from all visible and invisible enemies who seek to injure us. Nail down our flesh with fear of Thee, and let not our hearts be inclined to words or thoughts of evil, but pierce our souls with Thy love, that ever contemplating Thee, being enlightened by Thee, and discerning Thee, the unapproachable and everlasting Light, we may unceasingly render confession and gratitude to Thee: The eternal Father, with Thine Only-Begotten Son, and with Thine All-Holy, Gracious, and Life-Giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Amen.

The Discourse on the Holy Spirit by Gregory of Nyssa

Gregory of Nyssa here identifies the glory that Jesus speaks about in the Last Supper discourse of the Gospel of John with the Holy Spirit, the source of Christian unity. He also sees a reference to the Holy Spirit in the Song of Songs when the bridegroom speaks of "my dove, my perfect one."

When love has entirely cast out fear, and fear has been transformed into love, then the unity brought us by our savior will be fully realized, for all men will be united with one another through their union with the one supreme Good. They will possess the perfection ascribed to the dove, according to our interpretation of the text: *One alone is my dove, my perfect one. She is the only child of her mother, her chosen one* (Song of Songs 6:9).

Our Lord's words in the gospel bring out the meaning of this text more clearly. After having conferred all power on his disciples by his blessing, he obtained many other gifts for them by his prayer to the Father. Among these was included the greatest gift of all, which was that they were no longer to be divided in their judgement of what was right and good, for they were all to be united to the one supreme Good.

As the Apostle says, they were to be bound together with the bonds of peace in the unity that comes from the Holy Spirit (cf. Eph. 4:3). They were to be made one body and one spirit by the one hope to which they were all called. We shall do better, however, to quote the sacred words of the gospel itself. *I pray, the Lord says, that they all may be one; that as you, Father, are in me and I am in you, so they also may be one in us* (John 17:21).

Now the bond that creates this unity is glory. That the Holy Spirit is called glory no one can deny if he thinks carefully about the Lord's words: *The glory you gave to me, I have given to them* Jn.

17:22). In fact, he gave this glory to his disciples when he said to them: *Receive the Holy Spirit* (Jn. 20:22).

Although he had always possessed it, even before the world existed, he himself received this glory when he put on human nature. Then, when his human nature had been glorified by the Spirit, the glory of the Spirit was passed on to all his kin, beginning with his disciples. This is why he said: *The glory you gave to me, I have given to them, so that they may be one as we are one. With me in them and you in me, I want them to be perfectly one.*

Whoever has grown from infancy to manhood and attained to spiritual maturity possesses the mastery over his passions and the purity that makes it possible for him to receive the glory of the Spirit. He is that perfect dove upon whom the eyes of the bridegroom rest when he says: *One alone is my dove, my perfect one.*

St. Gregory of Nyssa

Gregory of Nyssa was the younger brother of St. Basil the Great and St. Macrina. Born around 330 AD, Gregory married and spent several years of his life in secular employment. He was rather lukewarm about spiritual things, but had a deeper conversion to Christ as an adult and eventually entered the monastery founded by his elder brother who consecrated Bishop of Nyssa in 371. Gregory fought tirelessly for the Trinitarian faith of Nicaea that was reaffirmed by the great Creed of the Council of Constantinople, which he attended. In the last few years of his life, he traveled a great deal since he was in great demand as a preacher, teacher, and spiritual writer.

St. Gregory of Nyssa was a theologian of great depth and originality. He wrote famous treatises against trinitarian heretics Eunomius and Apollinarius and instructed new Christians about the Trinity, Incarnation, Redemption and Sacraments in his *Catechetical Orations*. But his theological reflections far surpassed controversy and catechesis—indeed, St. Gregory of Nyssa provides us with the first systematic presentation of Christian doctrine since Origen over 150 years earlier.

Gregory wrote many reflections and commentaries on Scripture, most notably his *Life of Moses* and homilies on the Lord's Prayer, the Song of Songs, and the Beatitudes. His most important contribution was in the area of spirituality. While his brother gave eastern monasticism its structure and organization, Gregory provided its heart and mystical vision. For this reason he came to be known as "Father of Mysticism."

St. Gregory of Nyssa died around the year 395 AD and is revered as one of the greatest of the Eastern Church Fathers. He, his brother Basil and their friend St. Gregory of Nazianzen, are known as the Cappadocian Fathers, from the region in modern Turkey from which they came. His feast day is March 9th.

The Ethiopian Book of Healing Prayers (see the attached Ebook)

The Hymn of the Angels

Fear not, fear not, O ye shepherds,
Rather give ye thanks and sing,
For to you and to all people
Tidings of great joy I bring.

Refrain

Glory, glory in the highest!
Unto God let praise increase!
Glory, glory in the highest!
Unto men good-will and peace!

For in yonder town of David—
Seek ye there with one accord—
There is born to you a Savior
Who is even Christ the Lord.

Refrain

This the sign by which to know Him,
Seek ye, then, be not afraid—
Ye shall find a babe in Beth'lem,
In a lowly manger laid.

Refrain

The Ethiopian Song of the Redeemed (see the attached Ebook)

The Liturgical Calendar of Ethiopia

THE LITURGICAL YEAR

1. The calendar

The calendar of the Ethiopian church came from Egypt and as to methods and dates agrees with the calendar of the Coptic Church. But the two calendars differ with regard to the saints' days and the time of observing them. The year of the Ethiopian calendar contains 365 days to which is added every fourth year an extra day. Each year in this four-year period is dedicated to one of the four Evangelists who come in the following order: Mathew, Mark, Luke and John. The year of Luke is the Ethiopian Leap year and is the year which precedes the western leap year.

Each year is divided into 12 months of 30 days. The extra 5 days are placed at the end of the year and known as Pagumen. In the leap year the extra day is added to these five days making the Pagumen of this year a period of 6 days.

Nanes of nonths are as follows:

- (1) Meskerem (September-October)
- (2) Teqemt (October- November)
- (3) Hedar (November- December)
- (4) Tahsas (December- January)
- (5) Ter (January- February)
- (6) Yekatit (February- March)
- (7) Megabit (March- April)
- (8) Miyazia (April – May)
- (9) Ginbot (May – June)
- (10) Sene (June – July)
- (11) Hamle (July-August)
- (12) Nehase (August- September)

As in Julian and Gregorian calendars days are grouped into weeks and are named in order.

DAYS OF THE WEEK

Sunday Ehud, Senbete Krestian
Monday Sagno
Tuesday Maksagno
Wednesday Rabue
Thursday Hamus
Friday Sadus, Arb
Saturday Qadamit Sanbat

The chronology of the Ethiopian church follows the Era of Incarnation that is it dates from our Lord's birth; there is a difference of 7 or 8 years between the western and Ethiopian systems. Because the Ethiopian church holds that our Lord was born 5500 years after the creation of the world this gives the 7 or 8 years difference between the Gregorian and Ethiopian Chronologies.

The church also uses other systems of chronology. There is the Era of the world which dates from 5493 B.C, which also differs from the western chronology by 7 or 8 years. Then there is a system of chronology called "the years of Mercy or Grace," a system which follows the great lunar cycle.

The *MOVABLE FEASTS* are these of Easter and the days which depends upon it. The reckoning of Easter is based upon the system of Ammonius. The dates of Easter and the feast which depends upon it are determined by the Fast of Nineveh which precedes the Easter Lent and in turn the date of the fast of Nineveh has been found according to the given principles, the date of Easter and the dates of the movable feast can easily be calculated.

The Easter Lent always begins on a Monday and can not come before the 1st of Yekatit nor after the 5th of Megabit. The festival of the Mount of Olives always begins upon Sunday and cannot come before the 28th of Yekatit nor after the 2nd of Miyazia.

Palm Sunday cannot come before the 19th of Megabit 01 after the 23rd of Miyazia. Easter is on a Sunday and cannot come before the 26th of Megabit nor after 30th of Miyazia. The congress of priests always begins on Wednesday and cannot come before the 20th of Miyazia nor after the 24th

of Ginbot. Ascension always begins on Thursday and cannot come before the 5th of Ginbot nor after the 9th of Sene. The Feast of Pentecost always begins on Sunday and cannot come before the 15th of Ginbot nor after the 19th of Sene.

2. FESTIVAL

Saints' days and other festivals have not been imposed by any law of God, they were established by the church herself. Some go back to apostolic times and others are later origin. There is a prodigious number of feasts in the Ethiopian Church. The principal feasts of the church are nine feasts of the Lord, thirty three feasts of our Lady, the feasts of the Apostles, Sunday, Saturday, the feasts of the Angels, the feasts of the righteous (saints) and the feasts of the martyrs.

The feasts of our Lord are divided into G najor and G ninor feasts. Major feasts are:

1. His conception
2. Christmas
3. Epiphany
4. Transfiguration
5. Palm Sunday or hosanna
6. Good Friday
7. Easter
8. Ascension
9. Pentecost

Minor feasts are:

1. Sibket, the feast to commemorate the preaching of the prophets that Messiah will come to redeem His people from bondage;
2. Brahan, the feast to commemorate the fact of our Lord having come into the world for its enlightenment;
3. Nolwae, the feast of our Lord as "Good shepherd";
4. Gena, the feast to commemorate the reality that our Lord was actually born, not a mythical phenomenon;
5. Gizret, circumcision;
6. Kana ze Galilee, (feast of Kana of Galilee) when the Lord turned water into wine;
7. Debra zeit, it is held that the Second Advent will take place on the Mount of Olives. A day is kept on which the faithful offer special prayers that they may be righteous on that solemn event and on the right side of the Supreme Judge;
8. Megabit Meskel;
9. Ledete Simon, this is the feast to commemorate the event when a woman sinner (Mary Magdalene) washed the feet of the Lord with her tears and anointed them with ointment. Simon who had invited Jesus complained but the Lord made things clear to him.

The 33 feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary are as follows:

1. The day in which she was conceived.
2. Her Nativity.
3. The day when she was taken to the temple there to stay for some time (Her presentation).
4. The feast on which she conceived Christ.
5. Flight to Egypt.

6. Commemoration of the day when she was thirsty, her son commanded the rock and water came forth with which she quenched her thirst.
7. The day of promise on which her son assured her that for her sake He would in future have mercy upon sinners.
8. The sleeping of Mary (Asterio Mariam).
9. Assumption (Filseta), which is celebrated for 16 days, counted each as a separate feast.
10. The day when after her death she was revealed to all appeared to all for the first time.
11. Second time appearance to others.
12. Third time appearance.
13. Fourth time appearance.
14. Fifth time appearance.
15. We have twelve feasts a year when once a month on 21st day we commemorate her death or birth in heaven and this makes it 31 feasts in all up to now.
16. The 32nd feast is that of the day when a result of infidel with a blow hitting the icon, the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary, blood flew copiously from the image.
17. The 33rd feast is that of the purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The death of our Lady is commemorated on January 21, Ethiopic Calendar, 16 Jan. in Western reckoning and apparently by reason of this the 21st of each Ethiopian month is dedicated to the Virgin. Nativity is on May 1 (April 26 in Western reckoning and September 10 (7 in West. Reckoning); her burial on August 15 (8 in West. Reckoning); Assumption on August 16 (9 west reckoning); her Presentation on December 3 (Nov.29 in West reckoning); her Conception on December 16 (12 December in West. reckoning).

We thus have the following as our Lady's najor feasts:

- Conception
- Nativity
- Presentation
- Conceived of the Lord
- Flight into Egypt
- Death of our Lady
- Assumption
- Appearance

The feast of Kidane Mehret (Covenant of Mercy) is a day which honours the merciful power of St. Mary the blessed Mother. It is kept on Yekatit 16 in Ethiopian Calendar (Feb.24 Gregorian calendar).

The feasts which come each month during the are: Trinity, the 7th of each month; Michael the Archangel, the 12t of each month; the Covenant of Mercy, the 16th of each month; the Holy Virgin Assumption, the 21st of each month; the Death of Our Lord, the 27th of each month; and the birth of Christ, the 29th of each month.

Every Christian has a patron saint and each family has its patron saint whose anniversary is commemorated from father to son. The patron most in vogue are: St. Michael the Archangel, St. Gabriel, St. George, the Virgin Mary, St. John the Baptist, Tekla Haimanot, Gebre Menfese Kidus, St. Petros etc.

The book Senksar is the calendar which contains a list of saints to be commemorated daily and their brief history. There are many holy martyrs and confessors who are remembered. The angels hold a high place in the church. They protect homes, Churches, palaces and all places of importance. Chiefs among them are St. Michael and St. Gabriel.

Sone feasts are national and religious at the sane tine. These are:

- Christmas – Tahsas 29th E.C (7th January)
- Epiphany – Ter 11th E.C (19th January)
- St. Michael– Ter 12th E.C (20th January)
- Good Friday
- Easter
- Feast of Assumption—Nehassie 16th E.C (22nd August)
- Finding of the truth Cross- Maskaram 17th E.C (27th September)

3. FASTING AND ABSTINENCE

The Church, in her earliest days, recognized the necessity for her children to “chastise the body and bring it under subjection”, as St. Paul advises. The body is ever striving for mastery over the spirit; besides the external sources of temptation, “the world”, we have always another source with us which is a part of our nature. This is the reason for mortification. Self denial in lawful things enables us to turn with great earnestness to spiritual things. It is on these grounds that the Ethiopian church has strictly adhered to the injunctions of the Didascalia and enjoyed on the faithful the longest and most austere fasts in the world.

Fasting implies abstention from food and drink. Special days are appointed for fasting. Every Wednesday and Friday are days of fasting because on Wednesday the Jews held a council in which they rejected and condemned our Lord and on Friday they crucified him. The fasts are ordained in the Fetha Negest are:

1. Fast for Hudadi or Abiye Tsome (Lent), 56 days.
2. Fast of the Apostles, 10-40 days, which the Apostles kept after they had received the Holy Spirit. It begins after Pentecost.
3. The fast of Assumption, 16 days.
4. The gahad of Christmas (on the eve of Christmas).
5. The fast preceding Christmas, 40 days. It begins with Sibket on 15th Hedar and ends on Christmas eve with the feast of Gena and the 28th of Tahsas.
6. The fast of Nineveh, commemorating the preaching of Jonah. It comes on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of the third week before Lent.
7. The gahad of Epiphany, fast on the eve of Epiphany.

In addition to these, there is the fast of repentance which a man keeps after committing sin, it being imposed as a penance by the priest for seven days, forty days or one year. There is a fast which a bishop keeps at the time he is consecrated.

There is a fast of desire which a man keeps if he thinks he will increase his value in the sight of God or that he will subdue his body by extra good works. Monks and nuns observe additional fast days not required of the laity. All persons above the age of 13 observe the church fasts. The priest rarely

grants dispensations. The man who ignores or neglects any injunction of the church is not considered good Christian.

The total number of fasting days amounts to about 250 a year, of which about 180 are obligatory for all, and the rest are only for priests, monks, nuns and other special groups in the church. The longest periods of fasting are those of Lent. Advent and Kwekwam (forty days preceding the fast of the flight to Egypt). Fast generally implies one meal a day to be taken either in the evening or after 2.45 p.m. with total abstention from meat, fats, eggs and dairy products. Instead they use cereals, vegetables and other type of food devoid of fats. Smoking is a breach of the fast.

There is no fasting while Christmas, Epiphany, and the feast of fifty days are being kept. From Easter to Pentecost a man may eat and drink what he likes on Wednesday and Friday. There is no fast if the Christmas and Epiphany fall on a Wednesday or Friday. On Saturday and Sunday people may take breakfast at 9 or 9:30.

Special prayers are conducted during the fasting seasons. In all the churches we have daily services held from morning to 2:45 p.m.. Priests regularly attend night services and they perform the canon, they remain in the churches praying incessantly, and in sadness ponder and read their Psalter from cock-crow by light of a taper, and throughout the day eat dry grain and drink water.

4. ADVENT

The aim of the church is to cause her children to reflect. During the year she sets apart two seasons in which she imbues the faithful with a spirit of penitential fervor. One of these seasons, which is called Advent, from the Latin word *adventus*, (arrival), embraces about five Sundays.

The Law and practice of the church is observed strictly, though not so much as in Lent. It is a time for devout and penitential preparation of the soul for the proper and worthy celebration of the great feast of Christmas.

In advent (Sibket, in Amharic) a fast is kept, the Christmas fast of 40 days beginning on 15 Hedar and ending on Christmas eve with the Feast of Gena on the 28 of Tahsas.

5. CHRISTMAS

Year after year the Christmas season brings to the minds of all Christians the story of the Child in the manger, the shepherds on the Judean hills, the Celestial songs "Glory to God in the highest", and the Angel's message, telling that the Long expected one had come.

Liddet or Gena is the Ethiopian name for Christmas which is marked by special ceremonies. The origin is basically the same as is universally accepted. It is celebrated on 7th January (Tahsas 29 E.C) preceded by a fast of 40 days. The difference of date is due to a calendar of discrepancy since the Ethiopian calendar is based on the year of Grace 7 or 8 years after Anno Domini. The Ethiopian Christmas coincides with the date of this observance in the Eastern Orthodox dispensation.

Qiddus Bale Wold is another name for Christmas in addition to Liddet or Gena. Gena is also a name for a Christmas game played by boys and grown up men (like hockey).

6. LENT AND HOLY WEEK - HUDADI AND HIMAMAT

The church has always taught the necessity of penance for justification. She has instituted Lent as a remembrance of the forty days fast of our Blessed Lord in the desert and as a means of sanctification for her children.

To the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Lent means a period of fasting when the faithful undergo a rigorous schedule of prayers and penitence. This fast is observed with greater rigor than any other fast and it is a test of one's Christianity. One who fails to keep it is not considered a good Christian. Properly observed nullifies the sins committed during the rest of the year. The faithful should abstain from all food except bread, water and salt. It consists of 56 days. All kinds of meat is forbidden, and also dairy products. On all the fasting days only one meal is allowed and this is to be taken in the afternoon, at 3 p.m. or in the evening. On Saturdays and Sundays people are allowed to eat in the morning.

Daily Services are conducted in all the churches. Each day services are held from morning to 2.45p.m. Priests regularly attend night services starting at midnight up to 7 a.m.

Qibela is the Sunday – before the opening of Lent, Monday –when the people eat their fill. In lent many grown tired and thin.

7. HOLY WEEK

In accordance with the chronology of the Gospel account of the last days of our Lord's mortal life it is natural that the sacred Triduum of Thursday, Friday and Saturday developed. A special "Holy Week" became established in which all the faithful re-lived and received graces from the fundamental mysterious of redemption.

Palm Sunday or Hosanna is celebrated with proper ceremonies with palm, processions and special services.

Then follows Holy Week, the week of Pains, the Himamat. For some, from Thursday afternoon until Easter morning no morsel of food nor a drop of water enters the mouth and three days are known as "Qanona". The priests neither eat nor drink but remain in the churches singing and praying incessantly. No absolution is given.

MAUNDY THURSDAY is a special day on which in the Mass unleavened bread is used. For those who can, it is spent out of doors. When the fast is broken late in the afternoon no one eats ordinary bread, a mixture of special flour is compounded and boiled. A solemn Mass is celebrated on that day. The ceremony of washing the feet is conducted the same day in imitation of what our Lord did to the twelve Apostles at the Last Supper. All the faithful with clean souls should communicate on Holy Thursday.

GOOD FRIDAY. The solemn liturgical service of Good Friday is attended by thousands of believers. There is a sense of sorrow and desolation. All the symbols, images and instruments used in the passion of the Saviour are publicly exhibited in the church. Men and women go to church to prostrate themselves, remaining there from early morning till 3 p.m. the hour of the death of Jesus Christ. Believers confess their greater and lesser offenses to the confessor or sit reading their Psalter. It is believed that on Good Friday blood fell from Christ on the cross and dripped into the

grave of Adam beneath and there rose up from the dead about 500 people; the thief on the left was sent into darkness but the one on the right went before Adam into Paradise. On this Friday the Devil was bound with cords and Christ descending to purgatory (seol) sent forth to paradise all the souls that were in darkness (Seol). Good Friday is a special day for confession.

HOLY SATURDAY is Qidame shur on which the good news went forth. Everyone who fasts passes the day and night in expectation. On this night before Easter many go to the Church and pass the night in making prayers and in prostration on clenched hands. Confession is heard on that day.

EASTER, the feast of feasts, is celebrated with special solemnity. The church is filled with fragrance of incense and myriad's of lights. The clergy are arrayed in their best vestments. All the people hold lighted tapers. Greetings are exchanged, drums are beaten, hands are clapped and singing is heard everywhere: "our resurrection has come, hosanna." Men are heard saying "O Lord Christ have mercy upon us." They pray for a blessing "O God make it to be a festival of our good fortune and of our well being! Let us have another threshing floor and another year if thou wilt." Letters or messages are exchanged between friends and the whole day is one of spiritual and physical feasting, a commemoration of the holiest occasion of all history – a truly blessed time when Christ rose from the dead.

The Ethiopian Prayer for the Dead

The Orthodox pray for the departed. The most pressing prayer within the liturgies appointed for this purpose is for God to forgive their sins. We say, "For no one lives and does not sin, for You only are without sin...." This is easily misunderstood, but it goes to the very heart of the mystery of our relationship with God.

The same sentiment, interestingly, is offered in the prayers for the living. The priest says:

Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, and visitation for the servants of God [especially _____], and for the pardon and remission of their sins.

This can sometimes create a jarring moment. For example, I always include the names of the women who are pregnant in my parish (there always seem to be a bunch of them). Thus, "for Susan and the child she carries," only to be followed by "and for the pardon and remission of their sins." So every one of the living whom we pray for is under this concern "for the pardon and remission of their sin."

All of this is complicated by our culture's confusion about sin. When a contemporary person hears the term "sin," they immediately think in legal terms. We think, "They must have done something wrong and now they need to be forgiven." So, recently on Mothers' Day, I intoned, "for our mothers living this day...and for the pardon and remission of their sins." Some mothers might indeed look at us, their offspring, and think that perhaps they sinned by bringing us into the world! But this is not at all the meaning of the prayer.

Sin is not a legal problem. It is not a breaking of the rules for which we now deserve punishment. When we ask for God to forgive someone's sins, we are not asking God to "let them off the hook," or some such thing. Sin and forgiveness have to do with our broken communion with God and others. It is a state of being out-of-communion or in which our communion with God and others is somehow impaired.

God is Life. He is the Lord and Giver of Life. He is the only source of life for everything that exists. Our broken and impaired communion with Him results in death. St. Paul said, "The wages of sin is death." It's the natural outcome of broken communion. The only way to "forgive" such a broken communion is to restore it. That restoration of communion is the very essence of what we mean when we say "forgiveness." To be forgiven is to be made whole, beginning with our communion with God.

Thus, when we pray for the living, the very heart of our prayer is for the forgiveness of their sins. Not because we're aware of some rules which they have broken, but because the forgiveness of sin, the restoration of communion with God, is the source of every good thing, without which nothing can be good or well.

When we pray for those who have died and the forgiveness of their sins, we are asking the same thing, for their communion with God, whether broken or impaired, to be made whole. Of course, we enter mysterious ground in all of this. The Orthodox Church has very little to say in a definitive manner about prayers for the departed. The doctrine of purgatory is a development with Western Catholicism and plays no part in Orthodoxy. Officially, the Church says that our prayers for the departed are "of benefit." They help.

Some teachers in the Tradition hold that once we die, there is nothing that we can do for ourselves. But these same teachers hold that the prayers of the living do wonderful things for us. Others hold that we can indeed do things for ourselves after death, but also acknowledge the benefit of the prayers of the living.

What is essential in this is something that runs very counter to our contemporary minds, formed as they are by the false assumptions of modernity. Salvation, the full and complete restoration of communion with God and our complete healing, is not a private matter. We are not saved alone, for "alone" is the very antithesis of salvation. *Communion* is how we exist. Neither can we have communion with God without communion with our neighbor (1 John 4:20-21). Our contemporary culture imagines that we are self-existing, that life is merely a matter of biology. However, true existence, both in this life and the next, is marked by communion, both with God and with others.

This is the very heart of our salvation. That the Church prays for those who have died is the abiding confession that death does not destroy our communion with one another. That our prayers are of "benefit" for those who have died is the abiding confession that our communion is real and effective. That we ask the prayers of the saints is the abiding confession that those who have finished the course are of benefit to us.

The teaching of the Church is that the prayers of the Divine Liturgy are the most effective prayers of all. For it is in the Holy Eucharist that the whole Church, on earth and in heaven, united supremely

in Christ, its life in union with His sacrifice, is offered to the Father. Here the Son presents the Kingdom to the Father, that God might be "all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28).

It is indeed tragic that contemporary Christianity has lost this ancient understanding of the faith. With the radical individualism of the modern world, the mystery of communion and true participation (*koinonia*) have been forgotten, and with them, whole passages of Scripture have ceased to have their true meaning. Even the word *koinonia*, which has the Greek meaning of "commonality" or "participation," is rendered in English translations as "fellowship." Instead, Scripture tells us that we are in Christ and that Christ is in us, that we are members of one single Body, that we have communion with the sufferings of Christ, that His death becomes our death and our death becomes His, etc. This most fundamental element of the grammar of Christianity has ceased to be spoken by most of the contemporary world.

This same tragedy has deepened modern grieving and created the tragically feeble efforts now known as "celebrations of life" as substitutes for true Christian funerals. Memory, made as pleasant as possible, becomes the repository of those whom we now have truly "lost." All communion is severed, and the dead pass out of our lives. But, in reality, they do not. The mind, bereft of true communion wanders about, seeking a solace that can only be imagined. Grief therapists seek to create psychological moments of healing with no basis outside of the mind and the emotions, places where dogs chase their tails in circles that can never be resolved. "Time heals all wounds," becomes the modern panacea, so long as time promises a sad forgetfulness.

Many people are staggered the first time they attend an Orthodox funeral. The frankness with which death is addressed and acknowledged disturbs our modern sensibilities. Some of the ancient hymns that are traditionally sung by the choir are laments sung from the point-of-view of the departed:

As you see me set before you mute and without breath, weep for me, my brethren, family, and all who know me, for I spoke with you only yesterday, and suddenly the fearful hour of death came upon me. Come, all those who love me and give me the last kiss, for never again shall I journey or talk with you until the end of time. For I go to a Judge Who is impartial, where servant and master stand side by side. King and soldier, rich and poor, are held in equal esteem. For each will be glorified by his own deeds, or will be put to shame. But I ask and implore you all to pray without ceasing for me to Christ our God, that I may not be put into the place of torment because of my sins, but that He may appoint me to a place where there is the light of life. now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

The funeral marks only the beginning of a new communion. In Orthodox practice, prayers are offered on the third, ninth and fortieth days after death, and every year on the anniversary of our parting. Funeral services conclude with the ancient hymn, "Memory eternal!" In which the Church prays that God will forever remember the departed. To be remembered by God is nothing less than life eternal.

The faithful are urged to give alms in the name of the departed. In traditional Orthodox practice, those alms were a way of asking for the poor to remember the soul of the one who had died. Candles are lit in memory and the prayers of the Eucharist are offered repeatedly. In Orthodox

practice, the priest offers a service of prayers for each of the first forty days after death. Annual visits are made to the graves of the departed where prayers are offered yet again.

In all of these things, the reality of our eternal participation in one another and together in the life of God is foremost. All of these customs face an uphill battle in the dead-and-gone emptiness of the modern world. We have forgotten our ancestors and can only expect to be forgotten ourselves. Christ gives us a greater hope:

But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be an affliction, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace. For though in the sight of men they were punished, their hope is full of immortality. Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself; like gold in the furnace he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them. In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble. (Wisdom 3:1-7)

May their memory be eternal!

The Testament of Naphtali

Naphtali, the eighth son of Jacob and Bilhah. The Runner. A lesson in physiology.

The copy of, the testament of Naphtali, which he ordained at the time of his death in the hundred and thirtieth year of his life.

2 When his sons were gathered together in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, while still in good health, he made them a feast of food and wine.

3 And after he was awake in the morning, he said to them, I am dying; and they believed him not.

4 And as he glorified the Lord, he grew strong and said that after yesterday's feast he should die.

5 And he began then to say: Hear, my children, ye sons of Naphtali, hear the words of your father.

6 I was born from Bilhah, and because Rachel dealt craftly, and gave Bilhah in place of herself to Jacob, and she conceived and bare me upon Rachel's knees, therefore she called my name Naphtali.

7 For Rachel loved me very much because I was born upon her lap; and when I was still young she was wont to kiss me, and say: May I have a brother of thine from mine own womb, like unto thee.

8 Whence also Joseph was like unto me in all things, according to the prayers of Rachel.

9 Now my mother was Bilhah, daughter of Rotheus the brother of Deborah, Rebecca's nurse, who was born on one and the self-same day with Rachel.

10 And Rotheus was of the family of Abraham, a Chaldean, God-fearing, free-born, and noble.

11 And he was taken captive and was bought by Laban; and

he gave him Euna his handmaid to wife, and she bore a daughter, and called her name Zilpah, after the name of the village in which he had been taken captive.

12 And next she bore Bilhah, saying: My daughter hastens after what is new, for immediately that she was born she seized the breast and hastened to suck it.

13 And I was swift on my feet like the deer, and my father Jacob appointed me for all messages, and as a deer did he give me his blessing.

14 For as the potter knoweth the vessel, how much it is to contain, and bringeth clay accordingly, so also doth the Lord make the body after the likeness of the spirit, and according to the capacity of the body doth He implant the spirit.

15 And the one does not fall short of the other by a third part of a hair; for by weight, and measure, and rule was all the creation made.

16 And as the potter knoweth the use of each vessel, what it is meet for, so also doth the Lord know the body, how far it will persist in goodness, and when it beginneth in evil.

17 For there is no inclination or thought which the Lord knoweth not, for He created every man after His own image.

18 For as a man's strength, so also in his work; as his eye, so also in his sleep; as his soul, so also in his word either in the law of the Lord or in the law of Beliar.

19 And as there is a division between light and darkness, between seeing and hearing, so also is there a division between man and man, and between woman and woman; and it is not to be said that the one is like the other either in face or in mind.

20 For God made all things good in their order, the five senses in the head, and He joined on the neck to the head, adding to it the hair also for comeliness and glory, then the heart for understanding, the belly for excrement, and the stomach for grinding, the windpipe for taking in the breath, the liver for wrath, the gall for bitterness, the spleen for laughter, the reins for prudence, the muscles of the loins for power, the lungs for drawing in, the loins for strength, and so forth.

21 So then, my children, let all your works be done in order with good intent in the fear of God, and do nothing disorderly in scorn or out of its due season.

22 For if thou bid the eye to hear, it cannot; so neither while ye are in darkness can ye do the works of light.

23 Be ye, therefore, not eager to corrupt your doings through covetousness or with vain words to beguile your souls; because if ye keep silence in purity of heart, ye shall understand how to hold fast the will of God, and to cast away the will of Beliar.

24 Sun and moon and stars, change not their order; so do ye also change not the law of God in the disorderliness of your doings.

25 The Gentiles went astray, and forsook the Lord, and charged their order, and obeyed stocks and stones, spirits of deceit.

26 But ye shall not be so, my children, recognizing in the firmament, in the earth, and in the sea, and in all created things, the Lord who made all things, that ye become not as Sodom, which changed the order of nature.

27 In like manner the Watchers also changed the order of their nature, whom the Lord cursed at the flood, on whose account He made the earth without inhabitants and fruitless.

28 These things I say unto

you, my children, for I have read in the writing of Enoch that ye yourselves also shall depart from the Lord, walking according to all the lawlessness of the Gentiles, and ye shall do according to all the wickedness of Sodom.

29 And the Lord shall bring captivity upon you, and there shall ye serve your enemies, and ye shall be bowed down with every affliction and tribulation, until the Lord have consumed you all.

30 And after ye have become diminished and made few, ye return and acknowledge the Lord your God; and He shall bring you back into your land, according to His abundant mercy.

31 And it shall be, that after that they come into the land of their fathers, they shall again forget the Lord and become ungodly.

32 And the Lord shall scatter them upon the face of all the earth, until the compassion of the Lord shall come, a man working righteousness and working mercy unto all them that are afar off, and to them that are near.

The Testament of Asher

the tenth son of Jacob and Zilpah

Chapter 1

1:1 "A copy of the testament of Asher, the things he spoke to his sons in the one hundred twenty-fifth year of his life."

1:2 "While he was still healthy he said to them, Listen, children of Asher, to your father, and I will show you everything that is right in the sight of God."

1:3 "God has granted two ways to the sons of men, two mind-sets, two lines of action, two models, and two goals."

1:4 "Accordingly, everything is in pairs, the one over against the other."

1:5 "The two ways are good and evil; concerning them are two dispositions within our breasts that choose between them."

1:6 "If the soul wants to follow the good way, all of its deeds are done in righteousness and every sin is immediately repented."

1:7 "Contemplating just deeds and rejecting wickedness, the soul overcomes evil and uproots sin."

1:8 "But if the mind is disposed toward evil, all of its deeds are wicked; driving out the good, it accepts the evil and is overmastered by Beliar/Satan, who,"

1:9 "Even when good is undertaken, presses the struggle so as to make the aim of his action into evil, since the devil's storehouse is filled with the vermin of the evil spirit."

Chapter 2

2:1 "The soul, they say, may in words express good for the sake of evil, but the outcome of the action leads to evil."

2:2 "There is a man who has no mercy on the one who serves him in performing an evil deed; there are two aspects of this, but the whole is wicked."

2:3 "And there is a man who loves the one who does the evil, as he is himself involved in evil, so that he would choose to die in evil for the evildoer's sake. There are also two aspects of this, but the whole situation is evil."

2:4 "Although indeed love is there, yet in wickedness is evil concealed; in name it is as though it were good, but the outcome of the act is to bring evil."

2:5 "Someone steals, deals unjustly, robs, cheats, but yet has pity on the poor. This also has two aspects, but is evil as a whole."

2:6 "He who cheats his neighbor provokes God's wrath; he who serves falsely before the Most High, and yet has mercy on the poor, disregards the Lord who uttered the Law's commands; he provokes him, and yet he alleviates the plight of the poor day laborer."

2:7 "He defiles the soul and takes pride in his own body; he kills many, yet has pity on a few. This also has two aspects, but is evil as a whole."

2:8 "Someone else commits adultery and is sexually promiscuous, yet is abstemious/moderate in his eating. While fasting, he is committing evil deeds. Through the power of his wealth he ravages many, and yet in spite of his excessive evil, he performs the commandments."

2:9 "This also has two aspects, but is evil as a whole. Such persons are hares, because although they are halfway clean, in truth they are unclean,"

2:10 "For this is what God has said on the tables of the commandments."

Chapter 3

3:1 "But you, my children, do not be two-faced like them, one good and the other evil; rather, cling only to goodness, because in it the Lord God is at rest, and men aspire to it."

3:2 "Flee from the evil tendency, destroying the devil by your good works. For those who are two-faced are not of God, but they are enslaved to their evil spirits, so that they might be pleasing to Beliar/Satan and to persons like themselves."

Chapter 4

4:1 "For persons who are good, who are single-minded – even though they are considered by the two-faced to be sinners – are righteous before God."

4:2 "For many who destroy the wicked perform two works – good and evil – but it is good as a whole, because evil is uprooted and destroyed."

4:3 "One person hates the man who, though merciful, is also unjust, or who is an adulterer, even though he fasts, and thus is two-faced. But his work is good as a whole, because he imitates the Lord, not accepting the seeming good as though it were the truly good."

4:4 "Another person does not want to see any pleasant days among the convivial, lest they disgrace the body and pollute the soul. This also has two aspects, but is good on the whole."

4:5 "For such persons are like gazelles and stags: In appearance they seem wild and unclean, but as a whole they are clean. They live by zeal for the Lord, abstaining from what God hates and has forbidden through his commandments, staying off evil by the good."

Chapter 5

5:1 "Children, you see how in everything there are two factors, one against the other, one concealed by the other: In possessions is greed, in merriment is drunkenness, in laughter is lamentation, in marriage is dissoluteness."

5:2 "Death is successor to life, dishonor to glory, night to day, darkness to light, but all these things lead ultimately to day: righteous actions to life, unjust actions to death, since eternal life wards off death."

5:3 "One cannot say truth is a lie, nor a righteous act is unjust, because all truth is subject ultimately to the light, just as all things are subject ultimately to God."

5:4 "I have demonstrated all these things in my life, and have not strayed from the Lord's truth. I have searched out the commandments of the Most High and lived them according to all my strength."

Chapter 6

6:1 "You also, my children, give attention to the Lord's command, pursuing the truth with singleness of mind."

6:2 "The two-faced are doubly punished because they both practice evil and approve of others who practice it; they imitate the spirits of error and join in the struggle against mankind."

6:3 "You therefore, my children, keep the Law of the Lord; do not pay attention to evil as to good, but have regard for what is really good and keep it thoroughly in all the Lord's commandments, taking it as your way of life and finding rest in it."

6:4 "For the ultimate end of human beings displays their righteousness, since they are made known to the angels of the Lord and of Beliar/Satan."

6:5 "For when the evil soul departs, it is harassed by the evil spirit which it served through its desires and evil works. But if anyone is peaceful with joy he comes to know the angel of peace and enters eternal life."

Chapter 7

7:1 "Do not become like Sodom, which did not recognize the Lord's angels and perished forever."

7:2 "For I know that you will sin and be delivered into the hands of your enemies; your land shall be made desolate and your sanctuary wholly polluted."

7:3 "You will be scattered to the four corners of the earth; in the dispersion you shall be regarded as worthless, like useless water, until such time as the Most High visits the earth. [He shall come as a man eating and drinking with human beings,] crushing the dragon's head in the water. He will save Israel and all the nations, [God speaking like a man.]"

7:4 "Tell these things, my children, to your children, so that they will not disobey him."

7:5 "For I know that you will be thoroughly disobedient, that you will be thoroughly irreligious, heeding not God's Law but human commandments, being corrupted by evil."

7:6 "For this reason, you will be scattered like Dan and Gad, my brothers, you shall not know your own lands, tribe, or language."

7:7 "But he will gather you in faith/truth through his compassion and on account of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

Chapter 8

8:1 "After he had said these things he gave instructions, saying, Bury me in Hebron. And he died, having fallen into a beautiful sleep."

8:2 "And his sons did as he commanded them: They took him up to Hebron and buried him with his fathers."

The Vision of Habakkuk

Happily the Lord had better things in store. I learned I was a sinner before God, but provision had been made for all who confessed their sins. Through mercy I was brought to know Jesus as the savior of sinners.

What a transformation that made! My sins were forgiven. God had great plans; first for His Son, but also for me and all who put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Are you one of His?

But let us have a look at Habakkuk. He lived in an evil day. Israel had fallen into idolatry, and the moral state of the nation was very low. Judgment was coming, and of the severest kind—Jerusalem to be destroyed and the nation carried off into captivity. Was that all? Certainly not. God had made promises to Israel, unconditional promises, and God cannot lie. This makes Habakkuk bold. He goes to the watchtower, a good place to get a long view.

He got a vision: "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea"(2:14). Habakkuk would know the Scripture had said this before, but this time there was more detail (see Numbers14:21 and Isaiah 11:9).

This is wonderful, but not to be compared with the Lord's plans for us, His heavenly people (see Ephesians 1:10). The vision effected a big change in Habakkuk; he rightly felt that he must get adjusted to this remarkable discovery.

"I must venture my life to be in conformity with the truth" he says, in effect. "Revive thy work, O Lord . . . in the midst of the years make known" (3:2).

This brings us to another use of the watchtower; he looked for an answer to his prayer, just as you and I may do when we really pray earnestly. Here was an answer! In the midst of the judgments, God raised up a good king, Josiah, in Judah. Then a season of refreshment and blessing was known even in the small circumstances (see 2 Chron.35:18). In addition, a wonderful prophet was brought into prominence, Jeremiah, the one who wept over the desolations, but also had the privilege of showing God's mercy to the nation—and the new covenant to us (Jer.31). Revival is a powerful movement, and it is available at the same time as God's hand is upon the nations and also upon His people. If you want to know more about revival, look at Psalm 85:6 and Psalm 138:7 among others.

But there is something important to learn about this interesting story. There is only one way in which all this can come to pass: look at 2:4, "the just shall live by his faith." There are only two references

to faith in the Old Testament, and this is one of them. It also tells us it is not faith generally, or in others, but in us individually ("his faith") and this is where so many of us fail.

Habakkuk asked for a hard thing. The enemy of our soul puts every possible difficulty in the way, but this is where the victory can be won. God, in His wonderful love for us, puts all His resources at our disposal.

"Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." (1John 4:4). Hard things are to be overcome (see 2 Kings 2:10). Once again Habakkuk comes in with a message. Look at the conclusion (3:17-19)—he is rejoicing when there is nothing visible to rejoice in! Think about that for a moment, and then consider how Habakkuk can bring a wonderful message of encouragement to us also.

Young men in our day also see visions (Joel 2:28 and Acts 2:17). God needs such today because the days are evil (2 Timothy 3:1). Judgment is coming but the Lord is long-suffering (2 Peter 3:9) and wants all men to be saved (1 Timothy 2:4). But we also can venture forth in faith. We also can ask him to revive us (Isaiah 57:15) and ask him to increase our faith (Luke 17:50). Sometimes we marvel at saints who are real overcomers in the face of burdens that are insupportable without Divine help. This is the victory that our God is looking for in us today. Let us thank God for Habakkuk and seek to walk in his steps. Amen

The Apocalypse of Haggai

Haggai prophesied about a century after Zephaniah; and was contemporary with Zechariah, and the rebuilding of the Temple after the return from Babylon. He stirred the people up to finish it. Zerubbabel, son of David, and ancestor of Joseph the husband of Mary, and of Mary and Jesus, was Governor of Judah under the Persians; and Joshua, the son of Josedech, high priest.

These were "men of sign;" that is, men representative of One, who shall afterwards himself occupy, at one and the same time, the position of Governor and High Priest of the nation. Zerubbabel and Joshua are so regarded both by Haggai and Zechariah. In reference to the apocalypse of the Holy One they typified, Jehovah says in Haggai, "Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry; and I will shake all nations, and that to be desired of all nations they shall come (*isa bahu*, 3 p. plur.), and I will fill this house with glory.

And this "yet once more," says Paul, "signifieth the removing of those things which may be shaken as of things that are constituted, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." The heavens and earth shaken in the Babylonian desolation, were shaken "once more" in the Roman. But the time approaches when the heavens, earth, sea, and dry land of the Gentile world, are also to be convulsed. Therefore Jehovah commanded Haggai to speak to Zerubbabel, and say, "I will shake the heavens and the earth: and I will overthrow the thrones of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother.

In that day, saith Jehovah of armies, I will take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, son of Shealtiel, and will make thee as a signet; for I have chosen thee, saith Jehovah of armies"—ch. 2 : 6, 7, 21-23. Now as these things did not come to pass in the lifetime of Zerubbabel, he was either a representative of

his descendant the Son of Mary who shall be the ensign; or he must be raised from the dead if it is to be personally accomplished in him. Whichever alternative may be accepted, this is certain, that Zerubbabel is to be a living man when the shaking of the nations predicted shall come to pass. The prophecy then, relates to our future, and will be found hereafter to have been incorporated in some of the scenes of the Apocalypse.

The Epistle of Jeremiah to the Captives

This is the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the elders who were among the captives, the priests, and the prophets. He sent it to all the other people Nebuchadnezzar had taken as captives from Jerusalem to Babylon. ²(This letter was sent after all these people were taken away: Jehoiachin the king and the queen mother; the officers and leaders of Judah and Jerusalem; and the craftsmen and metalworkers from Jerusalem.) ³Zedekiah king of Judah sent Elasah son of Shaphan and Gemariah son of Hilkiah to Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. So Jeremiah gave them this letter to carry to Babylon:

⁴This is what the Lord All-Powerful, the God of Israel, says to all those people I sent away from Jerusalem as captives to Babylon: ⁵"Build houses and settle in the land. Plant gardens and eat the food they grow. ⁶Get married and have sons and daughters. Find wives for your sons, and let your daughters be married so they also may have sons and daughters. Have many children in Babylon; don't become fewer in number. ⁷Also do good things for the city where I sent you as captives. Pray to the Lord for the city where you are living, because if good things happen in the city, good things will happen to you also." ⁸The Lord All-Powerful, the God of Israel, says: "Don't let the prophets among you and the people who do magic fool you. Don't listen to their dreams. ⁹They are prophesying lies to you, saying that their message is from me. But I did not send them," says the Lord.

¹⁰This is what the Lord says: "Babylon will be powerful for seventy years. After that time I will come to you, and I will keep my promise to bring you back to Jerusalem. ¹¹I say this because I know what I am planning for you," says the Lord. "I have good plans for you, not plans to hurt you. I will give you hope and a good future. ¹²Then you will call my name. You will come to me and pray to me, and I will listen to you. ¹³You will search for me. And when you search for me with all your heart, you will find me! ¹⁴I will let you find me," says the Lord. "And I will bring you back from your captivity. I forced you to leave this place, but I will gather you from all the nations, from the places I have sent you as captives," says the Lord. "And I will bring you back to this place."

¹⁵You might say, "The Lord has given us prophets here in Babylon."

¹⁶But the Lord says this about the king who is sitting on David's throne now and all the other people still in Jerusalem, your relatives who did not go as captives to Babylon with you. ¹⁷The Lord All-Powerful says: "I will soon send war, hunger, and terrible diseases against those still in Jerusalem. I will make them like bad figs that are too rotten to eat. ¹⁸I will chase them with war, hunger, and terrible diseases. I will make them hated by all the kingdoms of the earth. People will curse them and be shocked and will use them as a shameful example wherever I make them go. ¹⁹This is

because they have not listened to my message," says the Lord. "I sent my message to them again and again through my servants, the prophets, but they did not listen," says the Lord.

²⁰ You captives, whom I forced to leave Jerusalem and go to Babylon, listen to the message from the Lord. ²¹ The Lord All-Powerful, the God of Israel, says this about Ahab son of Kolaiah and Zedekiah son of Maaseiah: "These two men have been prophesying lies to you, saying that their message is from me. But soon I will hand over those two prophets to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and he will kill them in front of you. ²² Because of them, all the captives from Judah in Babylon will use this curse: 'May the Lord treat you like Zedekiah and Ahab, whom the king of Babylon burned in the fire.' ²³ They have done evil things among the people of Israel. They are guilty of adultery with their neighbors' wives. They have also spoken lies and said those lies were a message from me. I did not tell them to do that. I know what they have done; I am a witness to it," says the Lord.

²⁴ Also give a message to Shemaiah from the Nehelamite family. ²⁵ The Lord All-Powerful, the God of Israel, says: "Shemaiah, you sent letters in your name to all the people in Jerusalem, to the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah, and to all the priests. ²⁶ You said to Zephaniah, 'The Lord has made you priest in place of Jehoiada. You are to be in charge of the Temple of the Lord. You should arrest any madman who acts like a prophet. Lock his hands and feet between wooden blocks, and put iron rings around his neck. ²⁷ Now Jeremiah from Anathoth is acting like a prophet. So why haven't you arrested him? ²⁸ Jeremiah has sent this message to us in Babylon: You will be there for a long time, so build houses and settle down. Plant gardens and eat what they grow.'"

²⁹ Zephaniah the priest read the letter to Jeremiah the prophet. ³⁰ Then the Lord spoke his word to Jeremiah: ³¹ "Send this message to all the captives in Babylon: 'This is what the Lord says about Shemaiah the Nehelamite: Shemaiah has prophesied to you, but I did not send him. He has made you believe a lie. ³² So the Lord says, I will soon punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite and his family. He will not see the good things I will do for my people, says the Lord. None of his family will be left alive among the people, because he has taught the people to turn against me.'"

The Assumption of Moses

- 1 The Testament of Moses *even* the things which he commanded in the one hundred and twentieth year of his life, that is the two thousand five hundredth year from the creation of the world: [But according to oriental reckoning the two thousand and seven hundredth, and the four hundredth after the departure from Phoenicia], when the people had gone forth after the Exodus that was made by Moses to Amman beyond the Jordan, in the prophecy that was made by Moses in the book Deuteronomy: and he called to him Joshua the son of Nun, a man approved of the Lord, that he might be the minister of the people and of the tabernacle of the testimony with all its holy things, and that he might bring the people into the land given to their fathers, that it should be given to them according to the covenant and the oath, which He spoke in the tabernacle to give (it) by Joshua: saying to Joshua these words: '(Be strong) and of a good courage so as to do with thy might all that has been commanded that you may be blameless unto God.' So says the Lord of the world. For He has created the world on behalf of His people. But He was not pleased to manifest this purpose

of creation from the foundation of the world, in order that the Gentiles might thereby be convicted, yea to their own humiliation might by (their) arguments convict one another. Accordingly He designed and devised me, and He prepared me before the foundation of the world, that I should be the mediator of His covenant. And now I declare unto you that the time of the years of my life is fulfilled and I am passing away to sleep with my fathers even in the presence of all the people And receive this writing that you may know how to preserve the books which I shall deliver unto you: and you shall set these in order and anoint them with oil of cedar and put them away in earthen vessels in the place which He made from the beginning of the creation of the world, that His name should be called upon until the day of repentance in the visitation wherewith the Lord will visit them in the consummation of the end of the days.

- 2 And now they shall go by means of you into the land which He determined and promised to give to their fathers, in the which you shall bless and give to them individually and confirm unto them their inheritance in me and establish for them the kingdom, and you shall appoint them local magistrates according to the good pleasure of their Lord in judgment and righteousness. And five years after they enter into the land, that thereafter they shall be ruled by chiefs and kings for eighteen years, and during nineteen years the ten tribes shall break away. And the twelve tribes shall go down and transfer the tabernacle of the testimony. Then the God of heaven will make the court of His tabernacle and the tower of His sanctuary, and the two holy tribes shall be (there) established: but the ten tribes shall establish kingdoms for themselves according to their own ordinances. And they shall offer sacrifices throughout twenty years: and seven shall entrench the walls, and I will protect nine, but four shall transgress the covenant of the Lord, and profane the oath which the Lord made with them. And they shall sacrifice their sons to strange gods, and they shall set up idols in the sanctuary, to worship them. And in the house of the Lord they shall work impiety and engrave every form of beast, *even* many abominations.
- 3 And in those days a king from the east shall come against them and his cavalry shall cover their land. And he shall burn their colony with fire together with the holy temple of the Lord, and he shall carry away all the holy vessels. And he shall cast forth all the people, and he shall take them to the land of his nativity, yea he shall take the two tribes with him. Then the two tribes shall call upon the ten tribes, and shall march as a lioness on the dusty plains, being hungry and thirsty. And they shall cry aloud: 'Righteous and holy is the Lord, for, inasmuch as ye have sinned, we too, in like manner, have been carried away with you, together with our children.' Then the ten tribes shall mourn on hearing the reproaches of the two tribes, and they shall say: 'What have we done unto you, brethren? Has not this tribulation come on all the house of Israel?' And all the tribes shall mourn, crying unto heaven and saying: 'God of Abraham God of Isaac and God of Jacob, remember Thy covenant which You made with them, and the oath which You didst swear unto them by Yourself, that their seed should never fail from the land which You hast given them.' Then they shall remember me, saying, in that day, tribe unto tribe and each man unto his neighbor: 'Is not this that which Moses did then declare unto us in prophecies, who suffered many things in Egypt and in the Red Sea and in the wilderness during forty years: and assuredly called heaven and earth to witness against us, that we should not transgress His

commandments, in the which he was a mediator unto us? Behold these things have befallen us after his death according to his declaration, as he declared to us at that time, yes, behold these have taken place even to our being carried away captive into the country of the east.' Who shall be also in bondage for about seventy and seven years.

- 4 Then there shall enter one who is over them, and he shall spread forth his hands, and kneel upon his knees and pray on their behalf saying: 'Lord of all, King on the lofty throne, who rules the world, and did will that this people should be Your elect people, then (indeed) You didst will that You should be called their God, according to the covenant which You didst make with their fathers. 3 And yet they have gone in captivity in another land with their wives and their children, and around the gates of strange peoples and where there is great vanity. Regard and have compassion on them, O Lord of heaven.' Then God will remember them on account of the covenant which He made with their fathers. and He will manifest His compassion in those times also. And He will put it into the mind of a king to have compassion on them, and he shall send them off to their land and country. Then some portions of the tribes shall go up and they shall come to their appointed place, and they shall anew surround the place with walls. And the two tribes shall continue in their prescribed faith, sad and lamenting because they will not be able to offer sacrifices to the Lord of their fathers. And the ten tribes shall increase and multiply among the Gentiles during the time of their captivity.
- 5 And when the times of chastisement draw nigh and vengeance arises through the kings who share in their guilt and punish them, they themselves also shall be divided as to the truth. Wherefore it hath been said: 'They shall turn aside from righteousness and approach iniquity, and they shall defile with pollutions the house of their worship,' and [because] 'they shall prostitute themselves with strange gods.' For they shall not follow the truth of God, but some shall pollute the altar with the (very) gifts which they offer to the Lord, who are not priests but slaves, sons of slaves. And many in those times shall have respect unto desirable persons and receive gifts, and pervert judgment [on receiving presents]. And on this account the colony and the borders of their habitation shall be filled with lawless deeds and iniquities: those who wickedly depart from the Lord shall be judges: they shall be ready to judge for money as each may wish.
- 6 Then there shall be raised up unto them kings bearing rule, and they shall call themselves priests of the Most High God: they shall assuredly work iniquity in the holy of holies. And an insolent king shall succeed them, who will not be of the race of the priests, a man bold and shameless, and he shall judge them as they shall deserve. And he shall cut off their chief men with the sword, and shall destroy *them* in secret places, so that no one may know where their bodies are. He shall slay the old and the young, and he shall not spare. Then the fear of him shall be bitter unto them in their land. And he shall execute judgments on them as the Egyptians executed upon them, during thirty and four years, and he shall punish them. And he shall beget children, (who) succeeding him shall rule for shorter periods. Into their parts cohorts and a powerful king of the west shall come, who shall conquer them: and he shall take them captive, and burn a part of their temple with fire, (and) shall crucify some around their colony.

- 7 And when this is done the times shall be ended, in a moment the (second) course shall be (ended), the four hours shall come. They shall be forced .. And, in the time of these, destructive and impious men shall rule, saying that they are just. And these shall stir up the poison of their minds, being treacherous men, self-pleasers, dissemblers in all their own affairs and lovers of banquets at every hour of the day. gluttons, gourmands..... Devourers of the goods of the (poor) saying that they do so on the ground of their justice, but *in reality* to destroy them, complainers, deceitful, concealing themselves lest they should be recognized, impious, filled with lawlessness and iniquity from sunrise to sunset: saying: 'We shall have feastings and luxury, eating and drinking, and we shall esteem ourselves as princes.' And though their hands and their minds touch unclean things, yet their mouth shall speak great things, and they shall say furthermore: 'Do not touch me lest you should pollute me in the place (where I stand)' . . .
- 8 And there shall come upon them a second visitation and wrath, such as has not befallen them from the beginning until that time, in which He will stir up against them the king of the kings of the earth and one that rules with great power, who shall crucify those who confess to their circumcision: and those who conceal (it) he shall torture and deliver them up to be bound and led into prison. And their wives shall be given to the gods among the Gentiles, and their young sons shall be operated on by the physicians in order to bring forward their foreskin. And others amongst them shall be punished by tortures and fire and sword, and they shall be forced to bear in public their idols, polluted as they are like those who keep them. And they shall likewise be forced by those who torture them to enter their inmost sanctuary, and they shall be forced by goads to blaspheme with insolence the word, finally after these things the laws and what they had above their altar.
- 9 Then in that day there shall be a man of the tribe of Levi, whose name shall be Taxo, who having seven sons shall speak to them exhorting (them): 'Observe, my sons, behold a second ruthless (and) unclean visitation has come upon the people, and a punishment merciless and far exceeding the first. For what nation or what region or what people of those who are impious towards the Lord, who have done many abominations, have suffered as great calamities as have befallen us? Now, therefore, my sons, hear me: for observe and know that neither did the fathers nor their forefathers tempt God, so as to transgress His commands. And you know that this is our strength, and thus we will do. Let us fast for the space of three days and on the fourth let us go into a cave which is in the field, and let us die rather than transgress the commands of the Lord of Lords, the God of our fathers. For if we do this and die, our blood shall be avenged before the Lord.
- 10 And then His kingdom shall appear throughout all His creation,
And then Satan shall be no more,
And sorrow shall depart with him.
Then the hands of the angel shall be filled
Who has been appointed chief,

And he shall forthwith avenge them of their enemies.
 For the Heavenly One will arise from His royal throne,
 And He will go forth from His holy habitation
 With indignation and wrath on account of His sons.
 And the earth shall tremble: to its confines shall it be shaken:
 And the high mountains shall be made low
 And the hills shall be shaken and fall.
 And the horns of the sun shall be broken and he shall be turned into darkness;
 And the moon shall not give her light, and be turned wholly into blood.
 And the circle of the stars shall be disturbed.
 And the sea shall retire into the abyss,
 And the fountains of waters shall fail,
 And the rivers shall dry up.
 For the Most High will arise, the Eternal God alone,
 And He will appear to punish the Gentiles,
 And He will destroy all their idols.
 Then you, O Israel, shall be happy,
 And you shall mount upon the necks and wings of the eagle,
 And they shall be ended.
 And God will exalt you,
 And He will cause you to approach to the heaven of the stars,
 In the place of their habitation.
 And you will look from on high and see your enemies in Ge(henna)
 And you shall recognize them and rejoice,
 And you shall give thanks and confess thy Creator.
 And do you; Joshua (the son of) Nun, keep these words and this book; For from my death
 [assumption] until His advent there shall be 250 times [= year-weeks = 1750 years]. And this
 is the course of the times which they shall pursue till they are consummated. And I shall go
 to sleep with my fathers. Wherefore, Joshua you (son of) Nun, (be strong and) be of good
 courage; (for) God has chosen (you) to be minister in the same covenant.

- 11 And when Joshua had heard the words of Moses that were so written in his writing all that he had before said, he rent his clothes and cast himself at Moses' feet. And Moses comforted him and wept with him. And Joshua answered him and said: 'Why do you comfort me, (my) lord Moses ? And how shall I be comforted in regard to the bitter word which you hast spoken which has gone forth from thy mouth, which is full of tears and lamentation, in that you depart from this people? (But now) what place shall receive you? Or what shall be the sign that marks (your) sepulcher? Or who shall dare to move your body from there as that of a *mere* man from place to place? For all men when they die have according to their age their sepulchers on earth; but your sepulcher is from the rising to the setting sun, and from the south to the confines of the north: all the world is your sepulcher. My lord, you are departing, and who shall feed this people? Or who is there that shall have compassion on them and who shall be their guide by the way? Or who shall pray for them, not omitting a single day, in order that I may lead them into the land of *their* forefathers? How therefore am I to foster this people as a father (his) only son, or as a mistress *her* daughter, a virgin who is being prepared to be given to the husband whom she will revere, while she guards her person from the sun and (takes care) that her feet are not unshod for running upon the ground. (And how) shall I supply them with food and drink according to the pleasure of their will? For of them, there shall be 600,000 (men), for these have multiplied to this degree through your prayers, (my) lord Moses. And what wisdom or understanding have I that I should judge or answer by word in the house (of the Lord)? And the kings of the Amorites also when they hear that we are attacking *them*, believing that there is no longer among them the holy spirit who was worthy of the Lord, manifold and incomprehensible, the lord of the word, who was faithful in all things, God's chief prophet throughout the earth, the most perfect teacher in the world, [that he is no longer among them], shall say "Let us go against them. If the enemy have but once wrought impiously against their Lord, they have no advocate to offer prayers on their behalf to the Lord, like Moses the great messenger, who every hour day and night had his knees fixed to the earth, praying and looking for help to Him that rules all the world with compassion and righteousness, reminding Him of the covenant of the fathers and propitiating the Lord with the oath." For they shall say: "He is not with them: let us go therefore and destroy them from off the face of the earth." What shall then become of this people, my lord Moses?'
- 12 And when Joshua had finished (these) words, he cast himself again at the feet of Moses. And Moses took his hand and raised him into the seat before him, and answered and said unto him: Joshua, do not despise yourself; but set your mind at ease, and hear my words. All the nations which are in the earth God has created and us, He has foreseen them and us from the beginning of the creation of the earth unto the end of the age, and nothing has been neglected by Him even to the least thing, but all things He hath foreseen and caused all to come forth. (Yes) all things which are to be in this earth the Lord has foreseen and, look, they are brought forward (into the light.. The Lord,) has on their behalf appointed me to (pray) for their sins and (make intercession) for them. For not for any virtue or strength of mine, but of His good pleasure have His compassion and longsuffering fallen to my lot. For I say unto you, Joshua: it is not on account of the godliness of this people that you shall root out the nations. The lights of the heaven, the foundations of the earth have been made and approved by God and are under the signet ring of His right hand. Those,

therefore, who do and fulfill the commandments of God shall increase and be prospered: but those who sin and set at naught the commandments shall be without the blessings before mentioned, and they shall be punished with many torments by the nations.

The Martyrdom of Isaiah

[Chapter 1]

1 And it came to pass in the twenty-sixth year of the reign of Hezekiah king of Judah that he
2 called Manasseh his son. Now he was his only one. And he called him into the presence of Isaiah
the son of Amoz the prophet; and into the presence of Josab the son of Isaiah.
6b, 7 And whilst he (Hezekiah) gave commands, Josab the son of Isaiah standing by, Isaiah said to
Hezekiah the king, but not in the presence of Manasseh only did he say unto him: 'As the Lord liveth,
whose name has not been sent into this world, [and as the Beloved of my Lord liveth], and as the
Spirit which speaketh in me liveth, all these commands and these words shall be made of none
effect by Manasseh thy son, and through the agency of his hands I shall depart mid the torture of
8 my body. And Sammael Malchira shall serve Manasseh, and execute all his desire, and he shall
9 become a follower of Beliar rather than of me. And many in Jerusalem and in Judaea he shall
cause to abandon the true faith, and Beliar shall dwell in Manasseh, and by his hands I shall be
10 sawn asunder.' And when Hezekiah heard these words he wept very bitterly, and rent his
garments,
11 and placed earth upon his head, and fell on his face. And Isaiah said unto him: 'The counsel of
12 Sammael against Manasseh is consummated: nought shall avail thee.' And on that day Hezekiah
13 resolved in his heart to slay Manasseh his son. And Isaiah said to Hezekiah: ['The Beloved hath
made of none effect thy design, and] the purpose of thy heart shall not be accomplished, for with
this calling have I been called [and I shall inherit the heritage of the Beloved].'

[Chapter 2]

1 And it came to pass after that Hezekiah died and Manasseh became king, that he did not
remember the commands of Hezekiah his father but forgot them, and Sammael abode in Manasseh
2 and clung fast to him. And Manasseh forsook the service of the God of his father, and he served
3 Satan and his angels and his powers. And he turned aside the house of his father which had been
4 before the face of Hezekiah the words of wisdom and from the service of God. And Manasseh
turned aside his heart to serve Beliar; for the angel of lawlessness, who is the ruler of this world, is
Beliar, whose name is Matanbuchus. And he delighted in Jerusalem because of Manasseh, and he
made him strong in apostatizing (Israel) and in the lawlessness which was spread abroad in
Jerusalem

5 And witchcraft and magic increased and divination and auguration, and fornication, [and adultery], and the persecution of the righteous by Manasseh and [Belachira, and] Tobia the Canaanite, and John

6 of Anathoth, and by (Zadok> the chief of the works. And the rest of the acts, behold they are written

7 in the book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. And when Isaiah the soll of Amoz saw the lawlessness which was being perpetrctd in Jerusalem and the worship of Satan and his wantonness, he

8 withdrew from Jerusalem and settled in Bethlehem of Judah. And there also there was much

9 lawlessness, and withdrawing from Bethlehem he settled on a mountain in a desert place. [And Micaiah the prophet, and the aged Ananias, and Joel and Habakkuk, and his son Josab, and many of the faithful who believed in the ascension into heaven, withdrew and settled on the mountain.]

10 They were all clothed with garments of hair, and they were all prophets. And they had nothing with them but were naked, and they all lamented with a great lamentation because of the going

11 astray of Israel. And these eat nothing save wild herbs which they gathered on the mountains, and having cooked them, they lived thereon together with Isaiah the prophet. And they spent two years of

12 days on the mountains and hills. [And after this, whilst they were in thc desert, there was a certain man in Samaria named Belchlra, of the family of Zedekiah, the son of Chenaan, a false prophet whose dwelling was in Bethlehem. Now Hezekiah the son of Chanani, who was the brother of his father, and in the days of Ahab king of Israel had been the teacher of the 400 prophets of Baal,

13 had himself smitten and reprovcd Micaiah the son of Amada the prophet. And he, Micaiah, had been reprovcd by Ahab and cast into prison. (And he was) with Zedekiah the prophet: they were

14 with Ahaziah the son of Ahab, king in Samaria. And Elijah the prophet of Tebon of Gilead was reprovng Ahaziah and Samaria, and prophesied regarding Ahaziah that he should die on his bed of sickness, and that Samaria should be delivered into the hand of Leba Nasr because he had slain

15 the prophets of God. And when the false prophets, who were with Ahaziah the son of Ahab and

16 their teacher Gemarias of Mount Joel had heard -now he was brother of Zedekiah -when they had heard, they persuaded Ahaziah the king of Aguaron and slew Micaiah.

[Chapter 3]

1 And Belchlra recognized and saw the place of Isaiah and the prophets who were with him; for he dwelt in the region of Bethlehem, and was an adherent of Manasseh. And he prophesied falsely in Jerusalem, and many belonging to Jerusalem were confederate with him, and he was a Samaritan.

2 And it came to pass when Alagar Zagar, king of Assyria, had come and captured Samaria and taken the nine (and a half) tribes captive, and led them away to the mountains of the Medes and the

3 rivers of Tazon; this (Belchira) while still a youth, had escaped and come to Jerusalem in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, but he walked not in the ways of his father of Samaria; for he feared

4 Hezekiah. And he was found in the days of Hezekiah speaking words of lawlessness in Jerusalem.

5 And the servants of Hezekiah accused him, and he made his escape to the region of Bethlehem.

6 And they persuaded . . . And Belchira accused Isaiah and the prophets who were with him, saying: 'Isaiah and those who are with him prophesy against Jerusalem and against the cities of Judah that they shall be laid waste and (against the children of Judah and) Benjamin also that they shall go into captivity, and also against thee, O lord the king, that thou shalt go (bound) with hooks

8 and iron chains': But they prophesy falsely against Israel and Judah. And Isaiah himself hath

9 said: 'I see more than Moses the prophet.' But Moses said: 'No man can see God and live':

10 and Isaiah hath said: 'I have seen God and behold I live.' Know, therefore, O king, that he is lying. And Jerusalem also he hath called Sodom, and the princes of Judah and Jerusalem he hath declared to be the people of Gomorrah. And he brought many accusations against Isaiah and the

11 prophets before Manasseh. But Beliar dwelt in the heart of Manasseh and in the heart of the

12 princes of Judah and Benjamin and of the eunuchs and of the councillors of the king. And the words of Belchira pleased him [exceedingly], and he sent and seized Isaiah.

[Chapter 5]

1b, 2 And he sawed him asunder with a wood-saw. And when Isaiah was being sawn in sunder Balchira stood up, accusing him, and all the false prophets stood up, laughing and rejoicing because

3 of Isaiah. And Balchira, with the aid of Mechembechus, stood up before Isaiah, [laughing]

4 deriding; And Balchira said to Isaiah: 'Say: "I have lied in all that I have spoken, and likewise

5 the ways of Manasseh are good and right. And the ways also of Balchira and of his associates are

6, 7 good.'" And this he said to him when he began to be sawn in sunder. But Isaiah was (absorbed)

8 in a vision of the Lord, and though his eyes were open, he saw them . And Balchira spake thus to Isaiah: 'Say what I say unto thee and I will turn their heart, and I will compel Manasseh

9 and the princes of Judah and the people and all Jerusalem to reverence thee.' And Isaiah answered and said: 'So far as I have utterance (I say): Damned and accursed be thou and all thy powers and

10, 11 all thy house. For thou canst not take (from me) aught save the skin of my body.' And they

12 seized and sawed in sunder Isaiah, the son of Amoz, with a wood-saw. And Manasseh and

13 Balchira and the false prophets and the princes and the people [and] all stood looking on. And to the prophets who were with him he said before he had been sawn in sunder: 'Go ye to the region

14 of Tyre and Sidon; for for me only hath God mingled the cup.' And when Isaiah was being sawn in sunder, he neither cried aloud nor wept, but his lips spake with the Holy Spirit until he was sawn in twain.

The History of Melchizedek

Melchizedek only appears briefly in Genesis 14, and yet this priest earns a role in the hall of faith in the New Testament. In fact, the New Testament often compares Melchizedek, the king of Salem (in some translations, Sodom) and priest of God Most High, with Jesus.

Melchizedek appears on the scene after Abraham has defeated five kings. He declares a blessing on Abraham, and then Abraham gives him 1/10th of everything he owns.

As is the case with many seemingly minor details or characters in the Bible, each plays an important role in God's redemptive story. In this article, we'll discover more about this priest-king that Abraham (Abram at the time) encounters in Genesis 14.

Then we'll discuss the meaning of Melchizedek's name, what he did as a priest, and why the New Testament compares him with Jesus.

Let's dive in!

Who Was Melchizedek?

As mentioned previously, Melchizedek is the king of Salem and a priest of God. Let's break down those roles first before we dive further into the personhood of Melchizedek.

King of Salem, a place later supposedly known as Jerusalem, meant that he hailed from a land that would have significance in Israel's later history.

As for his priestly role, we'll dive into that more in the section below. We should make a careful note that he serves bread and wine. For those of us familiar with the act of communion, this should sound familiar.

We also have no idea about Melchizedek's lineage (Hebrews 7). The Bible makes no mention of whose family he belongs, only because he appears for a few verses. Some rabbinic teachings say Melchizedek was Noah's son Shem. Others have said Melchizedek appeared to Abram in a Christophany, or as the Son of God mentioned throughout the Old and New Testament.

Although scholars have highly debated Melchizedek's true personhood, most, like Matthew Henry in his commentary, have concluded that he was, in fact, a man and not the Son of God.

What Does the Name "Melchizedek" Mean?

Melchizedek, or in some translations Malki-Tzedek, literally means "my king." Because the tzedek means "righteous" or "just," many scholars have wrongly translated his name to mean just king or righteous king, writes John J. Parsons. Salem also derives from the term Shalom, which means peace. Perhaps his name had also meant King of Peace. Hebrews 7 confirms both of these names.

No wonder so many scholars have debated about the possible divine status of Melchizedek as the Son of God – because it seems odd that a mere human would ever have a name that means "king of righteousness," as indicated in Hebrews 7.

In either case, Melchizedek's name points to his kingship.

The Priesthood of Melchizedek

We don't get a lot of hints in Scripture about the specifics of what Melchizedek does in his role as a priestly king. He does break out the bread and wine sacrament and offers a blessing to Abraham in the name of God.

To answer this question, we'll have to look to the role of priests in the Old Testament and know that the roles may slightly differ. After all, the priesthood doesn't really come until the time of Aaron, Moses' brother, in Exodus.

Priests in the Bible would serve as mediators between the people and God (we'll discuss this more in the high priest section below). They administered sacrifices, especially during important holidays throughout the year, such as Passover, and were divided in twenty-four different sub-types (1 Chronicles 24:7-18). They ministered in both the temple and in the cities in which they were assigned. They also specifically came from the tribe of Levi.

We should make note that Melchizedek appears again in Psalm 110:4. This verse makes it clear that the order of the priesthood of Melchizedek has an eternal value.

Unlike the priesthood of Aaron which ran into many roadblocks and happened on and off, the priesthood of Melchizedek lasts forever.



What Is a "High Priest"?

In the Bible, we do have a distinction between the priests and the high priest. The priests may range in their duties from taking care of the sacrificial lambs and maintaining the temple, but the high priest had the enormous task as serving as a mediator between the people and God once during the year.

On the Day of Atonement (Exodus 28), the high priest would enter the most sacred spot in the Temple (or Tabernacle, depending on the Old Testament timeline). He had a rope with bells attached to him, so those outside the holy of holies would know that God had not struck him dead

from the sound. He would sprinkle the sacrifice for the people and himself on the holy seat (the ark of the covenant).

Scripture doesn't offer any evidence that Melchizedek does this particular priestly duty. After all, the priesthood of Aaron existed long after his time. But we should make note that he does serve as a mediator between Abraham and God, as other priests do in Scripture.

And if Jesus does hail from the order of Melchizedek, we do know that a certain sacrifice Jesus did on earth (his crucifixion) tore the curtain to the holy of holies in half and atoned for our sins.

Why Is Jesus "of the Order of Melchizedek"?

As mentioned previously, in Hebrews 7, we see that Jesus hails from the priesthood of Melchizedek. In fact, a good portion of Hebrews 7 compares Jesus with Melchizedek.

Throughout the Old Testament, we do see certain archetypes to Jesus (Adam, David, etc.), but often they don't receive half a chapter in the Bible dedicated to them. So why does this matter?

First, this shows that Jesus takes part in a greater priesthood than Aaron. The priesthood of the Levites was fraught with idolatry, abuse, and didn't last forever. But the priesthood of Melchizedek has an eternal value – it lasts no matter what happens.

Second, the Bible highlights the importance of Jesus' role as priest. We don't often discuss this role as much in churches because most of us don't have a familiarity with priests, as opposed to kings or even shepherds, other titles given to Jesus. But Jesus' priestly role plays a huge part in the biblical narrative.

Like priests, Jesus mediates for us. He completed the ultimate sacrifice to atone for our sins.

Pointing to a Greater Priesthood

A great deal of debate has happened over a handful of verses about a man who lived thousands of years ago. The enigmatic figure of Melchizedek seems to last longer than Aaron's priesthood, which spans entire books of the Bible.

We should care about this as Christians because no detail is too small in Scripture, and Melchizedek proves this. As an archetype of Jesus, he points us to a greater priesthood that will last eternally.

He also exemplifies kingly humility by declaring a blessing over Abraham and acknowledging God's almighty power.

Like the Levitical priests and the high priest, Melchizedek acts as a mediator between the people and God. And we later see this same role played out in the New Testament in a different way through Jesus.

Jesus, who hails from the order of Melchizedek, plays the ultimate high priestly role and atones for our sins, allowing the people to come face to face with God, as opposed to via one man, once a year.

The Book of the Heavenly Jerusalem

SUMMARY

Christians live in light of a “festal gathering” in the heavenly Jerusalem. This image speaks of joy and intimacy with the people of God, angels, Jesus, and God’s own self.

ANALYSIS

The description of the heavenly Jerusalem is in many ways the climax of Hebrews. The author describes it as a festal gathering, something that was a familiar feature of life in the ancient world. For ordinary festivals, people would travel many miles to take part in games and banquets in a city. Festivals were known for their atmosphere of friendship and joy. This gives readers a sense of the joy that they can anticipate in the heavenly Jerusalem, where the redeemed gather in the presence of angels and Christ himself. The vision gives people confidence for life in the present, knowing that the future of faith is one of life, joy, and community. It is not an individualistic hope, but one that involves the whole people of God. Moreover, this hope gives people cause for gratitude and a desire to serve God in daily life. The final chapter of the book outlines ways in which citizens of the heavenly city serve God on earth by showing mutual love and hospitality, attending to prisoners, remaining faithful in marriage, and avoiding the obsession for money (12:28-13:6). Hope for the city that is to come inspires praise to God in the present and sharing what we have with those in need (13:14-16).

The Miracles of Abba Gabra Manfas Qeddus

Christianity was brought to Ethiopia in the 4th century, making the Ethiopian Church the oldest branch of the Eastern Orthodox community. Ethiopian religious painting is based on Byzantine pictorial traditions but it exhibits a strong Ethiopian accent in the use of Ethiopian dress and the presence of Ethiopian saints. This cloth icon represents the popular saint Abba Gabra Manfas Qeddus, who died around 1433. He was an Ethiopian hermit monk sent by God to live in the desert among sixty lions and sixty leopards. Above the head of the monk is text written in the Orthodox Ge'ez script.

The Ethiopian Psalms of Solomon (see the Ebook attached)

The Ethiopian Book of Angelic Names

The Creation, Nature and Purpose of the Angelic Hosts <#>

The Holy Angels in Sacred Scripture <#>

First and foremost, the word “Angel” means “Messenger” and this word expresses the nature of Angelic service to the human race. From the days of man’s life in paradise, mankind has known of

their existence, and its almost universal recognition is reflected not only in Judaism but in most other ancient belief system as well. When Adam, the first human, was expelled from Paradise after his fall, one of the Angelic hosts, a Cherubim, with a flaming sword was set to guard the gates of Eden (Genesis 3:24). When Abraham sent his servant to Nahor, his brother, he encouraged him by telling him that the Lord would send His Angel before him and prosper his way (Genesis 24: 7, 40). Jacob saw Angels both in a dream (the vision of the ladder) and when awake, when returning home to Esau he saw a host of the Angels of God. In the Psalter - Book of Psalms, there are constant references to Angels, and we also read of them in the Book of Job and the Prophets. The Prophet Isaiah saw the Seraphim surrounding the Throne of God, and the Prophet Ezekiel saw Cherubim in his vision of the Temple of God (Isaiah 6:1-7, Ezekiel. 10:1-22.)

In the New Testament, the Book of Revelation contains many details about Angels and many references to them. An Angel announced the birth of St. John the Baptist to his father, the Priest Zacharias; so also did an Angel announce the birth of the Savior to the most Blessed Virgin St. Mary and appear in a dream to the righteous St. Joseph. A immense host of Angels sang the Glory of Christ Jesus Nativity - Birth; an Angel announced the birth of the Savior to the Shepherds and stopped the Wise Men - Magi from returning to King Herod; Angels ministered to the Lord Jesus Christ during His temptation in the wilderness; an Angel appeared to Him in the Garden of Gethsemane; Angels announced His Resurrection to the myrrh-bearing women; and at His Ascension into Heaven, Angels proclaimed, His Second Coming. Angels loosed the bonds of St. Peter and the other Apostles (Acts 5:19) and of St. Peter alone (Acts 12:7-15); an Angel appeared to Cornelius the Roman Centurion, telling him to send for St. Peter who would instruct him in the Word of God (Acts 10:3-7). An Angel announced to St. Paul that he was to appear before Caesar (Acts 27:23-24) and the vision of Angels is the foundation of the Revelation of St. John the Apostle - Evangelist.

The Creation of the Angels

In the Symbol of Faith, the Nicene Creed, which we recite at every Eucharist - Qiddasie, we find the following words: "I believe in One God . . . the Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible." The invisible, Angelic world was created by Almighty God before the visible world. "When the stars were made, all My Angels praised Me with a loud voice" (Job 38:7). The Apostle St. Paul writes: "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers; all things were created by Him and for Him" (Colossians 1:16).

Studying the first words of the Book of Genesis, "In the beginning God created heaven and earth", some of the Fathers of the Church understand the word "heaven" as meaning not the firmament, which was created later, but the invisible heaven, the world of Angelic beings. Many teachers of the Orthodox Church have expressed the thought that Almighty God created the Angels long before the visible world (Sts. Ambrose, Jerome, Gregory the Dialogist, Anastasius of Sinai) and that at the time when the material universe was created, they already stood before the face of the Creator and served Him. St. Gregory writes about this as follows: "As the goodness (or "love") of God could not find satisfaction in contemplating Himself, He wished to spread this goodness ever further, so that the number of those who would enjoy it should be as great as possible (for such is the nature of the highest form of goodness) and so God first thought of the Angelic heavenly powers, and thought

became act, carried out by the Word and fulfilled by the Spirit. As His first creation was pleasing to Him, He then devised another world, material and visible, and a well-balanced unity between heaven and earth and that which is between them." This view of Abune Gregory is echoed in the work of Abba Yohannes the Syrian along with many other Fathers of the Church.

The Nature of the Angelic Hosts <#>

By their nature - make up, the Angels are active spirits endowed with reason, will and knowledge; they serve Almighty God, fulfilling the will of His Providence and praise Him. They are incorporeal spirits, and because they belong to the invisible world, cannot be seen by our bodily eyes. Abba Yohannes the Syrian writes: "When it is the will of Almighty God that Angels should appear to those who are worthy, they do not appear as they are in their essence, but, transformed, take on such an appearance as to be visible to physical eyes." In the Old Testament Book of Tobit, the Angel accompanying Tobit and his son says of himself: "All these days I was visible to you, but I neither ate nor drank, this only appeared to your eyes" (Tobit 12:19).

But Abba Yohannes also writes: "An Angel can only be called incorporeal and non-material in comparison with us. For in comparison with Almighty God, Who alone is beyond compare, everything seems coarse and material, only the Divinity is totally non-material -and incorporeal."

The Degree of Perfection of the Angels <#>

Angels are the most perfect spirits, superior to mankind in their spiritual powers; but even they, like all creation; are bound by their limitations. As they are incorporeal spirits, they are less confined, by space and place than men, and can travel distances of, to us, inconceivable vastness with lightning speed, to appear where it is necessary for them to act, as God directs. However, it is impossible to say that they are totally independent of limitations of space and place, or that they could be omnipresent - being presence in every place at the same time. Holy Scripture depicts Angels as descending from heaven to earth, or ascending from earth to heaven, which gives us reason to believe that they cannot be on earth and in heaven at the same time.

Immortality is one of the qualities of Angels, as we are given clear evidence in Holy Scripture, which teaches that they cannot die (St. Luke 20:36). However, their immortality is not Divine (that is, independent and unconditional), but depends, like the immortality of human souls, completely on the will and mercy of Almighty God.

Angels, being incorporeal spirits, are capable to the highest degree spiritual development. Their mind has a much more exalted superiority than that of the human mind and in power and strength they transcend all earthly authorities, as St. Peter teaches (II Peter 2:11). The nature of an Angel is higher than the nature of a man, as the Prophet King David teaches us when, to stress the dignity of a man, he remarks, "Thou hast made him a little lower than the Angels" (Psalm 8:5).

However, even their exalted qualities have their limits. Sacred Scripture tells us that they do not know the depths of the essence of God, which is known only to the Spirit of God: "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (I Corinthians 2:11). They do not know the future, which is also known only to God: "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, ... not the Angels which are in heaven" (St. Mark 13:32). The Angels are also incapable of fully understanding the mystery of redemption, which they "desire to look into" (I Peter 1:12) but cannot. They are even incapable of

knowing all human thoughts (Kings 8:39), and cannot perform miracles on their own but only by the will of Almighty God. "Blessed is the Lord, the God of Israel, Who alone doeth wonders" (Psalm 71:19).

The Numbers and the Ranks of Angels <#>

The world of Angelic beings is depicted in Sacred Scripture as immeasurably vast. When the Prophet Daniel saw the "Ancient of Days" in a vision, he saw that "thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousands of myriads attended upon Him" (Daniel 7:10). A multitude of the heavenly host are also described as hymning the Nativity of the Son of God.

St. Cyril, Archbishop of Jerusalem writes: "Imagine how great in number is the Roman people; imagine how great in number are the other barbarian peoples that now exist, and how many must have died even! In a century, imagine how many have been buried in a thousand years; imagine all mankind, from Adam to the present day. Great is their multitude, but it is small in comparison with the Angels, whose numbers are greater. They are the ninety-nine sheep, whereas the human race is the one lost sheep. By the greatness of a place one can judge the numbers of those who dwell in it. The earth we inhabit is a mere dot in the heavens, thus the heaven that surrounds it must have a much greater number of inhabitants. As is has greater space, the heavens of heavens hold their innumerable number. If it is written that 'a thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousands of myriads attended upon Him' this is only because the Prophet could express no greater number." When the numbers of the Angels are so great, it is natural to assume that in their world, as in the material: world, there are various degrees of perfections and therefore various ranks or a hierarchy of the heavenly powers. Thus Holy Scripture calls some Angels and others Archangels (I Thessalonians 4:16; Jude v. 9).

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, guided by the views of the writers of the early Church and the Fathers of the Church divides the world of the Angels into 9 ranks, and of these 9 into 3 hierarchies, each consisting of 3 ranks.

The First Hierarchy: Stand those that are closest to the Throne of God, the Cherubim, Seraphim and Thrones.

The Second or Middle Hierarchy: The Authorities, Dominions, and Powers.

The Third Hierarchy: Which is closest to us, contains Angels, Archangels and Principalities.

We find the enumeration of 9 ranks of Angels in the "Decrees of the Apostles", and in the works of St. Ignatius of Antioch, St. Gregory the Theologian, and St. John Chrysostom; later in the works of St. Gregory the Dialogist, St. Yohannes the Syrian and others. This is what St. Gregory the Dialogist writes: "We accept the existence of 9 ranks of Angels, because from the evidence of the Word of God we know about Angels, Archangels, Powers, Authorities, Principalities, Dominions, Thrones, Cherubim and Seraphim. The existence of Angels and Archangels is witnessed throughout Holy Scripture; it is principally the Books of the Prophets which mention Cherubim and Seraphim. The names of yet another 4 ranks are listed by the Apostle St. Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians, where he writes: 'Far above all Principality; and Power, and Might, and Dominion and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come' (Ephesians 1:21); and also in his Epistle to the Colossians: 'For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in

earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers: all things were created by Him and for Him' (Col. 1:16).

Thus, when to those 4, of whom he speaks to the Ephesians, that is to the Principalities, Authorities, Powers and Dominions, we add the Thrones, mentioned in the Epistle to the Colossians, that adds up to 5 ranks of Angels; and when to them we add the Angels, Archangels, Cherubim and Seraphim, we can see that there are 9 Ranks of Angelic beings"

And in fact, when we examine the books of Holy Scripture, we find the names of the 9 ranks which have been listed; more than nine are not mentioned. We read the name of the Cherubim in the 3rd Chapter of Genesis, in Psalms 80 and 99, in Chapter 10 of Ezekiel; of the Seraphim in Isaiah Chapter 6; of Powers in the Epistle to the Ephesians Chapter 1, and to the Romans Chapter 8; of Thrones, Authorities, Principalities, and Dominions in the Epistle to the Colossians Chapter 1, to the Ephesians Chapter 1 and 3; of Archangels in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians Chapter 4 and the Epistle of Jude v. 9; of Angels in the First Epistle of Peter Chapter 3, and the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans Chapter 8, and in; various other places. On this evidence of Holy Scripture the number of Angelic Ranks recognized in the teaching of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church is normally limited to nine.

However, some Fathers of the Church express their personal opinion that the division of Angelic beings into 9 Ranks covers only those names and ranks which have been revealed to us in this present life; others will be revealed in the world to come. This idea has been developed by St. John Chrysostom, among other Fathers of the Church. St. John Chrysostom writes: "There are in truth other powers, whose names even are unknown to us. Not only Angels, Archangels, Thrones, Dominions, Authorities and Powers inhabit the heavens, but there are innumerable other kinds and an unimaginable multitude of classes, which no words can be adequate to express. But what evidence is there that there are more powers than those whose names are known to us? The Apostle St. Paul, when he mentions one of the series of ranks we know, also reminds of the other which we do not, when he writes of Christ: 'He ... set Him at His own right hand, in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come' (Ephesians 1:20-21). From this we see that there are certain names which will be known then, but are now unknown. Hence the reference to a "name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."

These ideas, however, are regarded by the Church not as dogma, but as personal opinions which may or may not be true.

On the whole the writers and teachers of the early Church regarded the doctrine of the heavenly hierarchy as something mysterious. St Dionysius writes in his book, *On the Celestial Hierarchies*: "How many ranks there are of heavenly beings, what their nature is and in what manner the mystery of holy authority is ordered among them, only God can know in detail. It is He Who created their hierarchy, and they themselves know their own powers, the nature of their light, their holy and most peaceful system of ranks. All that we can say about this is what God has revealed to us through them themselves, because they know themselves". Augustine, Bishop of Hippo in the 4th Century has similar ideas. "That there exist thrones, principalities; dominions and powers in the heavenly mansions, I believe most firmly, and I hold it as an undoubted fact that there are distinctions

between them, but what exactly they are like and what exactly are the distinctions between them, I do not know."

In Holy Scripture we find the names of some of the highest Angels. There are two such names in the canonical books, ["Michael", the supreme Archangel](#) ("Who is like unto God?" Daniel 10:13; 12:1; Jude v. 9; Revelation 12:7-8) and "Gabriel" ("Man of God" Daniel 8:16; 9:21; St. Luke 1:19-26). In the deutero-canonical books of the "Apocrypha" we have "Raphael" ("The help of God" Tobit 3:17; 12:15); "Uriel" ("Fire of God" A.V.) or "Jeremiel" ("The highness or mercy of God" R.V.), in II Esdras 4:36; "Uriel" also in II Esdras 4:1; "Salathiel" ("Prayer to God" A.V.) or "Phaltiel" R.V. or "Psaltiel" (in Syriac, II Esdras 5:16). Apart from these names, pious tradition gives yet another two names of Angels, "Jehudiel" ("The praise of God") and "Barachiel" ("The blessing of God"), although these names do not appear in Holy Scripture. Various listings exist of the great Archangels and in these many alternative names occur, yet it is significant that in all cases only seven names are given and this is in agreement with the words of St. John in the Revelation: "Grace be unto you and peace, from Him Which is, and Which is to come: and from the seven spirits which are before His throne" (Revelations 1:4).

The Service of the Angels <#>

But what is the purpose of the beings who people the spiritual world? Obviously Almighty God intended and intends that they should be the most perfect reflections of His Majesty and Glory and share in His bliss. If we are told of the visible heavens, "The heavens declare the glory of God", how much more is this the purpose of the spiritual heavens. For this reason St. Gregory the Theologian calls them "reflections of the Perfect Light" or secondary lights.

The Angels of those ranks which are closest to the human race appear in Holy Scripture as "Messengers" or "Heralds" of the will of God, guides for people and the servants of their salvation. The Apostle St. Paul writes: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Hebrews 1:14).

Angels not only hymn the glory of God, but also serve Him in the plan of His Providence for the material world. The Fathers of the Church often speak of this service of theirs. "Some of them stand before the Great God, while others by their action support the whole world" (St. Gregory the Theologian, "Songs of the Mysteries"). Angels are "set in command of the elements, the heavens, the world, and all within it" (St. Athenagoras). "Each of them has received under his control some particular part of the universe, or is attached to some particular thing or person in the world, as is known to Him Who arranges and orders all things, and all work towards one goal, by command of the Builder of all things" (St. Gregory the Theologian).

Some ecclesiastical writers express the idea that particular Angels are set in charge of particular aspects of the kingdom of nature, inorganic, organic and animal or animate, as we read, for example, in the works of Origen and Augustine of Hippo. This idea comes from the Revelation, where we read of Angels set in charge of certain physical elements by the will of God (Revelation 16:15: "And I heard the Angel of the waters say . . ."; Rev. 7:1 : "I saw four Angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, not on the sea, nor on any tree;" Rev. 14:18: "And another Angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire . . .").

According to the vision of the Prophet Daniel, there are Angels to whom God entrusts the fate of the kingdoms and peoples of the earth (Daniel Chapters 10-12).

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church believes that every person has his own "Guardian Angel," unless he has driven him away by an evil life. The Lord Jesus Christ said: "Take heed that you despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, that in heaven their Angels do always behold the Face of My Father Which is in heaven" (St. Matthew 18:10). The Conflict of the Good and Bad Angels Those parts of Almighty God's creation which are inanimate and not endowed with reason have no freedom and automatically do God's Holy will; they obey the rules He has laid down for them, which we call "the Laws of Nature."

But those beings which the One and only true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit has endowed with reason, He has honored with great gifts-language and free will-and it is free will which invests each action of a free being with moral value.

To be free, to choose to do good and perform the will of Almighty God, not merely be forced to do so by irresistible natural laws, is essential for there to be any moral value in one's doing of good, and for obedience to the will of Almighty God to truly express love for God.

However, to have the freedom to choose to do what is right - good, one must also be free to do what is wrong - evil, for without alternatives there can be no choice, and if there is no choice there is no moral value in doing good, it is simply an automatic reaction to irresistible force.

Having the freedom to choose evil, one of the Angels actually did so, and by so doing, this Angel of light became the enemy of God, the devil. This took place before the creation of the visible world.

The devil, who is also known as "Satan" or "the enemy," was created as a mighty and beautiful Archangel, one of the most perfect and radiant, and for this reason he was given the name Lucifer, "the light-bearer". But when he chose not to do the will of God, he fell, lost his exalted qualities, and left his dwelling in heaven. St. Jude says: "And the Angels that did not keep their own position but left their proper dwelling have been kept by him in eternal chains in the nether gloom until the judgment of the great day;" (The Epistle of Jude, Verse 6).

Lucifer had been richly endowed by the Creator and should have ever held his eyes on the Lord, "as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress." But instead he concentrated his attention on his own perfection, fell in love with it and was seized with pride. By doing this he left the path of truth, which united him with the Source of Life and Light, and entered the path of destruction. He forgot that he owed all to Almighty God, that all his perfections were the gift of God. He ascribed them to himself, and so seemed exceedingly great to himself. He was so blinded by the idea of his own greatness and considered, "is there any who is equal to me? Any Angel ... or God, even God Himself. I myself am Divine, I myself am a Divinity!"

Satan rose against his Lord and took with him a large number of spirits who accepted his authority. The Archangel Michael took command of the Angels who remained faithful to God, forming an army of Angels, and entered into conflict with the fallen spirits. "Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his Angels fighting against the dragon; and the dragon and his Angels fought, 8 but they were defeated and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. 9* And the great dragon was thrown

down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his Angels were thrown down with him.” (Revelations 12:7-9). Long before the creation of the material world took place this war which was waged between the Angels of light and the spirits of darkness. But light conquered darkness, and the rebels were hurled into the abyss. The fall of the mighty spirit was horrifying and inevitable. “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven,” says Our Lord (St. Luke 10:18).

And this fall, associated with increasing stubbornness and hardening of heart continues, further and further downwards, to this day. One sin leads to another, pride leads to envy and spite, whose weapons are lies, false witness and cunning. Darkness falls when we leave the Source of light, and this is what happened to the devil. From a light-bearing Angel Satan was transformed into the prince of darkness. But can he not repent? Would not the merciful Lord receive his penitence? One hermit, who pondered over this problem, was granted a revelation. An Angel brought him from heaven the answer that forgiveness is always possible for those who repent. The holy man repeated this comforting reply to the devil, when he appeared before him. The enemy of mankind burst into laughter and disappeared: every thought of repentance is comic to him, every suggestion of humility unbearable. Stubbornness, hardness of heart and pride which develops into a habit can reach such a level that a sinner no longer wishes to make use of the means of salvation. This is the curse of pride—that extreme pride no longer desires salvation and hence perishes.

Thus the Angelic world of light divided; some Angels, faithful to the Lord, remain in light, joy, love and gratitude, piously serve Almighty God and all the time continue to develop, to make progress towards perfection, to closer union with the Lord. And they have gone so far in their work and in the path of grace, and have developed such a habit of goodness, that none of them can or will rebel against God now. The leader of this holy army of heaven is the radiant Archangel Michael, whereas that other world of darkness and spite consists of Satan and the demons.

The Martyrdom of Abuna Aregawi

Abune Aregawi was born around 455 A.D. in Constantinople C was chosen by God from a young age. His father Isaac C his mother Edena were Christians who were really rich, C they unceasingly served God with humbleness C helped the poor C needy. By the guidance of Isaac C Edna, our Holy Father Abune Aregawi studied the Holy Scriptures, both the Old C New Testament from a young age. As it was custom in those days his parents thought it was right that he would be married to the official’s daughter of Constantinople.

Our Holy father Abune Aregawi remembered the words of the Bible that said “He that doesn’t carry his cross, C follows after me, is not worthy of me. He that finds his life shall lose it: C he that loses his life for my sake shall find it. (Matt. 10:37-39)” So he decided to flee from this world C entered a Monastery to serve God. Shortly after, our Holy Father Abune Aregawi at the age of 14 received the Monkhood from Fr. Pachomius with the name ZeMichael.

Abune Aregawi continued to serve in the Monastery C with his knowledge of the Holy scriptures C his wisdom at a young age the Holy fathers in the Monastery were astonished by his maturity C spiritual zeal C named him “Aregawi” which means elderly (you who are our father). Not too long

after, our father Abune Aregawi C eight other Holy fathers departed to the IC of Agazian "Agazi" (referring to modern day Eritrea C N. Ethiopia) to bring the Christian Good News of Salvation in Christ Jesus C to introduce Monastic institutions.

Now in the year 480 A.D. in the Ge'ez Calendar during the reign of ኣልኣሜዳ ወዲ ሰልዓዶበ, Alamieda the son of SelAdoba, the 9 Roman saints including Abune Aregawi (ZeMikael) left their country C came to Eritrea for their love of the Virgin St. Mary. Arriving in Eritrea, the Nine saints learned the Ge'ez language, C the saints went in different directions to teach the word of God. When they arrived at the city AgaAro near Debre Sina, they saw a luminescing light like that seen on Mount Sinai by Moses, C seeing this, they named it Debre Sina.

Seeing this radiance from afar, they went back C forth twice, C having not reached the light, they went a third time. On this third journey from Agaro to Debre Sina they placed large rocks on their way there with the other 8 saints, C reached the brilliant monastery full of light, C for the first time the luminescent planted tree was revealed to Abune Aregawi. Seeing this radiance, they rejoiced exceedingly C praised God. The signs they left are still there to this day.

Although this levitating welensa (rock) was floating by God's will, because of problems of flooding in the Church, it was encircled with a building around it in the year 1951. To this day it has been a cell to many monastic fathers.

When Abune Aregawi arrived in Axum, Ethiopia, Abune Aregawi was led to a place C found a high mountain which was impossible to climb. Abune Aregawi was guided by the Holy Spirit to this place C knew it was Holy but was perplexed on how he could climb up the mountain. After much pondering he prayed earnestly C God sent him St. Michael, who showed him a large serpent C while holding onto the serpent he ascended up the mountain. After reaching the mountain top he praised God by saying "Hallelujah to the Father, Hallelujah to the Son C Hallelujah to the Holy Spirit" meaning praise be to the Father, praise be to the Son C praise be to the Holy Spirit) therefore the mountain was called Debre Halie luya (Mt. Hallelujah).

Our Holy Father Abune Aregawi blessed the mountain C established a Monastery with a Church on top of the mountain built by the King Hatsay Gebre Meskel. The king contributed many alms C gifts to the Church on Mount Hallelujah C built a permanent way up C down the Holy Mountain for people to visit. This was unacceptable C displeasing to Abune Aregawi therefore he ordered the king to "Dahmemo," which means destroy what he had built. Abune Aregawi prophesied that no stairs, ladders or path should be built to climb the mountain C that it should remain like that, as a miracle for future generations. Therefore the monastery was also named Debre Damo (Mount Damo) deriving from the Ge'ez word "Dahmemo" C until this day only a rope is used to climb the Holy Mountain symbolizing the serpent our holy father Abune Aregawi used to ascend C descend the mountain.

The feast of Abune Aregawi is on the 14th of Tiqimti, October 14th in the Ge'ez calendar, for this reason Tewahdo faithful all around the world commemorate our holy Father Abune Aragawi, annually on this Holy day C on the 14th day of each month. Abune Aregawi continued to preach C teach C establish Rules for the Monastic Life, which he had learned from Abba Pachomius. He established them among his children. C God made a covenant with him concerning those who

should celebrate his commemoration, C those who shall call upon his name, write his strife C history that it shall be greatly counted C many blessings shall be bestowed upon them.

As mentioned in the Old Testament of the Prophet Henok (Enoch) Gen. 5: 4 C the Prophet Elias (Elijah) 2 Kings 2:811, it is said that God through his grace hid Abune Aregawi from the face of death.

This holy man became a guide to the servants of God on the road. C he went up to the holy Debra Damo holding the tail of a serpent, C there he fought countless noble fights. C God graciously made a covenant (promise) with him saying that "Whoever calls upon his name, whoever should celebrate his commemoration" C then he was hidden from the face of death by the grace of God.

"Selam Leke Zemikael Be-tsu Ante Gebar-ye Te'amer Se'al Be'enti-ane O Abo-ye Aregawi"

"Salutation to Ze' Mikael righteous art thou doer of miracles, O our Father Aregawi intercede on our behalf."

May the blessings and intercession of our Holy Father Abune Aregawi be with us all!

The Ethiopian Book of Visions

The **Ethiopian Book of Visions** refers to the rich tapestry of spiritual and apocalyptic texts within the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian tradition. While not a single, universally recognized book, this term captures the essence of Ethiopia's unique biblical and extra-biblical literature that encompasses prophetic visions, apocalyptic revelations, and divine encounters.

Historical and Religious Context

Ethiopia's Christian heritage, dating back to the 4th century CE, has preserved a corpus of sacred writings unmatched in its breadth and depth. Central to this are the *Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church's* scriptures, which include books like **1 Enoch**, **The Apocalypse of Baruch**, and **4 Ezra**, alongside canonical works such as the **Book of Revelation**. These texts, often visionary and symbolic in nature, have shaped Ethiopia's spiritual identity. They delve into themes of divine judgment, the coming of the Messiah, the struggle between good and evil, and the ultimate restoration of God's kingdom.

Key Texts with Visionary Themes

1. **1 Enoch**: Found only in its entirety in Ge'ez, the ancient liturgical language of Ethiopia, 1 Enoch is a cornerstone of visionary literature. It describes the journeys of Enoch, who is shown the heavens, the fate of fallen angels, and the coming divine judgment.
2. **Apocalypse of Baruch**: Often included in Ethiopian collections, this text recounts Baruch's revelations about the destruction of Jerusalem and the eventual triumph of God's people.
3. **Miracles of Mary (Ta'amra Maryam)**: Though not apocalyptic, this work includes numerous accounts of Marian visions, miracles, and divine interventions, revealing Ethiopia's deep devotion to the Virgin Mary.

Cultural and Mystical Significance

The Ethiopian Book of Visions highlights the profound connection between faith and the supernatural. Monastic traditions often emphasize mysticism, with monks recording visions of angels, saints, and Christ Himself. These texts served as a means of spiritual guidance and inspiration, fostering a connection between the divine and the faithful.

Modern Relevance

Today, Ethiopia's visionary texts remain a vital part of its religious heritage. They continue to be studied for their theological insights and their influence on Ethiopian art, liturgy, and iconography. The vivid imagery and symbolic depth of these works resonate not only within Ethiopia but also among scholars and theologians worldwide.

The Ethiopian Book of Visions embodies the interplay of divine revelation and human understanding, a testament to the enduring legacy of Ethiopia's spiritual traditions.

The Gospel of Matthias

In the City of the Man-eaters

About that time all the apostles had come together to the same place, and shared among themselves the countries, casting lots, in order that each might go away into the part that had fallen to him. By lot, then, it fell to Matthias to set out to the country of the man-eaters. And the men of that city used neither to eat bread nor drink wine; but they ate the flesh of men, and drank their blood. Every man, therefore, who came into their city they laid hold of, and digging they thrust out his eyes, and gave him a drug to drink, prepared by sorcery and magic; and from drinking the drug his heart was altered and his mind deranged.

Matthias then having come into the gate of their city, the men of that city laid hold of him, and thrust out his eyes; and after putting them out they made him drink the drug of their magical deception, and led him away to the prison, and put beside him grass to eat, and he ate it not. For when he had partaken of their drug, his heart was not altered, nor his mind deranged; but he kept praying to God, weeping, and saying: Lord Jesus Christ, for whose sake we have forsaken all things and have followed You, knowing that You are the helper of all who hope in You, attend then and behold what they have done to Matthias Your servant, how they have made me near to the brutes; for You are He who knows all things. If, therefore, You have ordained that the wicked men in this city should eat me up, I will not by any means flee from Your dispensation. Afford to me then, O Lord, the light of mine eyes, that at least I may behold what the wicked men in this city have in hand for me; do not forsake me, O my Lord Jesus Christ, and do not give me up to this bitter death.

While Matthias was thus praying in the prison, a light shone, and there came forth out of the light a voice saying: Beloved Matthias, receive your sight. And immediately he received his sight. And again there came forth a voice saying: Be of good courage, our Matthias, and be not dismayed; for I shall not by any means forsake you, for I shall deliver you from all danger; and not only you, but also all your brethren who are with you: for I am with you everywhere and at all times. But remain here twenty-seven days for the edification of many souls; and after that I shall send forth Andrew to you, and he shall lead you forth out of this prison; and not you only, but also all who hear. Having said

this, the Saviour said again to Matthias, Peace be to you, our Matthias, and went into heaven. Then Matthias having beheld Him, said to the Lord: Let your grace abide with me, O my Lord Jesus.

Then Matthias therefore sat down in the prison, and sang. And it came to pass that, when the executioners came into the prison to bring forth the men to eat them, Matthias also shut his eyes, that they might not behold that he saw. And the executioners having come to him, read the ticket in his hand, and said among themselves: Yet three days, and we shall bring out this one also from the prison, and slay him. Because in the case of every man whom they laid hold of, they noted that day on which they laid hold of him, and tied a ticket to his right hand, that they might know the completion of the thirty days.

And it came to pass when the twenty-seven days were fulfilled since Matthias was seized, the Lord appeared in the country where Andrew was teaching, and said to him: Rise up, and set out with your disciples to the country of the man-eaters, and bring forth Matthias out of that place; for yet three days, and the men of the city will bring him forth and slay him for their food. And Andrew answered and said: My Lord, I shall not be able to accomplish the journey there before the limited period of the three days; but send Your angel quickly, that he may bring him out thence: for you know, Lord, that I also am flesh, and shall not be able to go there quickly. And He says to Andrew: Obey Him who made you, and Him who is able to say in a word, and that city shall be removed thence, and all that dwell in it. For I command the horns of the winds, and they drive it thence. But rise up early, and go down to the sea with your disciples, and you shall find a boat upon the shore, and you shall go aboard with your disciples. And having said this, the Saviour again said: Peace to you, Andrew, along with those with you! And He went into the heavens.

And Andrew having risen up early, proceeded to the sea along with his disciples; and having come down to the shore, he saw a little boat, and in the boat three men sitting. For the Lord by His own power had prepared a boat, and He it was in human shape a pilot in the boat; and He brought two angels whom He made to appear like men, and they were in the boat sitting. Andrew, therefore, having beheld the boat, and the three who were in it, rejoiced with exceeding great joy; and having gone to them, he said: Where are you going, brethren, with this little boat? And the Lord answered and said to him: We are going to the country of the man-eaters. And Andrew having beheld Jesus, did not recognise Him; for Jesus was hiding His Godhead, and He appeared to Andrew like a pilot. And Jesus having heard Andrew saying, I too am going to the country of the man-eaters, says to him: Every man avoids that city, and how are you going there? And Andrew answered and said: We have some small business to do there, and we must get through with it; but if you can, do us this kindness to convey us to the country of the man-eaters, to which also you intend to go. Jesus answered and said to them: Come on board.

And Andrew said: I wish to make some explanation to you, young man, before we come on board your boat. And Jesus said: Say what you will. And Andrew said to Him: We have no passage-money to give you; we have not even bread for our nourishment. And Jesus answered and said to him: How, then, are you going away without giving us the passage-money, and without having bread for your nourishment? And Andrew said to Jesus, Listen, brother; do not think that it is through masterfulness that we do not give you our passage-money, but we are disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, the good God. For He chose for Himself us twelve, and gave us such a commandment, saying, When you go to preach, do not carry money in the journey, nor bread, nor bag, nor shoes,

nor staff, nor two coats. If, therefore, you will do us the kindness, brother, tell us at once; if not, let us know, and we shall go and seek another boat for ourselves. And Jesus answered and said to Andrew: If this is the commandment which you received, and you keep it, come on board my boat with all joy. For I really wish you, the disciples of Him who is called Jesus, to come on board my boat, rather than those who give me of their silver and gold; for I am altogether worthy that the apostle of the Lord should come on board my boat. And Andrew answered and said: Permit me, brother, may the Lord grant you glory and honour. And Andrew went on board the boat with his disciples.

And having gone on board, he sat down by the boat's sail. And Jesus answered and said to one of the angels: Rise and go down to the hold of the boat, and bring up three loaves, that the men may eat, lest perchance they be hungry, from having come to us off a long journey. And he rose and went down to the hold of the boat, and brought up three loaves, as the Lord commanded him; and he gave them the loaves. Then Jesus said to Andrew: Rise up, brother, with your friends; partake of food, that you may be strong to bear the tossing of the sea. And Andrew answered and said to his disciples: My children, we have found great kindness from this man. Stand up, then, and partake of the nourishment of bread, that you may be strong to bear the tossing of the sea. And his disciples were not able to answer him a word, for they were in distress because of the sea. Then Jesus forced Andrew to partake himself also of the nourishment of bread along with his disciples. And Andrew answered and said to Jesus, not knowing that it was Jesus: Brother, may the Lord give you heavenly bread out of His kingdom. Allow me then brother; for you see the children, that they are distressed because of the sea. And Jesus answered and said to Andrew: Assuredly the brethren are without experience of the sea; but inquire of them whether they want to go to land, and yourself to remain, until you shall finish your business, and again come back to them. Then Andrew said to his disciples: My children, do you wish to go to the land, and me to remain here until I shall finish my business for which I have been sent? And they answered and said to Andrew: If we go away from you, may we become strangers to the good things which the Lord has provided for us. Now, therefore, we are with you, wherever you may go.

Jesus answered and said to Andrew: If you are truly a disciple of Him who is called Jesus, tell your disciples the miracles which your Teacher did, that their soul may rejoice, and that they may forget the fear of the sea; for, behold, we are going to take the boat off from the land. And immediately Jesus said to one of the angels: Let go the boat; and he let go the boat from the land. And Jesus came and sat down beside the rudder, and steered the boat. Then Andrew exhorted and comforted his disciples, saying: My children, who have given up your life to the Lord, fear not; for the Lord will not at all forsake you forever. For at that time when I was alone with our Lord, we went on board the boat with Him, and He lay down to sleep in the boat, trying us; for He was not fast asleep. And a great wind having arisen, and the sea being stormy, so that the waves were uplifted, and came under the sail of the boat, and when we were in great fear, the Lord stood up and rebuked the winds, and there was a calm in the sea; for all things feared Him, as being made by Him. Now, therefore, my children, fear not. For the Lord Jesus will not at all forsake us. And having said this, the holy Andrew prayed in his heart that his disciples might be led to sleep. And as Andrew was praying, his disciples fell asleep.

And Andrew, turning round to the Lord, not knowing that it was the Lord, said to Him: Tell me, O man, and show me the skill of your steering; for I have never seen any man so steering in the sea as I

now see you. For sixteen years have I sailed the sea, and behold this is the seventeenth, and I have not seen such skill; for truly the boat is just as if on land. Show me then, young man, your skill. Then Jesus answered and said to Andrew: We also have often sailed the sea, and been in danger; but since you are a disciple of Him called Jesus, the sea has recognised you that you are righteous, and has become calm, and has not lifted its waves against the boat. Then Andrew cried out with a loud voice, saying: I thank You, my Lord Jesus Christ, that I have met a man who glorifies Your name.

And Jesus answered and said: O Andrew, tell me, you disciple of Him called Jesus, wherefore the unbelieving Jews did not believe in Him, saying that He was not God, but man. Show me, O disciple of Him called Jesus; for I have heard that He showed His Godhead to His disciples. And Andrew answered and said: Truly, brother, He showed us that He was God. Do not think, then, that He is man. For He made the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and all that is in them. And Jesus answered and said: How then did the Jews not believe Him? Perhaps He did not do miracles before them? Andrew said: Have you not heard of the miracles which He did before them? He made the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear; He cleansed lepers, He changed water into wine; and having taken five loaves and two fishes, He made a crowd recline on the grass, and having blessed, He gave them to eat; and those that ate were five thousand men, and they were filled: and they took up what was over to them twelve baskets of fragments. And after all these things they did not believe Him.

And Jesus answered and said to Andrew: Perhaps He did these miracles before the people, and not before the chief priests, and because of this they did not believe Him.

And Andrew answered and said: Nay, brother, He did them also before the chief priests, not only openly, but also in secret, and they did not believe Him. Jesus answered and said: What are the miracles which He did in secret? Disclose them to me. And Andrew answered and said: O man, who hast the spirit of inquisitiveness, why do you put me to the test? And Jesus answered and said: I do not put you to the test by saying this, O disciple of Him called Jesus; but my soul rejoices and exults, and not only mine, but also every soul that hears the wonders of Jesus.

And Andrew answered and said: O child, the Lord shall fill your soul with all joy and all good, as you have persuaded me now to relate to you the miracles which our Lord did in secret.

It came to pass as we, the twelve disciples, were going with our Lord into a temple of the Gentiles, that He might make known to us the ignorance of the devil, that the chief priests, having beheld us following Jesus, said to us, O wretches, why do you walk with him who says, I am the Son of God? Do you mean to say that God has a son? Which of you has ever at any time seen God associating with a woman? Is not this the son of Joseph the carpenter, and his mother is Mary, and his brothers James and Simon? And when we heard these words, our hearts were turned into weakness. And Jesus, having known that our hearts were giving way, took us into a desert place, and did great miracles before us, and displayed to us all His Godhead. And we spoke to the chief priests, saying, Come ye also, and see; for, behold, He has persuaded us.

And the chief priests having come, went with us; and when we had gone into the temple of the Gentiles, Jesus showed us the heaven, that we might know whether the things were true or not. And there went in along with us thirty men of the people, and four chief priests. And Jesus, having looked on the right hand and on the left of the temple, saw two sculptured sphinxes, one on the right and

one on the left. And Jesus having turned to us, said, Behold the sign of the cross; for these are like the cherubim and the seraphim which are in heaven. Then Jesus, having looked to the right, where the sphinx was, said to it, I say unto you, you image of that which is in heaven, which the hands of craftsmen have sculptured, be separated from your place, and come down, and answer and convict the chief priests, and show them whether I am God or man.

And immediately at that very time the sphinx removed from its place, and having assumed a human voice, said, O foolish sons of Israel, not only has the blinding of their own hearts not been enough for them, but they also wish others to be blind like themselves, saying that God is man, who in the beginning fashioned man, and put His breath into all, who gave motion to those things which moved not; He it is who called Abraham, who loved his son Isaac, who brought back his beloved Jacob into his land; He is the Judge of living and dead; He it is who prepares great benefits for those who obey Him, and prepares punishment for those who believe Him not. Heed not that I am an idol that can be handled; for I say unto you, that the sacred places of your synagogue are more excellent. For though we are stones, the priests have given us only the name of a god; and those priests who serve the temple purify themselves, being afraid of the demons: for if they have had intercourse with women, they purify themselves seven days, because of their fear; so that they do not come into the temple because of us, because of the name which they have given us, that we are a god. But you, if you have committed fornication, take up the law of God, and go into the synagogue of God, and purify, and read, and do not reverence the glorious words of God. Because of this, I say unto you, that the holy things purify your synagogues, so that they also become churches of His only begotten Son. The sphinx having said this, ceased speaking.

And we said to the chief priests, Now it is fitting that you should believe, because even the stones have convicted you. And the Jews answered and said, By magic these stones speak, and do not you think that it is a god? For if you have tested what has been said by the stone, you have ascertained its deception. For where did he find Abraham, or how did he see him? For Abraham died many years before he was born, and how does he know him?

And Jesus, having again turned to the image, said to it, Because these believe not that I have spoken with Abraham, go away into the land of the Canaanites, and go away to the double cave in the field of Mamre, where the body of Abraham is, and cry outside of the tomb, saying, Abraham, Abraham, whose body is in the tomb, and whose soul is in paradise, thus speaks He who fashioned man, who made you from the beginning his friend, Rise up, you and your son Isaac, and the son of your son Jacob, and come to the temples of the Jebusites, that we may convict the chief priests, in order that they may know that I am acquainted with you, and you with me. And when the sphinx heard these words, immediately she walked about in the presence of us all, and set out for the land of the Canaanites to the field of Mamre, and cried outside of the tomb, as God had commanded her. And straightway the twelve patriarchs came forth alive out of the tomb, and answered and said to her, To which of us have you been sent? And the sphinx answered and said, I have been sent to the three patriarchs for testimony; but do ye go in, and rest until the time of the resurrection. And having heard, they went into the tomb and fell asleep. And the three patriarchs set out along with the sphinx to Jesus, and convicted the chief priests. And Jesus said to them, Go away to your places; and they went away. And He said also to the image, Go up to your place; and straightway she went up and stood in her place. And He did also many other miracles, and they did not believe Him;

which *miracles*, if I shall recount, you will not be able to bear. And Jesus answered and said to him: I can bear it; for I prudently listen to profitable words.

And when the boat was about to come near the land, Jesus bent down His head upon one of His angels, and was quiet. And Andrew ceased speaking; and he also, reclining his head upon one of his disciples, fell asleep. And Jesus said to His angels: Spread your hands under him, and carry Andrew and his disciples, and go and put them outside of the city of the man-eaters; and having laid them on the ground, return to me. And the angels did as Jesus commanded them, and the angels returned to Jesus: and He went up into the heavens with His angels.

And when it was morning, Andrew, having awakened and looked up, found himself sitting on the ground; and having looked, he saw his disciples sleeping on the ground: and he wakened them, and said to them: Rise up, my children, and know the great dispensation that has happened to us, and learn that the Lord was with us in the boat, and we knew Him not; for He transformed Himself as if He were a pilot in the boat, and humbled Himself, and appeared to us as a man, putting us to the test. And Andrew, recovering himself, said: Lord, I recognised Your excellent words, but You did not manifest Yourself to me, and because of this I did not know You. And his disciples answered and said to him: Father Andrew, do not think that we knew when you were speaking with Him in the boat, for we were weighed down by a most heavy sleep; and eagles came down out of the heavens, and lifted up our souls, and took them away into the paradise in heaven, and we saw great wonders. For we beheld our Lord Jesus sitting on a throne of glory, and all the angels round about Him. We beheld also Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the saints; and David praised Him with a song upon his harp. And we beheld there you the twelve apostles standing by in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, and outside of you twelve angels round about you, and each angel standing behind each of you, and they were like you in appearance. And we heard the Lord saying to the angels, Listen to the apostles in all things whatsoever they shall ask you. These are the things which we have seen, father Andrew, until you woke us; and angels, who appeared like eagles, brought our souls into our bodies.

Then Andrew, having heard, rejoiced with great joy that his disciples had been deemed worthy to behold these wonderful things. And Andrew looked up into heaven, and said: Appear to me, Lord Jesus Christ; for I know that You are not far from Your servants. Pardon me, Lord, for what I have done; for I have beheld You as a man in the boat, and I have conversed with You as with a man. Now therefore, Lord, manifest Yourself to me in this place.

And when Andrew had said this, Jesus appeared to him in the likeness of a most beautiful little child. And Jesus answered and said: Hail, our Andrew! And Andrew, having beheld Him, worshipped Him, saying: Pardon me, Lord Jesus Christ, for I saw You like a man on the sea, and conversed with You. What is there, then, wherein I have sinned, my Lord Jesus, that You did not manifest Yourself to me on the sea? And Jesus answered and said to Andrew: You have not sinned, but I did this to you because you said, I shall not be able to go to the city of the man-eaters in three days; and I have showed you that I am able to do all things, and to appear to every one as I wish. Now therefore rise up, go into the city to Matthias, and bring him forth out of the prison, and all the strangers that are with him. For, behold, I show you, Andrew, what you must suffer before going into this city. They will heap upon you tortures and insults, and scatter your flesh in the ways and the streets, and your blood shall flow to the ground, but they are not able to put you to death; but endure, just as you saw

me beaten, insulted, and crucified: for there are those who are destined to believe in this city. And having said this, the Saviour went into the heavens.

And Andrew went into the city along with his disciples, and no one beheld him. And when he came to the prison, he saw seven warders standing at the gate guarding, and he prayed within himself, and they fell down and expired; and he marked the gate with the sign of the cross, and it opened of its own accord. And having gone in with his disciples, he found Matthias sitting and singing; and seeing him, he stood up, and they saluted each other with a holy kiss; and he said to Matthias: Brother, how have you been found here? For yet three days, and they will bring you out to be food for them. Where are the great mysteries which you have been taught, and the wonderful things which we have believed? And Matthias said to him: Did you not hear the Lord saying, I shall send you like sheep into the midst of wolves? They straightway brought me into the prison, and I prayed to the Lord; and He said to me, Remain here twenty-seven days, and I shall send you Andrew, and he will bring you forth out of the prison. And now, behold, it has come to pass as the Lord said.

Then Andrew, having looked, saw three men shut up eating grass naked; and he beat his breast, and said: Consider, O Lord, what the men suffer; how have they made them like the irrational brutes? And he says to Satan: Woe to you, the devil, the enemy of God, and to your angels, because the strangers here have done nothing to you; and how have you brought upon them the punishment? How long will you war against the human race? You brought forth Adam out of paradise, and caused men to be mixed up with transgression; and the Lord was enraged, and brought on the deluge so as to sweep man away. And again have you made your appearance in this city too, in order that you may make those who are here eat men, that the end of them also may be in execration and destruction, thinking in yourself that God will sweep away the work of His hands. Have you not heard that God said, I will not bring a deluge upon the earth? but if there is any punishment prepared, it is for the sake of taking vengeance upon you.

Then he stood up, and Andrew and Matthias prayed; and after the prayer Andrew laid his hands upon the faces of the blind men who were in the prison, and straightway they all received their sight. And again he laid his hand upon their hearts, and their minds were changed into human reason. Then Andrew answered them: Rise up, and go into the lower parts of the city, and you shall find in the way a great fig-tree, and sit under the fig-tree, and eat of its fruit, until I come to you; but if I delay coming there, you will find abundance of food for yourselves: for the fruit shall not fail from the fig-tree, but according as you eat it shall produce more fruit, and nourish you, as the Lord has said. And they answered and said to Andrew: Go along with us, O our master, lest perchance the wicked men of this city again see us, and shut us up, and inflict upon us greater and more dreadful tortures than they have inflicted upon us. And Andrew answered and said to them: Go; for in truth I say to you, that as you go, not a dog shall bark with his tongue against you. And there were in all two hundred and seventy men and forty-nine women whom Andrew released from the prison. And the men went as the blessed Andrew said to them; and he made Matthias go along with his disciples out of the eastern gate of the city. And Andrew commanded a cloud, and the cloud took up Matthias and the disciples of Andrew; and the cloud set them down on the mountain where Peter was teaching, and they remained beside him.

And Andrew, having gone forth from the prison, walked about in the city; and having seen a brazen pillar, and a statue standing upon it, he came and sat down behind that pillar until he should see

what should happen. And it happened that the executioners went to the prison to bring out the men for their food, according to the custom; and they found the doors of the prison opened, and the guards that guarded it lying dead upon the ground. And straightway they went, and reported to the rulers of the city, saying: We found the prison opened, and having gone inside we found nobody; but we found the guards lying dead upon the ground. And the rulers having heard this, said among themselves: What, then, has happened? You do not mean to say that some persons have gone into the prison of the city, and have killed the warders, and taken away those that were shut up? And they spoke to the executioners, saying: Go to the prison, and bring the men that are dead, that we may eat them up today. And let us go tomorrow, and bring together all the old men of the city, that they may cast lots upon themselves, until the seven lots come, and we slay seven each day. And they shall be to us for food until we may choose young men, and put them in boats as sailors, that they may go away to the countries round about, and attack them, and bring some men here, that they may be for food to us.

And the executioners went to the prison, and brought the seven men that were dead; and there was an oven built in the midst of the city, and there lay in the oven a large trough in which they killed the men, and their blood ran down into the trough, and they drew out of the blood and drank it. And they brought the men, and. put them into the trough. And when the executioners were lifting their hands against them, Andrew heard a voice, saying: Behold, Andrew, what is happening in this city. And Andrew having beheld, prayed to the Lord, saying: Lord Jesus Christ, who ordered me to come into this city, do not suffer those in this city to do any evil, but let the knives go out of the hands of the wicked ones. And straightway the knives of the wicked men fell, and their hands were turned into stone. And the rulers, having seen what had happened, wept, saying: Woe unto us, for here are the magicians who have gone into the prison, and brought out the men; for, behold, they have bewitched these also. What, then, shall we do? Let us go now, and gather together the old men of the city, seeing that we are hungry.

And they went and gathered them together, and found two hundred and seventeen; and they brought them to the rulers, and they made them cast lots, and the lot came upon seven old men. And one of those taken by lot answered and said to the officers: I pray you, I have for myself one son; take him, and slay him instead of me, and let me go. And the officers answered and said to him: We cannot take your son, unless we bring him first to our superiors. And the officers went and told the rulers. And the rulers answered and said to the officers: If he give us his son instead of himself, let him go. And the officers went and told the old man. And the old man answered and said to them: I have also a daughter along with my son; take them, and kill them, only let me go. And he gave his children to the officers, that they might kill them. And the children wept to each other, and prayed the officers, saying: We pray you do not kill us, as we are of so small a size; but let us complete our size, and so kill us. For it was a custom in that city, and they did not bury their dead, but ate them up. And the officers did not hearken to the children, nor take pity upon them, but carried them to the trough weeping and praying.

And it happened, as they were leading them away to kill them, that Andrew, having beheld what happened, shed tears; and weeping, he looked up to heaven and said: Lord Jesus Christ, as You heard me in the case of the dead men, and did not suffer them to be eaten up, so also now hear me, that the executioners may not inflict death upon these children, but that the knives may be loosened out of the hands of the executioners. And straightway the knives were loosened, and fell

out of the hands of the executioners. And when this came to pass, the executioners, having beheld what had happened, were exceedingly afraid. And Andrew, seeing what had happened, glorified the Lord because He had listened to him in every work.

And the rulers, having beheld what had happened, wept with a great weeping, saying: Woe unto us! What are we to do? And, behold, the devil appeared in the likeness of an old man, and began to say in the midst of all: Woe unto you! Because you are now dying, having no food; what can sheep and oxen do for you? They will not at all be enough for you. But rise up, and make a search here for one who has come to the city, a stranger named Andrew, and kill him; for if you do not, he will not permit you to carry on this practice longer: for it was he who let loose the men out of the prison. Assuredly the man is in this city, and you have not seen him. Now, therefore, rise and make search for him, in order that henceforward you may be able to collect your food.

And Andrew saw the devil, how he was talking to the multitudes; but the devil did not see the blessed Andrew. Then Andrew answered the devil, and said: O Belial most fiendish, who art the foe of every creature; but my Lord Jesus Christ will bring you down to the abyss. And the devil, having heard this, said: I hear your voice indeed, and I know your voice, but where you are standing I know not. And Andrew answered and said to the devil: Why, then, have you been called Amael? is it not because you are blind, not seeing all the saints? And the devil, having heard this, said to the citizens: Look round now for him speaking to me, for he is the man. And the citizens, having run in different directions, shut the gates of the city, and searched for the blessed one, and did not see him. Then the Lord showed Himself to Andrew, and said to him; Andrew, rise up and show yourself to them, that they may learn my power, and the powerlessness of the devil working in them.

Then Andrew rose up, and said in presence of all: Behold, I am Andrew whom you seek. And the multitudes ran upon him, and laid hold of him, saying: What you have done to us, we also will do to you. And they reasoned among themselves, saying: By what death shall we kill him? And they said to each other: If we take off his head, his death is not torture; and if we burn him, he will not be for food to us. Then one of them, the devil having entered into him, answered and said to the multitudes: As he has done to us, so let us also do to him. Let us rise up, then, and fasten a rope to his neck, and drag him through all the streets and lanes of the city; and when he is dead, we shall share his body. And they did as he said to them; and having fastened a rope round his neck, they dragged him through the streets and lanes of the city, and the flesh of the blessed Andrew stuck to the ground, and his blood flowed to the ground like water. And when it was evening they cast him into the prison, having bound his hands behind him; and he was in sore distress.

And in the morning again they brought him out, and having fastened a rope round his neck, they dragged him about; and again his flesh stuck to the ground, and his blood flowed. And the blessed one wept and prayed, saying: Do not forsake me, my Lord Jesus Christ; for I know that You are not far from Your servants. And as he was praying, the devil walked behind, and said to the multitudes: Strike him on the mouth, that he may not speak.

And when it was evening they took him again to the prison, having bound his hands behind him, and left him till the morrow again. And the devil having taken with himself seven demons whom the blessed one had cast out of the countries round about, and having gone into the prison, they stood before him, wishing to kill him. And the demons answered and said to Andrew: Now have you fallen into our hands. Where is your glory and your exultation, you who raises yourself up against us, and

dishonors us, and tells our doings to the people in every place and country, and has made desolate our workshops and our temples, in order that sacrifices may not be brought to them? Because of this, then, we shall also kill you, like your teacher called Jesus, and John whom Herod beheaded.

And they stood before Andrew, wishing to kill him; and having beheld the seal upon his forehead which the Lord gave him, they were afraid, and did not come near him, but fled. And the devil said to them: Why have you fled from him, my children, and not killed him? And the demons answered and said to the devil: We cannot kill him, but kill him if you art able; for we knew him before he came into the distress of his humiliation. Then one of the demons answered and said: We cannot kill him, but come let us mock him in the distress of his humiliation. And the demons came and stood before him, and scoffed at him. And the blessed one hearing, wept; and there came to him a voice saying: Andrew, why are you weeping? And it was the voice of the devil changed. And Andrew answered and said: I am weeping because God commanded me, saying, Be patient toward them. And the devil said: If you can do anything, do it. And Andrew answered and said: Is it for this, then, that you do these things to me? But forbid it that I should disobey the commandment of my Lord; for if the Lord shall make for me a charge in this city, I shall chastise you as you deserve. And having heard this, they fled.

And when it was morning they brought him out again, and having fastened a rope about his neck, they dragged him; and again his flesh stuck to the ground, and his blood flowed to the ground like water. And the blessed one, as he was being dragged along, wept, saying: Lord Jesus Christ, be not displeased with me; for You know, Lord, what the fiend has inflicted upon me, along with his demons. These tortures are enough, my Lord; for, behold, I am dragged about for three days. But remember, Lord, that You were three hours upon the cross, and cried out to the Father, My Father, why have You forsaken me? Where are Your words, Lord, which You spoke to us, confirming us, when we walked about with You, saying to us, You shall not lose one hair? Consider, then, Lord, what has become of my flesh, and the hairs of my head. Then Jesus said to Andrew: O our Andrew, the heaven and the earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. Turn yourself then, Andrew, and behold your flesh that has fallen, and your hair, what has become of them. And Andrew turned, and saw great trees springing up, bearing fruit; and he glorified God.

And when it was evening they took him up again, and cast him into the prison, having bound his hands behind him; and he was exceedingly exhausted. And the men of the city said among themselves: Perhaps he dies in the night, and we do not find him alive on the following day; for he was languid, and his flesh was spent.

And the Lord appeared in the prison, and having stretched out His hand, said to Andrew: Give me your hand, and rise up whole. And Andrew, having beheld the Lord Jesus, gave Him his hand, and rose up whole. And falling down, he worshipped Him, and said: I thank You, my Lord Jesus Christ, that You have speedily brought help to me. And Andrew, having looked into the middle of the prison, saw a pillar standing, and upon the pillar there stood an alabaster statue. And Andrew, having gone up to the statue, unfolded his hands seven times, and said to the pillar, and the statue upon it: Fear the sign of the cross, which the heaven and the earth dread; and let the statue set upon the pillar bring up much water through its mouth, until all who are in this city be punished. And say not, I am stone, and am not worthy to praise the Lord, for the Lord fashioned us from the earth; but you are pure, because that out of you He gave the tables of the law. When the blessed Andrew had said this,

straightway the stone statue cast out of its mouth water in abundance, as if out of a canal. And the water stood high upon the earth; and it was exceedingly acrid, eating into the flesh of men.

And when it was morning, the men of the city saw it, and began to flee, saying in themselves: Woe to us! Because we are now dying. And the water killed their cattle and their children; and they began to flee out of the city. Then Andrew prayed, saying: Lord Jesus Christ, in whom I have hoped that this miracle should come upon this city, forsake me not, but send Michael Your archangel in a cloud of fire, and be a wall round the city, that no one may be able to escape out of the fire. And straightway a cloud of fire came down and encircled the city like a wall; and the water was as high as the neck of those men, and it was eating them up exceedingly. And they wept, saying: Woe to us! For all these things have come upon us because of the stranger who is in the prison. Let us go and release him, lest perchance we die.

And they went out, crying with a loud voice: God of the stranger, take away from us this water. And the apostle knew that they were in great affliction, and said to the alabaster statue: Stop the water, for they have repented. And I say to you, that if the citizens of this city shall believe, I will build a church, and place you in it, because you have done me this service. And the statue ceased flowing, and no longer brought forth water. And the men of the city, having come out to the doors of the prison, cried out, saying: Have pity upon us, God of the stranger, and do not according to our unbelief, and according to what we have done to this man, but take away from us this water. And Andrew came forth out of the prison; and the water ran this way and that from the feet of the blessed Andrew. Then all the multitude seeing him, all cried out: Have pity upon us.

And the old man having come who gave up his children that they should slay them instead of him, prayed at the feet of the blessed Andrew, saying: Have pity upon me. And the holy Andrew answered and said to the old man: I wonder how you say, Have pity upon me; for you had no pity upon your children, but gave them up to be slain instead of you. Therefore I say to you, At what hour this water goes away, into the abyss shall you go, with the fourteen executioners who slay the men every day. And he came to the place of the trough, where they used to slay the men. And the blessed one, having looked up to heaven, prayed before all the multitude; and the earth was opened, and swallowed up the water, along with the old man. He was carried down into the abyss, with the executioners. And the men, having seen what had happened, were exceedingly afraid, and began to say: Woe unto us because this man is from God; and now he will kill us because of the afflictions which we have caused him. For, behold, what he said to the executioners and the old man has befallen them. Now, therefore, he will command the fire, and it will burn us. And Andrew, having heard, said to them: Fear not, children; for I shall not send these also to Hades; but those have gone, that you may believe in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Then the holy Andrew ordered to be brought up all who had died in the water. And they were not able to bring them; for there had died a great multitude both of men, and women, and children, and cattle.

Then Andrew prayed, and they all came to life. And after these things he drew a plan of a church, and he caused the church to be built. And he baptized them, and gave them the ordinances of our Lord Jesus Christ, saying to them: Stand by these, in order that you may know the mysteries of our Lord Jesus Christ. And they all prayed him: We pray you, stay with us a few days, that we may be filled with your fountain, because we are newly planted. And he did not comply with their request,

but said to them: I shall go first to my disciples. And the children followed after, weeping and praying, with the men; and they cast ashes upon their heads. And he did not comply with them, but said: I shall go to my disciples, and after that I shall come again to you. And he went his way.

And the Lord Jesus Christ came down, being like a comely little child, and met Andrew, and said: Andrew, why have you come out and left them without fruit, and hast not had compassion upon the children that followed after you, and the men entreating you, Stay with us a few days? For the cry of them and the weeping has come up to heaven. Now therefore return, and go into the city, and remain there seven days, until I shall confirm their souls in the faith; and then you shall go away into the country of the barbarians, you and your disciples. And after going into this city, you shall proclaim my Gospel, and bring up the men who are in the abyss. And you shall do what I command you.

Then Andrew turned and went into the city, saying: I thank You, my Lord Jesus Christ, who wishes to save every soul, that You have not allowed me to go forth out of this city in mine anger. And when he had come into the city, they, seeing him, rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And he stayed there seven days, teaching and confirming them in the Lord Jesus Christ. And the seven days having been fulfilled, it came to pass, while the blessed Andrew was going out, all came together to him, from the child even to the elder, and sent him on his way, saying: There is one God, *the God* of Andrew, and one Lord Jesus Christ, who alone does wonders; to whom be glory and strength forever. Amen.

The Paraphrase of Shem

[The] paraphrase which was about the unbegotten Spirit.

What Derdekeas^s revealed to me, Shem,⁵ according to the will of the Majesty. My thought which was in my body snatched me away from my race. It took me up to the top of the world,¹⁰ which is close to the light that shone upon the whole area there. I saw no earthly likeness, but there was light. And my thought separated¹⁵ from the body of darkness as though in sleep.

I heard a voice saying to me, Shem, since you are from an unmixed power²⁰ and you are the first being upon the earth, hear and understand what I shall say to you first concerning the great powers who were in existence in the beginning, before²⁵ I appeared. There was Light and Darkness and there was Spirit between them. Since your root fell into forgetfulness – he who was³⁰ the unbegotten Spirit – I reveal to you the truth about the powers. The Light was thought full of hearing and word. They were³⁵ united into one form. And the Darkness was 2 wind in waters. He possessed the mind wrapped in a chaotic fire. And the Spirit between them⁵ was a gentle, humble light. These are the three roots. They reigned each in themselves, alone. And they covered each other, each one with¹⁰ its power.

But the Light, since he possessed a great power, knew the abasement of the Darkness and his disorder, namely that the root was not straight.¹⁵ But the crookedness of the Darkness was lack of perception, namely (the illusion that) there is no one above him. And as long as he was able to bear up under his evil, he was covered with the water. And he²⁰ stirred. And the Spirit was frightened by the sound. He lifted himself up to his station. And he saw a great, dark water. And he was nauseated. And²⁵ the thought of the Spirit stared down; he saw the infinite Light. But he was

overlooked by the putrid root. And by the will of the great Light ³⁰ the dark water separated. And the Darkness came up wrapped in vile ignorance, and (this was) in order that the mind might separate from him because he prided ³⁵ himself in it.

And when he stirred, ³ the light of the Spirit appeared to him. When he saw it he was astonished. He did not know that another Power was above him. And when he ⁵ saw that his likeness was dark compared with the Spirit, he felt hurt. And in his pain he lifted up to the height of the members of Darkness his mind which ¹⁰ was the eye of the bitterness of evil. He caused his mind to take shape in a member of the regions of the Spirit, thinking that, by staring (down) at his evil, he would be able ¹⁵ to equal the Spirit. But he was not able. For he wanted to do an impossible thing, and it did not take place. But in order that the mind of Darkness, which ²⁰ is the eye of the bitterness of evil, might not be destroyed, since he was made partially similar, he arose and shone with a fiery light upon all of Hades, so that ²⁵ the equality to the faultless Light might become apparent. For the Spirit made use of every form of Darkness because he appeared in his majesty. ³⁰

And the exalted, infinite Light appeared, for he was very joyful.

He wished to reveal himself to the Spirit. And the likeness ³⁵ of the exalted Light appeared to the unbegotten Spirit. ⁴ appeared. [I] am the son of the incorruptible, infinite Light. appeared in the likeness ⁵ of the Spirit, for am the ray of the universal Light. And his appearance to me (was) in order that the mind of Darkness might not remain in Hades. ¹⁰ For the Darkness made himself like his mind in a part of the members. When, (O) Shem, appeared in it (i.e. the likeness), in order that the Darkness might become dark to himself, ¹⁵ according to the will of the Majesty – in order that the Darkness might become free from every aspect of the power which he possessed – the mind drew the chaotic fire, with which ²⁰ it was covered, from the midst of the Darkness and the water. And from the Darkness the water became a cloud. and from the cloud the womb took shape. ²⁵ The chaotic fire which was a deviation went there.

And when the Darkness saw it (i.e. the womb) he became unchaste and when he had aroused ³⁰ the water, he rubbed the womb. His mind dissolved down to the depths of Nature. It mingled with the power of the bitterness of Darkness. And ³⁵ her (i.e. the womb's) eye ruptured at the wickedness in order that she might not again bring forth the mind. For it was ⁵ a seed of Nature from the dark root.

And when Nature had taken to herself the mind by means of the dark power, ⁵ every likeness took shape in her. And when the Darkness had acquired the likeness of the mind, it resembled the Spirit. For Nature rose up to expel it; ¹⁰ she was powerless against it, since she did not have a form from the Darkness. For she brought it forth in the cloud. And the cloud shone. A mind appeared in ¹⁵ it like a frightful, harmful fire. It (i.e. the mind) collided against the unbegotten Spirit

since it possessed a likeness from him. In order that ²⁰ Nature might become empty of the chaotic fire, then immediately Nature was divided into four parts. They became clouds which varied ²⁵ in their appearance. They were called Hymen, Afterbirth, Power, (and) Water. And the Hymen and the Afterbirth and the Power were ³⁰ chaotic fires. And it (i.e. the mind) was drawn from the midst of the Darkness and the water – since the mind was in the midst of Nature

and the dark power – ³⁵ in order that the harmful waters might not cling to it. ⁶ Because of this Nature was divided, according to my will, in order that the mind may return to its power which

the ⁵ dark root, which was mixed with it (i.e. the mind), had taken from it. And he (i.e. the dark root) appeared in the womb. And at the division of Nature he separated from the dark power ¹⁰ which he possessed from the mind. It (i.e. the mind) went into the midst of the power – this was the middle region of Nature.

And the Spirit of light, when the mind ¹⁵ burdened him, was astonished. And the force of his Astonishment cast off the burden. And it (i.e. the burden) returned to its heat. It put on the light of the Spirit. ²⁰ And when Nature moved away from the power of the light of the Spirit, the burden returned. And the Astonishment (of the) light cast off the burden. It stuck ²⁵ to the cloud of the Hymen. And all the clouds of Darkness cried out, they who had separated from Hades, because of the alien Power. He is the Spirit of light who has come ³⁰ in them. And by the will of the Majesty the Spirit gazed up at the infinite Light, in order that his light may be pitied and ³⁵ the likeness brought up from Hades.

And when the Spirit had looked, flowed **7** out – , the son of the Majesty – like a wave of bright light and like a whirlwind of the immortal Spirit. And blew from ⁵ the cloud of the Hymen upon the Astonishment of the unbegotten Spirit. It (i.e. the cloud) separated and cast light upon the clouds. These separated in order that the Spirit might return. Because of this the mind ¹⁰ took shape. Its repose was shattered. For the Hymen of Nature was a cloud which cannot be grasped; it is a great fire. Similarly, the Afterbirth ¹⁵ of Nature is the cloud of silence; it is an august fire. And the Power which was mixed with the mind, it, too, was a cloud of Nature which ²⁰ was joined with the Darkness that had aroused Nature to unchastity. And the dark water was a frightful cloud. And the root ²⁵ of Nature, which was below, was crooked, since it is burdensome and harmful. The root was blind with respect to the light-bondage which was unfathomable since ³⁰ it had many appearances.

And had pity on the light (of) the Spirit which the mind had received. returned to my position in order to pray ³⁵ to the exalted, infinite Light **8** that the power of the Spirit might increase on the place and might be filled without dark defilement. And ⁵ reverently said, "Thou art the root of the Light. Thy hidden form has appeared, O exalted, infinite one. May the whole power of ¹⁰ the Spirit spread and may it be filled with its light, O infinite Light. (Then) he will not be able to join with the unbegotten Spirit, and the power of the Astonishment will not be able to ¹⁵ mix with Nature. According to the will of the Majesty," my prayer was accepted.

And the voice of the Word was heard saying through the Majesty to the ²⁰ unbegotten Spirit, "Behold, the power has been completed. He who was revealed by me appeared in the Spirit. Again I shall appear. I am Derdekeas, the son ²⁵ of the incorruptible, infinite Light."

The light of the infinite Spirit came down to a feeble nature for a short time until ³⁰ all the impurity of nature became void, and in order that the darkness of Nature might be blamed. I put on my garment which is the garment of the light ³⁵ of the Majesty – which I am.

I came in the appearance of the **G** Spirit to consider the whole light which was in the depths of the Darkness. According to the will of the Majesty, in order that the Spirit ⁵ by means of the Word might be filled with his light independently of the power of the infinite Light, and at my wish, the Spirit arose by his (own) power. ¹⁰ His greatness was granted to him that he might be filled with his whole light and depart from the whole burden of the Darkness. For what was behind was a dark fire which blew ¹⁵ (and) pressed on the Spirit. And the Spirit rejoiced because he was protected from the

frightful water. But his light was not equal to the Majesty. But <what> he was granted ²⁰ by the infinite Light, (he was granted it) in order that in all his members he might appear as a single image of light. And when the Spirit arose above the water, ²⁵ his black likeness became apparent. And the Spirit honored the exalted Light: "Surely thou alone art the infinite one, because thou art above ³⁰ every unbegotten thing, for thou hast protected me from the Darkness. And at thy wish I arose above the power of darkness.

And that nothing might be hidden from you, Shem, the thought, ³⁵ which the Spirit from the greatness had contemplated, came into being, **10** since the Darkness was not able [to] restrain his evil. But when it appeared, the three roots became known as they ⁵ were from the beginning. If the Darkness had been able to bear up under his evil, the mind would not have separated from him, and another power would not have appeared. ¹⁰

But from the time it appeared I was seen, the son of the Majesty, in order that the light of the Spirit might not become faint, and that Nature might not reign ¹⁵ over it, because it gazed at me. And by the will of the greatness my equality was revealed, that what is of the Power might become apparent. You ²⁰ are the great Power which came into being, and I am the perfect Light which is above the Spirit and the Darkness, the one who puts to shame the Darkness for the intercourse of the impure ²⁵ practice. For through the division of Nature the Majesty wished to be covered with honor up to the height of the Thought of the Spirit. And the Spirit received ³⁰ rest in his power.

For the image of the Light is inseparable from the unbegotten Spirit. And the lawgivers did not name him after all the clouds ³⁵ of Nature, nor is it possible to name them. For every likeness **11** into which Nature had divided is a power of the chaotic fire which is the hyllic seed. The one who took to himself ⁵ the power of the Darkness imprisoned it in the midst of its members.

And by the will of the Majesty, in order that the mind and the whole light of the Spirit might be protected ¹⁰ from every burden and (from) the toil of Nature, a voice came forth from the Spirit to the cloud of the Hymen. And the light of the astonishment began to rejoice with the voice ¹⁵ which was granted to him. And the great Spirit of light was in the cloud of the Hymen. He honored the infinite Light and the universal likeness ²⁰ who I am, the son of the Majesty. It is said: "Anasses Duses, thou art the infinite Light who was given by the will ²⁵ of the Majesty to establish every light of the Spirit upon the place, and to separate the mind from the Darkness. For it was not right ³⁰ for the light of the Spirit to remain in Hades. For at thy wish the Spirit arose to behold thy greatness."

For I said these things to you, ³⁵ Shem, that you might know **12** that my likeness, the son of the Majesty, is from my infinite Thought, since I am for him a universal likeness ⁵ which does not lie, (and) I am above every truth and origin of the word. His appearance is in my beautiful garment of light which is the voice of the immeasurable Thought. ¹⁰ We are that single, sole light which came into being. He appeared in another root in order that the power of the Spirit might be raised from the ¹⁵ feeble Nature. For by the will of the great Light I came forth from the exalted Spirit down to the cloud of the Hymen without my universal garment.

And the Word took ²⁰ me to himself, from the Spirit, in the first cloud of the Hymen of Nature. And I put on this of which the Majesty and the unbegotten Spirit made me worthy. ²⁵ And the threefold unity of my garment appeared in the cloud, by the will of the Majesty, in a single form. And my likeness was covered ³⁰ with the light of my garment. And the cloud was disturbed, and it was not

able to bear my likeness. It shed the first power, the one (which) it had taken from ³⁵the Spirit, that one which shone on him from the beginning, before (I) appeared in the word to the Spirit. The cloud **13** would not have been able to bear both of them. And the light which came forth from the cloud passed through the silence, until it came into the middle region. And, ⁵by the will of the Majesty, the light mixed with him ¹(i.e.) the Spirit which exists in the silence, he who had been separated from the Spirit of light. It was separated from the light ¹⁰by the cloud of the silence. The cloud was disturbed. It was he who gave rest to the flame of fire. He humbled the dark womb in order that she might not reveal ¹⁵other seed from the darkness. He kept them back in the middle region of Nature in their position which was in the cloud. They were troubled since they did ²⁰not know where they were. For still they (did> not possess the universal understanding of the Spirit.

And when I prayed to the Majesty, toward the ²⁵infinite Light, that the chaotic power of the Spirit might go to and fro, and the dark womb might be idle, and that my likeness might appear ³⁰in the cloud of the Hymen, as if I were wrapped in the light of the Spirit which went before me, and by the will of the Majesty and through ³⁵the prayer I came in the cloud in order that through my garment – which was from the power **14** of the Spirit – the pleroma of the word, might bring power to the members who possessed it in the Darkness. For because of them I appeared ⁵in this insignificant place. For I am a helper of every one who has been given a name. For when I appeared in the cloud, the light ¹⁰of the Spirit began to save itself from the frightful water, and (from) the clouds of fire which had been separated from dark Nature. And I gave them eternal honor ³⁵that they might not again engage in the impure practice.

And the light which was in the Hymen was disturbed by my power, and it passed through my middle region. It ²⁰was filled with the universal Thought. And through the word of the light of the Spirit it returned to its repose. It received form in its root and shone ²⁵without deficiency. And the light which had come forth with it from the silence went in the middle region and returned to the place. And the cloud shone. ³⁰And from it came an unquenchable fire. And the part which separated from the astonishment put on forgetfulness. It was deceived by ³⁵the fire of darkness. And the shock of its astonishment cast off the burden of the **15** cloud. It was evil since it was unclean. And the fire mixed with the water in order that the waters might become harmful. ⁵

And Nature which had been disturbed immediately arose from the idle waters. For her ascent was shameful. And Nature took to herself the ¹⁰power of fire. She became strong because of the light of the Spirit which was in Nature. Her likeness appeared in the water in the form of a frightful beast ³⁵with many faces, which is crooked below. A light went down to chaos filled with mist and dust, in order to harm Nature. ²⁰And the light of the Astonishment which is in the middle region came to it after he cast off the burden of the Darkness. He rejoiced when the Spirit arose. For he looked ²⁵from the clouds down at the dark waters upon the light which was in the depths of Nature.

Therefore I appeared that I might ³⁰get an opportunity to go down to the nether world, to the light of the Spirit which was burdened, that I might protect him from the evil of the burden. And through ³⁵his looking down at the dark region the light once more **16** came up in order that the womb might again come up from the water. She (i.e. the womb) came up by my will. Guilefully the eye opened. ⁵And the light which had appeared in the middle region (and) which had separated from the Astonishment rested and shone upon her. And the womb saw ¹⁰things she had not seen, and she rejoiced joyfully in the light, although this was not hers — the one which appeared in the

middle region, in her wickedness, when he (i.e. the light) shone ¹⁵ upon her. And the womb saw things she had not seen, and she was brought down to the water, she was thinking that she had reached to the power of light. ²⁰ And she did not know that her root was made idle by the likeness of the Light, and that it was to her (i.e. the root) that he had run.

The light was astonished, the one which was in ²⁵ the middle region and which was beginning and end. Therefore his thought gazed directly up at the exalted Light. And he called out and said, ²⁰ "Lord, have mercy on me, for my light and my effort went astray. For if thy goodness does not establish me, I do not know where I am." And when the Majesty ³⁵ had heard him, he had mercy on him. '

And I appeared in the cloud of the Hymen, in the silence, **17** without my holy garment. With my will I honored my garment which has three forms in the cloud of the Hymen. ⁵ And the light which was in the silence, the one from the rejoicing Power, contained me. I wore it. And its two parts appeared ¹⁰ in a single form. Its other parts did not appear on account of the fire. I became unable to speak in the cloud of the Hymen, for its fire was frightful, ¹⁵ lifting itself up without humility. And in order that my greatness and the word might appear, I placed likewise my other garment in the cloud of the silence. ²⁰ I went into the middle region and put on the light that was in it, that was sunk in forgetfulness and that was separated from the Spirit of astonishment, for he had cast off the burden. ²⁵ At my wish nothing mortal appeared to him, but they were all immortal things which the Spirit granted to him. And he said in ³⁰ the thought of the Light, ai eis ai ou phar dou is ei ou: I have come in a great rest in order that he may give rest to my light in ³⁵ his root, and may bring it out of **18** harmful Nature.

Then, by the will of the Majesty, I took off my garment of light. I put on another garment ⁵ of fire which has no form, which is from the mind of the power, which was separated, and which was prepared for me, according to my will, in the middle region. For the middle region ³⁰ covered it with a dark power in order that I might come and put it on. I went down to chaos to save the whole light from it. For without ¹⁵ the power of darkness I could not oppose Nature. But I rested myself upon her staring eye ²⁰ which was a light from the Spirit. For it had been prepared for me as a garment and a rest by the Spirit. Through me he opened his eyes down to ²⁵ Hades. He granted Nature his voice for a time. '

And my garment of fire, according to the will of the Majesty, went down to what is strong, and to the ³⁰ unclean part of Nature which (the) power of darkness was covering. And my garment rubbed Nature in her covering. And her unclean ³⁵ femininity was strong. And the wrathful womb came up **1G** and made the mind dry, resembling a fish which has a drop of fire and a power of fire. And when Nature ⁵ had cast off the mind, she was troubled and she wept. When she was hurt, and in her tears, she cast off the power of the Spirit **30** (and) remained as I. I put on the light of the Spirit and I rested with my garment on account of the sight of the fish.

And in order that the deeds of Nature might be condemned, ¹⁵ since she is blind, manifold animals came out of her, in accordance with the number of the fleeting winds. All of them came into being in Hades searching for the light ²⁰ of the mind which took shape. They were not able to stand up against it. I rejoiced over their ignorance. ¹ They found me, the son of the Majesty, in ²⁵ front of the womb which has many forms. I put on the beast, and laid before her a great request

that heaven and earth ³⁰ might come into being, in order that the whole light might rise up. For in no other way could the power of the Spirit be saved from bondage except that I appear ³⁵ to her in animal form. Therefore she was gracious to me **20** as if I were her son.

And on account of my request, Nature arose since she possesses of the power of the Spirit and the Darkness ⁵ and the fire. For she had taken off her forms. When she had cast it off, she blew upon the water. The heaven was created. And from the foam of the heaven ¹⁰ the earth came into being. And at my wish it brought forth all kinds of food in accordance with the number of the beasts. And it brought forth dew from the winds on account of you (pl.) and those ¹⁵ who will be begotten the second time upon the earth. For the earth possessed a power of chaotic fire. Therefore it brought forth ²⁰ every seed.

And when the heaven and the earth were created, my garment of fire arose in the midst of the cloud of Nature (and) shone upon the whole world ²⁵ until Nature became dry. The Darkness which was its (i.e. the earth's) garment was cast into the harmful waters. The middle region was cleansed from the Darkness. ³⁰ But the womb grieved because of what had happened. She perceived in her parts what was water like a mirror. When she perceived (it), she wondered ²⁵ how it had come into being. Therefore she remained a widow. It also was **21** astonished (that) it was not in her. For still the forms possessed a power of fire and light. It (i.e. the power) remained ⁵ in order that it might be in Nature until all the powers are taken away from her. For just as the light of the Spirit was completed in three clouds, it is necessary ¹⁰ that also the power which is in Hades will be completed at the appointed time. For, because of the grace of the Majesty, I came forth to her from the water for the second time. ¹⁵ For my face pleased her. Her face also was glad.

And I said to her, "May seed and power come forth from you ²⁰ upon the earth." And she obeyed the will of the Spirit that she might be brought to naught. And when her forms returned, they rubbed their tongue(s) with each other; they copulated; ²⁵ they begot winds and demons and the power which is from the fire and the Darkness and the Spirit. But the form which remained alone cast the ³⁰ beast from herself. She did not have intercourse, but she was the one who rubbed herself alone. And she brought forth a wind which possessed a power ³⁵ from the fire and the Darkness and the Spirit.

And in order that the **22** demons also might become free from the power which they possessed through the impure intercourse, a womb was with the winds ⁵ resembling water. And an unclean penis was with the demons in accordance with the example of the Darkness, and in the way he rubbed with the womb from the beginning. And after ¹⁰ the forms of Nature had been together, they separated from each other. They cast off the power, being astonished about the deceit which had happened to them. They grieved ¹⁵ with an eternal grief. They covered themselves with their power.

And when I had put them to shame, I arose with my garment in the power and — which is above the beast which is a light, ²⁰ in order that I might make Nature desolate. The mind which had appeared in the Nature of Darkness, (and) which was the eye of the heart of Darkness, at my wish reigned over ²⁵ the winds and the demons. And I gave him a likeness of fire, light, and attentiveness, and a share of guileless word. Therefore he was given of the greatness ³⁰ in order to be strong in his power, independent of the power, independent of the light of the Spirit, and intercourse of Darkness, in order that, at the end of time, when **23** Nature will be destroyed, he may rest in the honored place.

For he will be found faithful, since he has loathed ⁵ the unchastity of Nature with the Darkness. The strong power of the mind came into being from the mind and the unbegotten Spirit.

But the winds, which are demons ¹⁰ from water and fire and darkness and light, had intercourse unto perdition. And through this intercourse the winds received in their womb ¹⁵ foam from the penis of the demons. They conceived a power in their womb. From the breathing the wombs of the winds girded each other ²⁰ until the times of the birth came. They went down to the water. And the power was delivered, through the breathing which moves the birth, in the midst of the practice. And ²⁵ every form of the birth received shape in it. When the times of the birth were near, all the winds were gathered from the water which is near the ³⁰ earth. They gave birth to all kinds of unchastity. And the place where the wind alone went was permeated with the unchastity. Barren wives came from it ³⁵ and sterile husbands. **24** For just as they are born, so they bear.

Because of you (pl.), the image of the Spirit appeared in the earth and the water. ⁵ For you are like the Light. For you possess a share of the winds and the demons, and a thought from the Light of the power of the Astonishment. ¹⁰ For everything which he brought forth from the womb upon the earth was not a good thing for her, but her groan and her pain, because of the image which appeared in ¹⁵ you from the Spirit. For you are exalted in your heart. And it is blessedness, Shem, if ²⁰ a part is given to someone and if he departs from the soul to (go) to the thought of the Light. For the soul is a burden of the Darkness, and those who know where the root of the soul came from will be able to grope after Nature also. ²⁵ For the soul is a work of unchastity and an (object of) scorn to the thought of Light. For I am the one who revealed concerning all that is unbegotten. ³⁰

And in order that the sin of Nature might be filled, I made the womb, which was disturbed, pleasant – the blind wisdom – that I might be able to bring (it) to naught. And at my **25** wish, he plotted with the water of Darkness and also the Darkness, that they might wound every form of your (pl.) heart. For by ⁵ the will of the light of the Spirit they surrounded you; they bound you in Faith. And in order that his plan might become idle, he sent a demon ¹⁰ that the plan of her wickedness might be proclaimed. And he caused a flood, and he destroyed your (pl.) race, in order to take the light and to take from ¹⁵ Faith. But I proclaimed quickly by the mouth of the demon that a tower come to be up to the particle of the light, which was left in the demons and ²⁰ their race – which was water – that the demon might be protected from the turbulent chaos. And the womb planned these things according to my will in order that she might ²⁵ pour forth completely. A tower came to be through the demons. The Darkness was disturbed by his loss. He loosened the muscles of the womb. And the demon ³⁰ who was going to enter the tower was protected in order that the races might continue and might acquire coherence through him. For he possesses power from every form. ³⁵

Return henceforth, **26** O Shem, and rejoice [greatly] over your race and Faith, for without body and necessity it is protected from ⁵ every body of Darkness, bearing witness to the holy things of the greatness which was revealed to them in their thought by my will. And they shall rest in the unbegotten Spirit ¹⁰ without grief. But you, Shem, because of this, you remained in (the) body outside the cloud of light that you might remain with Faith. And Faith ¹⁵ will come to you. Her thought will be taken and given to you with a consciousness of light. And I told you these things for the benefit of your race from the cloud of light. ²⁰ And likewise what I shall say to you concerning everything, I shall reveal to you completely that you may reveal them to those who will be upon the earth the ²⁵ second time.

O Shem, the disturbance which occurred at my wish happened in order that Nature might become empty. For the wrath of the Darkness subsided. ³⁰ O Shem, the Darkness' mouth was shut. No longer does the light which shone for the world appear in it, according to my will. And when Nature had said that ³⁵ its wish was fulfilled, then every form was engulfed by the waters **27** in prideful ignorance. She (i.e. Nature) turned her dark vagina and cast from her the power of fire ⁵ which was in her from the beginning through the practice of the Darkness. It (masc.) lifted itself up and shone upon the whole world instead of the righteous one. And all her forms ¹⁰ sent forth a power like a flame of fire up to heaven as a help to the corrupted light, which had lifted itself up. For they were members of the ¹⁵ chaotic fire. And she did not know that she had harmed herself. When she cast forth the power, the power which she possessed, she cast it forth from the genitals. It was the demon, ²⁰ a deceiver, who stirred up the womb in every form – . And in her ignorance, as if she were doing a great thing, she granted the demons ²⁵ and the winds a star each. For without wind and star nothing happens upon the earth. For every power is filled by them after they were ³⁰ released from the Darkness and the fire and the power and the light. For in the place where their darkness and their fire were mixed with each other beasts were brought forth. And it was in the place ³⁵ of the Darkness, and the fire, and the power **28** of the mind, and the light, that human beings came into existence. Being from the Spirit, the thought of the Light, my eye, exists not in every man. ⁵ For before the flood came from the winds and the demons, rain came to men. But then, in order that the power which is in the tower might be brought forth, ¹⁰ and might rest upon the earth Nature, which had been disturbed, wanted to harm the seed which will be upon the earth after the flood. ¹⁵ Demons were sent to them, and a deviation of the winds, and a burden of the angels, and a fear of the prophet, a condemnation of speech, that I may ²⁰ teach you, O Shem, from what blindness your race is protected. When I have revealed to you all that has been spoken, then the righteous one will ²⁵ shine upon the world with my garment. And the night and the day will be separated. For I shall hasten down to the world to take the light of that place, the one which ³⁰ Faith possesses. And I shall appear to those who will acquire the thought of the light of the Spirit. For because of them my majesty appeared.

When ³⁵ he will have appeared, O Shem, upon the earth, [in] the place which will be **2G** called Sodom, (then) safeguard the insight which I shall give you. For those whose heart was pure will congregate to you, ⁵ because of the word which you will reveal. For when you appear in the world, dark Nature will shake against you, ¹⁰ together with the winds and a demon, that they may destroy the insight. But you, proclaim quickly to the Sodomites your universal teaching, ¹⁵ for they are your members. For the demon of human form will part from that place by my will, since he is ignorant. He will guard this utterance. But the ²⁰ Sodomites, according to the will of the Majesty, will bear witness to the universal testimony. They will rest with a pure conscience in the place ²⁵ of their repose, which is the unbegotten Spirit. And as these things will happen, Sodom will be burned unjustly by a base nature. ³⁰ For the evil will not cease in order that your majesty may reveal that place.

Then **30** the demon will depart with Faith. And then he will appear in the four regions of the world. And when ⁵ Faith appears in the last likeness, then will her appearance become manifest. For the firstborn is the demon who appeared in the union ¹⁰ of Nature with many faces, in order that Faith might appear in him. For when he appears in the world, evil passions will arise, ¹⁵ and earthquakes, and wars, and famines, and blasphemies. For because of him the whole world will be disturbed. For

he will seek the power ²⁰ of Faith and Light; he will not find it. For at that time the demon will also appear upon the river to baptize with an ²⁵ imperfect baptism, and to trouble the world with a bondage of water. But it is necessary for me to appear in the members of the thought of Faith to ³⁰ reveal the great things of my power. I shall separate it from the demon who is Soldas. And the light which he possesses from the Spirit I shall mix ³⁵ with my invincible garment, as well as him whom I shall reveal **31** in the darkness for your sake and for the sake of your race which will be protected from the evil Darkness.

Know, O Shem, that without ⁵ Elorchaio and Amoi and Strophaios and Chelke and Chelke and Aileou, no one will be able to pass by this wicked region. For this is my memorial ¹⁰ that in it I have been victorious over the wicked region. And I have taken the light of the Spirit from the frightful water. For when the ¹⁵ appointed days of the demon draw near he who will baptize erringly – , then I shall appear in the baptism of the demon to reveal ²⁰ with the mouth of Faith a testimony to those who belong to her. I testify of thee, Spark the unquenchable, Osei, the elect of ²⁵ the Light, the eye of heaven, and Faith, the first and the last, and Sophia, and Saphaia, and Saphaina, and the righteous Spark, and the ³⁰ impure light. And you (sg.), east, and west, and north, and south, upper air and lower air, and all the powers and authorities, **32** you (pl.) are in Nature.

And you (sg.), Moluchtha and Soch are from every work and every impure effort of ⁵ Nature. Then I shall come from the demon down to the water. And whirlpools of water and flames of fire will rise up against me. Then I ¹⁰ shall come up from the water, having put on the light of Faith and the unquenchable fire, in order that through my help the power of the Spirit may cross, ¹⁵ she who has been cast in the world by the winds and the demons and the stars. And in them I every unchastity will be filled.

Finally, O Shem, consider ²⁰ yourself pleasing in the thought of the Light. Do not let your thought have dealings with the fire and the body of Darkness which was an unclean ²⁵ work. These things which I teach you are right.

This is the paraphrase: – For you did not remember that it is from the firmament that ³⁰ your race has been protected. – Elorchaio is the name of the great Light, the place from which I have come, the Word which has no equal. And the likeness is my honored garment. ³⁵ And Derderkeas is the name of his Word in **33** the voice of the Light. And Strophaios is the blessed glance which is the Spirit. and it is Chelkeach, who is my garment, ⁵ who has come from the Astonishment, who was in the cloud of the Hymen which appeared, as a trimorphic cloud. And Chelke is my garment ¹⁰ which has two forms, he who was in the cloud of Silence. And Chelke is my garment which was given him from every region; it was given him in a single form ¹⁵ from the greatness, he who was in the cloud of the middle region. and the star of the Light which was mentioned is my invincible garment which ²⁰ I wore in Hades; this (i.e. the star of the Light) is the mercy which surpasses the thought and the testimony of those who bear witness. And the testimony which has been mentioned: ²⁵ the First and the Last, Faith, the Mind of the wind of darkness. And Saphaia and Saphaina are in the cloud of those who have been separated from the chaotic fire. ³⁰ And the righteous Spark is the cloud of light which has shone in your (pl.) midst. For in it (i.e. the cloud of light) my garment will go down to chaos.

But the **34** impure light, which appeared in the Darkness (and) which belongs to dark Nature, is a power. And the upper air and the lower air, and the ⁵ powers and the authorities, the demons and the stars, these possessed a particle of fire and a light from the Spirit.

And Moluchthas is a wind, ³⁰ for without it nothing is brought forth upon the earth. He has a likeness of a serpent and a unicorn. His protrusion(s) are manifold wings. ¹⁵ And the remainder is the womb which has been disturbed. You are blessed, Shem, for your race has been protected from the dark wind which is many-faced. And they will ²⁰ bear the universal testimony and (bear witness) to the impure practice of (Nature>. And they will become sublime through the reminder of the Light.

O Shem, ²⁵ no one who wears the body will be able to complete these things. But through ¹ remembrance he will be able to grasp them, in order that, when his thought separates from the body, ³⁰ then these things may be revealed to him. They have been revealed to your race. O Shem, it is difficult for someone wearing a body to complete [these things, as] I said to you. **35** And it is a small number that will complete them, those who possess the particle of the mind and the thought of the light of the ⁵ Spirit. They will keep their mind from the impure practice. For many in the race of Nature will seek the security of the Power. They will not find it, nor ¹⁰ will they be able to do the will of Faith. For they are seed of the universal Darkness. And those who find them are in much suffering. The winds ¹⁵ and the demons will hate them. And the bondage of the body is severe. For where the winds, and the stars, and the demons cast forth from the power ²⁰ of the Spirit, (there) repentance and testimony will appear upon them, and mercy will lead them to the unbegotten Spirit. ²⁵ And those who are repentant will find rest in the consummation and Faith, in the place of the Hymen. This is the Faith which will ³⁰ fill the place which has been left empty. But those who do not share in the Spirit of light and in Faith will dissolve in the [Darkness], the place **36** where repentance did not come. '

It is I who opened the eternal gates which were shut from the beginning. To those who long for the best of ⁵ life, and those who are worthy of the repose, he revealed them. I granted perception to those who perceive. I disclose to them ¹⁰ all the thoughts and the teaching of the righteous ones. And I did not become their enemy at all. But when I had endured the wrath of the world, I was victorious. There was not ¹⁵ one of them who knew me. The gates of fire and endless smoke opened against me. All the winds rose up against me. The thunderings and the ²⁰ lightning-flashes for a time will rise up against me. And they will bring their wrath upon me. And on account of me according to the flesh, they will rule over them according to kind. ²⁵

And many who wear erring flesh will go down to the harmful waters through the winds and the demons. And they are bound by the water. ³⁰ And he will heal with a futile remedy. He will lead astray, and he will bind the world. And those that do the will of Nature, their part will [...] **37** two times in the day of the water and the forms of Nature. And it will not be granted them, when Faith disturbs them ⁵ in order to take to herself the righteous one.

O Shem, it is necessary that the thought be called by the Word in order that the bondage of the power of the Spirit may be saved from the frightful ¹⁰ water. And it is blessedness if it is granted someone to contemplate the exalted one, and to know the exalted time and the bondage. For the water is an ¹⁵ insignificant body. And men are not released, since they are bound in the water, just as from the beginning the light of the Spirit was bound.

O Shem, they are deceived ²⁰by manifold demons, thinking that through baptism with the uncleanness of water, that which is dark, feeble, idle, ²⁵(and) disturbing, he will take away the sins. And they do not know that from the water to the water there is bondage, and error and unchastity, ³⁰envy, murder, adultery, false witness, heresies, robberies, lusts, babblings, wrath, bitterness, ³⁵great [...].

38 Therefore there are many deaths which burden their thoughts. For I foretell it to those who have a heart. ⁵They will refrain from the impure baptism. And those who take heart from the light of the Spirit will not have dealings with the impure practice. ¹⁰And their heart will not expire, nor will they curse. And the water – <nor> will they be given honor. Where the curse is, there is the deficiency. ¹⁵And the blindness is where the honor is. For if they mix with the evil ones, they become empty in the dark water. For where the water has been ²⁰mentioned, there is Nature, and the oath, and the lie, and the loss. For only in the unbegotten Spirit, where the exalted Light rested, ²⁵has the water not been mentioned, nor can it be mentioned.

For this is my appearance: for when I have ³⁰completed the times which are assigned to me upon the earth, then I will cast from me [my garment of fire (?)]. And **3G** my unequalled garment will come forth upon me, and also all my garments which I put on in all the clouds ⁵which were from the Astonishment of the Spirit. For the air will tear my garment. For it (i.e. my garment) will shine, and it will divide all the clouds up to ¹⁰the root of the Light. The repose is the mind and my garment. And my remaining garments, those on the left and those on the right, will shine ¹⁵on the back in order that the image of the Light may appear. For my garments which I put on in the three clouds, in the last day they ²⁰will rest in their root, i.e. in the unbegotten Spirit, since they are without fault, through the division of (the) clouds.

Therefore I have appeared, ²⁵being faultless, on account of the clouds, because they are unequal, in order that the wickedness of Nature might be ended. For she wished at that time ³⁰to snare me. She was about to fix (to the cross) Soldas who is the dark flame, who attended on the [...] of error, **40** that he might snare me. She took care of her faith, being vainglorious.

And at that time ⁵the light was about to separate from the Darkness, and a voice was heard in the world, saying, "Blessed is the eye which has seen thee, and the mind which has ¹⁰supported thy majesty at my desire." It will be said by the exalted one, "Blessed is Rebouel among every race of men, for it is you (fern.) alone ¹⁵who have seen." And she will listen. And they will behead the woman who has the perception, whom you will reveal upon the earth. And according to ²⁰my will she will bear witness, and she will cease from every vain effort of Nature and chaos. For the woman whom they will behead at that ²⁵time is the coherence of the power of the demon who will baptize the seed of darkness in severity, that it (i.e. the seed) may mix with unchastity. ³⁰He begot a woman. She was called Rebouel.

See, O Shem, how all the things I have said to you have been fulfilled. [AndAnd the things which] you **41** lack, according to my will they will appear to you at that place upon the earth that you may reveal them ⁵as they are. Do not let your thought have dealings with the body. For I have said these things to you, through the voice of the fire, for I entered through ¹⁰the midst of the clouds. And I spoke according to the language of each one. This is my language which I spoke to you. And it will be taken from you. And you will speak with the voice of the world ¹⁵upon the earth. And it will appear

to you with that appearance and voice, and all that I have said to you. Henceforth proceed with Faith ²⁰ to shine in the depths of the world.

And I, Shem, awoke as if from a long sleep. I marveled when I received the power of the Light and his whole thought. ²⁵ And I proceeded with Faith to shine with me. And the righteous one followed us with my invincible garment. And all that he had told me ³⁰ would happen upon the earth happened. Nature was handed over to Faith, that she (i.e. Faith) might overturn her and that she (i.e. Nature) might stand in the Darkness. She brought forth a **42** turning motion while wandering night and day without receiving rest with the souls.

These things completed her ⁵ deeds.

Then I rejoiced in the thought of the Light. I came forth from the Darkness and I walked in Faith where the forms of ¹⁰ Nature are, up to the top of the earth, to the things which are prepared.

Thy Faith is upon the earth the whole day. For all night and day she surrounds ¹⁵ Nature to take to herself the righteous one. For Nature is burdened, and she is troubled. For none will be able to open the forms of the Womb except the mind ²⁰ alone who was entrusted with their likeness. For frightful is their likeness of the two forms of Nature, the one which is blind.

But they who have ²⁵ a free conscience remove themselves from the babbling of Nature. For they will bear witness to the universal testimony; ³⁰ they will strip off the burden of Darkness; they will put on the Word of the Light; and they will not be kept back **43** in the insignificant place. And what they possess from the power of the mind they will give to Faith. They will ⁵ be accepted without' grief. And the chaotic fire which they possess they will place in the middle region of

Nature. And they will be received ¹⁰ by my garments, those which are in the clouds. It is they who guide their members. They will rest in the Spirit without suffering. And because of this the ¹⁵ appointed term of Faith appeared upon the earth for a short time, until the Darkness is taken away from her, and her testimony is revealed ²⁰ which was revealed by me. They who will prove to be from her root will strip off the Darkness and the chaotic fire. ²⁵ They will put on the light of the mind and they will bear witness. For all that I have said must happen.

After I cease to be upon the earth and ³⁰ withdraw up to my rest, a great, evil error will come upon the world, and many evils in accordance with the number of the forms of **44** Nature. Evil times will come. And when the era of Nature is approaching destruction, darkness will ⁵ come upon the earth. The number will be small. And a demon will come up from the power who has a likeness of fire. He will divide the heaven, (and) he will rest ¹⁰ in the depth of the east. For the whole world will quake. And the deceived world will be thrown into confusion. Many places will be flooded because of ¹⁵ envy of the winds and the demons who have a name which is senseless: Phorbea, Chloerga. They are the ones who govern the world with their teaching. And they lead astray ²⁰ many hearts because of their disorder and their unchastity. Many places will be sprinkled with blood. And five races by themselves ²⁵ will eat their sons. But the regions of the south will receive the Word of the Light. But they who are from the error of the world ³⁰ and from the east – . A demon will come forth from (the) belly of the serpent. He was **45** in hiding in a desolate place. He will perform many wonders. Many will loathe him. A wind will come forth from his mouth with a female likeness. Her name will be called Abalphe. He will reign over the world from the east to the west.

Then Nature will have ¹⁰ a final opportunity. And the stars will cease from the sky. The mouth of error will be opened in order that the evil Darkness may become idle and silent. And in the last day ¹⁵ the forms of Nature will be destroyed with the winds and all their demons; they' will become a dark lump, just as they were ²⁰ from the beginning. And the sweet waters which were burdened by the demons will perish. For where the power of the Spirit has gone ²⁵ there are my sweet waters. The other works of Nature will not be manifest. They will mix with the infinite waters of darkness. ³⁰ And all her forms will cease from the middle region.

I, Shem, have completed these things. And my mind began to separate from the body of darkness. My **46** time was completed. And my mind put on the immortal memorial. And I said, "I agree with thy ⁵ memorial which thou hast revealed to me: Elorchaois, and thou, Amoiaiai, and thou, Sederkeas, and they guilelessness, Strophaias, and thou, Chelkeak, ¹⁰ and thou, Chelkea, and Chelke and Elaie, you (pl.) are the immortal memorial. I testify to thee, Spark, the unquenchable one, who is an eye ¹⁵ of heaven and a voice of light, and Sophaia, and Saphaia, and Saphaina, and the righteous Spark, and Faith, the first and the last, and the upper air and lower ²⁰ air, (and thou, Chelkeak, and Chelke and Elaie, you (pl.) are the immoral memorial. I testify to thee, Spark, the unquenchable one, who is an eye of heaven ²⁵ and a voice of light, and Sophaia, and Saphaia, and Saphaina, and the righteous Spark, and Faith, the First and the Last, and the upper air and the lower air,) and ³⁰ all the powers and the authorities that are in the world. And you, impure light, and you (sg.) also, east, and west, and south, and ³⁵ north, you (pl.) are the zones **47** of the inhabited world. And you (fern. sg.) also Moluchtha and Essoch, you (pl.) are the root of evil and every work and ⁵ impure effort of Nature."

These are the things which I completed while bearing witness. I am Shem. On the day that I was to come forth from (the) body, when my thought ¹⁰ remained in (the) body, I awoke as if from a long sleep. And when I arose as it were from the burden of my body, I said, Just as Nature became old, ¹⁵ so is it also in the day of mankind. Blessed are they who knew, when they slept, in what power their thought rested. ²⁰

And when the Pleiades separated, I saw clouds which I shall pass by. For the cloud of the Spirit is like a pure beryl. ²⁵ And the cloud of the hymen is like a shining emerald. And the cloud of silence is like a flourishing amaranth. And ³⁰ the cloud of the middle region is like a pure jacinth. And when the righteous one appeared in Nature, then – when Nature ³⁵ was angry – she felt hurt, and she granted **48** to Morphaia to visit heaven. The righteous one visits during twelve periods that he may visit them during one ⁵ period, in order that his time may be completed quickly, and Nature may become idle.

Blessed are they who guard themselves against the ¹⁰ heritage of death, which is the burdensome water of darkness. For it will not be possible to conquer them in a few moments, since they hasten to come forth from the error of the ¹⁵ world. And if they are conquered, they will be kept back from them and be tormented in the darkness until the time of the consummation. When the consummation ²⁰ has come and Nature has been destroyed, then their thoughts will separate from the Darkness. Nature has burdened them for a short time. And they ²⁵ will be in the ineffable light of the unbegotten Spirit without a form. And thus is the mind as I have said from ³⁰ the first.

Henceforth, O Shem, go in grace and continue in faith upon the earth. For every power of light and fire will be completed by me **4G** because of you. For without you they will not be revealed until you

speaking them openly. When you cease to be upon the earth, they will ⁵ be given to the worthy ones. And apart from this proclamation, let them speak about you upon the earth, since they will take the carefree and agreeable land.

The Gospel of the Hebrews

The historical literary evidence shows that the Gospel of the Hebrews was a middle second century document written in Aramaic based on the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew and filled with additions, deletions, and changes to the text to reflect Jewish and Gnostic beliefs. It was probably created by the Ebionites, a Jewish Gnostic sect.

The Gospel of the Hebrews was quoted by several church fathers, but was not well-known among the churches and was never accepted as the authentic Hebrew Gospel of Matthew or equal in authority to the four New Testament Gospels because of its late date and all its corruptions.

This article explores the historical literary evidence for the nature of the Gospel of the Hebrews and its relation to the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew.

Note: There has been much scholarly speculation about the Gospel to the Hebrews and a wide variety of opinion.

The evidence for the Gospel of the Hebrews or the Gospel According to the Hebrews is not like the evidence for the Gospel of Thomas or the Gospel of Peter. Those gospels were found intact, but the Gospel According to the Hebrews is found only in quotes from various church fathers. The quotes are often very brief with little context given and prefaced by or followed by brief statements about the gospel itself. It has also been associated with two groups, the Nazareans (also spelled Nazarenes) who attempted to combine Judaism and orthodox Christianity and the Ebionites who attempted to combine Judaism and Gnostic Christianity.

This has caused much speculation among scholars about this gospel with little consensus. There are basically three views regarding Jewish Christian gospels. The first and older one is that there was one Jewish Christian Gospel, which is the Gospel of the Hebrews used by the Nazareans and the Ebionites. The second view is that there were two Jewish Christian gospels, one used by the Nazareans and one used by the Ebionites. The third view is that there were three Jewish Christian gospels, one used by the Nazareans, one used by the Ebionites, and the Gospel of the Hebrews.

The author of this article takes a view similar to the first and older view that there was one Gospel of the Hebrews, which was most probably created by the Ebionites and possibly used by the Nazareans later in their history. This proposition is based primarily on the evidence of Epiphanius with corroborating testimony from Clement, Origen, and Jerome.

Although this view is not popular among present scholars, the other two views are based on identifying passages which various church fathers state are from the Gospel of the Hebrews and identifying them as coming not from the Gospel of the Hebrews, but coming from a supposed Gospel of the Nazareans or Gospel of the Ebionites. The author finds this difficult to accept. The testimony of the church fathers concerning the source of a quote should not be set aside unless there is a seriously strong reason to do so. The author's view, which is the traditional view, is the

only view based on the actual testimony of the church fathers as to its origin. That testimony combined with the consistent picture that emerges from the evidence of a Jewish Gnostic document matching the Ebionites' belief system forms a solid historical basis for this view.

The literary evidence presented below will focus on the testimony of Epiphanius, a church father who quoted extensively from the Gospel of the Ebionites, whom he says they called the Hebrew Gospel or the Gospel of the Hebrews.

This article will also focus on the quotes from Epiphanius and the other church fathers that clearly name or refer to the Gospel of the Hebrews.

Unless otherwise noted, all quotations except Epiphanius are from *The Early Church Fathers*, ed. Philip Schaff, William B. Eerdmans Publishing, Reprint 2001 at CCEL Internet Library

Unless otherwise noted, Epiphanius quotes are from *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis*, Tr. Frank Williams, BRILL, Boston, Mass. 1987

For a list of the early church fathers, who they were and when they lived, mentioned in this article, [click here](#).

The Problem of the Jewish-Christian Gospel(s)

Philipp Vielhauer and Georg Strecker write about the tremendous difficulties faced by scholars in understanding the patristic evidence for the Jewish-Christian Gospels, "In the second edition of this work H. Waitz rightly described the problem of the Jewish-Christian Gospels as one of the most difficult which the apocryphal literature presents, 'difficult because of the scantiness and indefiniteness of the patristic testimonies, difficult also because the results of scientific investigation are often self-contradictory.' There are preserved, mostly as citations in the Church Fathers, only small fragments from which conclusions as to the character of the whole book are difficult to draw, and also accounts which are in themselves often very vague and in their entirety make possible a whole kaleidoscope of interpretations."¹

Johann Michaelis mentions the reason for the scarcity of information about this gospel. He states, "Very few ecclesiastical writers have taken notice of this Gospel at which we have no reason to be surprised as few of them understood Hebrew, and no translation of it had been made before that of Jerome. Besides, the copies of it were very scarce even in Palestine, for Jerome mentions it as an unusual book, which he found in the library of Caesarea. However its name and character were not unknown; though it is difficult to determine, what the majority of Christians in the three first centuries thought of it, because Eusebius has expressed himself in ambiguous terms. In the fifth century most persons believed it to be the original of St. Matthew's Gospel: but whether they knew that it was interpolated, and distinguished the genuine text from its additions, we are not informed."²

There is one statement that has scholarly consensus, which is that the Gospel of the Hebrews was NOT the original Hebrew Gospel of Matthew in a pure form. However, many some scholars agree that it is likely a severely corrupted version of that text as Epiphanius so testifies.

M.R. James writes about the Gospel of the Hebrews,

"What may be regarded as established is that it existed in either Hebrew or Aramaic, and was used

by a Jewish-Christian sect who were known as Nazareans (Nazarenes), and that it resembled our Matthew closely enough to have been regarded as the original Hebrew of that gospel. I believe, few if any, would now contend that it was that original.”³

Johann Michaelis summarizes the views of some scholars toward the Gospel of the Hebrews, “We must likewise distinguish the Gospel of the Nazarenes in the state, in which it was known to the Fathers of the third and fourth centuries, from the original state of this Gospel: for in its original state it may have been the work of St. Matthew, and yet have been afterwards so interpolated and corrupted, as to be no longer the same Gospel.”⁴

Even though there is no scholarly consensus, I believe that some simple facts about the Gospel can be presented which are based on the actual passages from the text quoted by the church father, Epiphanius, and other church fathers.

Epiphanius, the Bishop of Salamis

Epiphanius was the bishop (the church leader of the churches of a city) of Salamis, a city on the island of Cyprus. He lived between 310 and 403 A.D. He wrote a book in several volumes called the Panarion where he outlined some eighty heresies and heretical groups. Two of those groups were the Nazareans and the Ebionites.

Epiphanius was familiar with the Ebionites, their views, and the Gospel of the Hebrews, which he says they called their gospel. He quotes directly from the Gospel of the Hebrews. Epiphanius gives clear testimony to the nature of the Gospel of the Hebrews by the passages he quotes and the comments he makes. Other church fathers also give evidence of the Gospel of the Hebrews that is in agreement with Epiphanius’ testimony. The author has used Epiphanius’ testimony as a basis of the nature of the Gospel of the Hebrews believing it to be the clearest testimony to it.

This article is divided into five main points.

The Nature of the Gospel of the Hebrews
The Errors in the Gospel of the Hebrews
The Language of the Gospel of the Hebrews
The Date of the Gospel of the Hebrews
Orthodox Christians’ View of the Gospel of the Hebrews

The Nature of the Gospel of the Hebrews

1. The Gospel of the Hebrews was a severely corrupted version of Matthew’s Hebrew Gospel created by the Ebionites

According to Epiphanius, the Ebionites used a gospel in the Hebrew language, which they claimed was the Gospel of Matthew, which they referred to as “the Gospel according to (or “of”) the Hebrews” or “the Hebrew Gospel,” which was a severely mutilated version of the Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew.

The Ebionites were a "Christian" sect of the second century that held some Gnostic beliefs with a Jewish emphasis and a commitment to vegetarianism. The Gospel of Thomas reflects the same kind of views of this group.

1) The Ebionites used the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew, but called it the "Gospel of the Hebrews."

Epiphanius writes of the Ebionites and their use of the Gospel of the Hebrews and states,

Epiphanius 30.3.7

"They too accept the Gospel according to Matthew. Like the Cerinthians and Merinthians, they too use it alone. They call it, 'According to the Hebrews,' and it is true to say that only Matthew put the setting forth and the preaching of the Gospel into the New Testament in the Hebrew language and alphabet."

In this passage, Epiphanius tells us that the Ebionites used the Gospel of Matthew exclusively, but they called it by another name, the Gospel according to the Hebrews. Later he will reveal that they had changed it. He further tells us that it was written in the Hebrew language and alphabet. When the church fathers referred to the Hebrew language and alphabet they meant the Aramaic language, which was the language of the Jews in Israel at the time of Christ and the centuries that followed.

2) The Ebionites changed the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew into the Gospel of the Hebrews, a corrupted Matthew.

In another passage, Epiphanius relates that the Gospel of the Hebrews was not the pure Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew, but a severely changed and corrupted version of it. He states,

Epiphanius 30.13.2

"In the Gospel that is in general use amongst them [Ebionites], which is called according to Matthew, which however is not whole (and) complete but forged and mutilated - they call it the Hebrew Gospel - it is reported..." (Quote from New Testament Apocrypha, Vol. 1 Gospels and Related Writings, Ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher, Trans. R. McL. Wilson, Westminster John Knox Press 1990, 170)

In the first passage, Epiphanius writes that the Ebionites were using Matthew's gospel, but they called it, "The Gospel according to the Hebrews." In this passage he says that they had mutilated the gospel of Matthew and called it by a slightly different name, the "Hebrew Gospel." They most likely referred to it by both names.

According to Epiphanius, the Gospel of the Hebrews was filled with additions, deletions, and changes to the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew to reflect the beliefs of the Ebionites, a Jewish Gnostic sect committed to vegetarianism. This will be evidenced in point 2. and 3. below.

3) Eusebius also states that the Ebionites used the Gospel of the Hebrews.

Eusebius describes the basic beliefs of the Ebionites and states that they used the Gospel of the Hebrews.

Eusebius, Church History, 3.27.1, 2, and 4

"The evil demon, however, being unable to tear certain others from their allegiance to the Christ of

God, yet found them susceptible in a different direction, and so brought them over to his own purposes. The ancients quite properly called these men Ebionites, because they held poor and mean opinions concerning Christ. For they considered him a plain and common man, who was justified only because of his superior virtue, and who was the fruit of the intercourse of a man with Mary. In their opinion the observance of the ceremonial law was altogether necessary, on the ground that they could not be saved by faith in Christ alone and by a corresponding life... These men, moreover, thought that it was necessary to reject all the epistles of the apostle, whom they called an apostate from the law; and they used only the so-called Gospel according to the Hebrews and made small account of the rest."

Sunnary:

Before the time of Jerome, the Gospel of the Hebrews is only associated with the Ebionites. At the time of Jerome, the Gospel of the Hebrews is associated with the Nazareans and the Ebionites.

2. The Gospel of the Hebrews reflected Gnostic doctrine including vegetarianism.

Epiphanius clearly indicates that the Ebionites mutilated the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew to reflect their Gnostic views.

1) The Ebionites removed the first two chapters of Matthew's Gospel to eliminate the virgin birth.

The Ebionites believed that there was a difference between the human Jesus and the Christ spirit. They believed that Jesus was born as a human being to human parents, Joseph and Mary. Therefore, they did not believe in the virgin birth. They believed the Christ spirit descended in the form of a dove at his baptism and came into the human Jesus. These are Gnostic beliefs. Gnosticism was a heresy prevalent in the second century.

Epiphanius explains this in the following passage from the Panarion as he speaks of the Ebionites.

Epiphanius 30.14.4

"This is because they mean that Jesus is really a man, as I said, but that Christ, who descended in the form of a dove, has entered him - as we have found already in other sects and been united with him. Christ himself is from God on high, but Jesus is the product of a man's seed and a woman."

Because of these beliefs, Epiphanius says in the following passages that they falsified Matthew's genealogy by eliminating the first two chapters of Matthew's Gospel and beginning with John the Baptist in chapter three.

Epiphanius 30.13.6

"But their Gospel begins: 'It came to pass in the days of Herod, king of Judaea, in the high priesthood of Caiaphas, that a certain man, John by name, came baptizing with the baptism of repentance in the river Jordan, and he was said to be of the lineage of Aaron the priest, the son of Zacharias and Elisabeth; and all went out to him.'"

Epiphanius 30.14.3

"But these people have something else in mind. They falsify the genealogical tables in Matthew, and start its opening as I said with the words, 'It came to pass in the days of Herod, king of Judaea,

in the high priesthood of Caiaphas, that a certain man, John by name, came baptizing with the baptism of repentance in the river Jordan and so on.”

2) The Ebionites made an addition to the baptism of Jesus to prove a Gnostic origin for Jesus.

In the following passage from the Gospel of the Hebrews, added to what the voice from heaven said are the words, “I have this day begotten thee.”

Epiphanius 30.13.7

“And after saying a number of things, it adds, ‘When the people had been baptised, Jesus came also and was baptised of John. And as he came up out of the water, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, which descended and entered into him. And (there came) a voice saying, ‘Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.’ And again: ‘This day have I begotten thee.’ And straightway a great light shone round about the place. ‘Seeing this,’ it says, John said unto him, ‘Who art thou, Lord?’ And again (there came) a voice from heaven, ‘This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.’”

Klauck explains the Gnostic perspective, which this addition implies,

“The dynamite in this version of the baptism narrative is the fact that the heavenly voice is not content to quote only the first half of the verse from Ps.2 (“You are My Son”), but employs a transitional formula to add the second half: “This day I have begotten you.”

This edition, ‘Today I have begotten you,’ makes possible an adoptionist or even a docetic interpretation of the baptismal scene. The former would say that it is only at his baptism that God adopts and publicly acclaims the man Jesus of Nazareth as his Son; the docetic reading would emphasize the fusion with the Spirit and say that it is only at his baptism that a heavenly spiritual being enters the man Jesus. It is obvious that the rigidly orthodox Epiphanius must reject this Christology as defective.”⁵

Johann Michaelis agrees,

“By none of the Evangelists are the words ‘This day have I begotten thee’ said to have been uttered at the baptism of Christ. They are an interpolation in the Ebionite Gospel, and are derived from the false notion, which prevailed in the first century, that Christ was a mere man till the time of his baptism, and that he then became the Son of God, and filled with the Holy Ghost.”⁶

3) The Ebionites changed the diet of John the Baptist to reflect their vegetarian views.

In his book, *Is God a Vegetarian? Christianity, Vegetarianism, and Animal Rights*, Richard Young, writes of the vegetarian views of the Ebionites and other Gnostic groups,

“Gnostic groups of the first several centuries regularly forbade both marriage and meat eating...Ironical as it may seem, the devaluing of animals by the Gnostics led to a very strict vegetarianism, whereas today the devaluing of animals leads to an unrestrained eating of meat. The early church responded by condemning Gnostic vegetarianism.”⁷

Young later adds,

“In addition, the early church fathers fought against a heretical form of vegetarianism that sprang from Gnostic dualism. The Gnostic belief that the physical realm was evil turned meat eating and

marriage into works of the devil. Since the fathers believed the world was good, they could not condemn meat eating. The willingness to eat meat was for them a certification of orthodoxy.”⁸

Epiphanius quoted from the Gospel of the Hebrews explaining that the Ebionites had changed the text of Matthew’s Gospel, which originally stated that John ate locusts, which violated their vegetarian beliefs. The “locusts” were deleted and the words “manna as a cake in oil” was added.

Epiphanius 30.13.4-5

“And John came baptizing, and there went out unto him Pharisees and they were baptized, and all Jerusalem. And John had a garment of camel’s hair and a girdle of skin about his loins, and his meat, it says, was wild honey, whose taste was the taste of manna, as a cake in oil. This, if you please, to turn the speech of the truth into falsehood, and substitute a ‘cake in honey’ for ‘locusts.’”

Commenting on this change, Hans-Josef Klauck writes,

“An even more decisive reason for the replacement of the roasted locusts with honey cakes in the Gospel of the Ebionites was the strict vegetarianism of the Ebionites, who could not accept even the hint that John or Jesus ate meat...”⁹

4) The Ebionites also changed the words of Jesus concerning his role toward the O.T. sacrifices to reflect their vegetarian views.

Not only did the Gnostic vegetarian views of the Ebionites cause them to reject the eating of animal flesh, it also caused them to reject the sacrifice of animal flesh as was done in the Old Testament. That animal flesh could be acceptable to God for any reason was simply out of the question. Therefore, in their minds Jesus could not have come to fulfill the Mosaic Law and thus its sacrifices, having become the ultimate sacrifice for sin as the orthodox Christians taught. Rather he must have come to abolish animal sacrifices because they were wrong.

Epiphanius 30.16.4-5

“But they [Ebionites] say that he [Christ] is not begotten of God the Father, but was created as one of the archangels, and that he is ruler of both angels and of all creatures of the Almighty; and he came and instructed us to abolish the sacrifices. As their so-called Gospel says, ‘I came to abolish the sacrifices, and if ye cease not from sacrifice, wrath will not cease from you.’ These and certain similar things are their crafty devices.”

Epiphanius adds further that their vegetarian views also resulted in a change in the text which reveals Jesus’ attitudes and actions toward the Passover lamb. In the text of Matthew’s Gospel Jesus instructs his disciples where to go to prepare the meal (involving the Passover Lamb) they will eat together. However, in the Gospel of the Hebrews, Jesus is shown rejecting the eating of the Passover lamb with his disciples because it is animal flesh. He questions why they would think he desires to eat “meat” (animal flesh) with them.

Epiphanius 30.22.4

“But of their own will these people have lost sight of the consequence of the truth, and have altered the wording – which is evident to everyone from the sayings associated with it – and made the disciples say, ‘Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the Passover?’ And the Lord, if you please, says, ‘Have I desired meat with desire, to eat this Passover with you?’”

This rejection by Jesus is in direct contradiction to Luke 22:15 where Jesus says, "And he said to them, 'With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.'"

Klauck comments on this passage,

"Jesus has words at Lk.22:15 expanded to specify that the meat of the Paschal lamb is consumed at the Passover meal, and the negation of the entire sentence [by Jesus in the Gospel of the Hebrews] offers a strong argument against eating meat and in favor of vegetarianism."¹⁰

Clement of Alexandria - a Quote from the Gospel of the Hebrews Reflecting a Gnostic View of Salvation

The Gospel of the Hebrews contains an addition to Jesus' words to describe the steps of the Gnostic view of salvation.

The very first quotes from the Gospel of the Hebrews come from Clement of Alexandria (c.150AD-215AD) and are filled with Gnostic terms and ideas. This is very significant and shows that from the very beginning of its creation the Gospel was Gnostic in some of its text.

The Gnostics taught that salvation was all about gaining a special knowledge about spiritual realities and it involved "steps." These steps followed a sequence of discovery until one reached the goal, salvation "rest."

Clement of Alexandria quoted the Gospel of the Hebrews as indicating some of these steps to greater knowledge of Gnosticism.

Clement of Alexandria, Stromata 2.9

"So also in the Gospel to the Hebrews it is written, 'He that wonders shall reign, and he that has reigned shall rest.'"

Vielhauer and Strecker, in their book, NT Apocrypha evaluates this saying from the Gospel in terms of its Gnostic perspective. "Our saying describes the steps of the revelation of salvation and of the way of salvation. This description is characteristic of the Hermetic gnosis, as Dibelius has pointed out; here also "to marvel" is found as a step and the 'rest' as eschatological salvation."¹¹

There is also an expanded version of this saying in the Gnostic Gospel of Thomas, which reads,

Gospel of Thomas, 2

"Jesus said, 'Let him who seeks continue seeking until he finds. When he finds, he will become troubled. When he becomes troubled, he will be astonished, and he will rule over the all.'" (Quote from The Nag Hammadi Library, James M. Robinson, ed., Revised Edition. HarperCollins, San Francisco, 1990)

A Coptic Discourse Attributed to Cyril - a Quote from the Gospel of the Hebrews Reflecting a Gnostic view of Christ and Mary.

Some Gnostics such as the Ebionites taught that the Holy Spirit was the mother of Jesus, the spirit being who embodied itself as Mary in order to come to earth and birth Jesus.

In a Coptic translation of a discourse ascribed to Cyril of Jerusalem (315-386AD), which probably did not reflect what Cyril actually wrote, but which definitely reflects a Gnostic view of the Holy Spirit and the human Jesus in the Gospel of the Hebrews.

Coptic Cyril of Jerusalem (315-386AD)

"It is written in the Gospel of the Hebrews: 'When Christ wished to come upon the earth to men, the good Father summoned a mighty power in heaven, which was called Michael, and entrusted Christ to the care thereof. And the power came into the world and it was called Mary, and Christ was in her womb seven months.'" (From the Coptic translation of a discourse ascribed to Cyril of Jerusalem ed. E.A.W. Budge, Texts, Coptic p.60, English p. 637 quoted in the New Testament Apocrypha, Vol. 1 Gospels and Related Writings, Ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher, Trans. R. McL. Wilson, Westminster John Knox Press 1990, 177)

Origen - a Quote from the Gospel of the Hebrews Reflecting a Gnostic view of the Holy Spirit

Origen quotes a passage from the Gospel of the Hebrews, which sets forth the Gnostic doctrine that the Holy Spirit was the mother of Jesus.

Origen, Commentary on John, 2.6

"If any one should lend credence to the Gospel according to the Hebrews, where the Saviour Himself says, 'My mother, the Holy Spirit took me just now by one of my hairs and carried me off to the great Mount Tabor.'"

However, Origen attempts to interpret this passage in a way that reflects orthodox Christian doctrine rather than Gnostic doctrine by attempting to interpret the passage from the Gospel of Hebrews symbolically. He uses the passage from the Gospel of Matthew where Jesus says that the one who does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother. In spite of Origen's attempt, the passage cannot be reconciled with orthodox Christian doctrine. It clearly reflects Gnostic doctrine.

A parallel example of this doctrine can be seen in a passage from the Gnostic Gospel of Philip. It says,

"'Mary conceived by the Holy Spirit?' They are in error. They do not know what they are saying. When did a woman ever conceive by a woman? Mary is the virgin whom no power defiled. She is a great anathema to the Hebrews, who are the apostles and the apostolic men. This virgin whom no power defiled..." (Quote from The Nag Hammadi Library, James M. Robinson, ed., Revised Edition, HarperCollins, San Francisco, 1990)

In speaking of this passage in Origen, Vielhauer and Stricker state,

"This Jewish Christianity however contains syncretistic-gnostic elements. The account of the carrying away of Jesus shows a strong mythological trait, the Holy Ghost being designated the mother of Jesus...the Coptic Cyril fragment belongs to the Gospel of the Hebrews, then the Holy Spirit is to be identified with the 'mighty power in heaven' and Mary to be understood as the incarnation of the heavenly power. Not merely for Jesus but also for his mother the pre-existence and incarnation myth may have been assumed. That the mighty power in heaven was called Michael is not surprising, in view of his importance in Egyptian magical texts and in the Pistis Sophia [a Gnostic text] and in the last analysis is no decisive objection to the identification of the

'mighty power' with the Holy Spirit. In the Coptic Epistle of James of the Cod. Jung, Jesus describes himself as 'son of the Holy Spirit.'"12

The passage above is quoted by Origen twice and Jerome three times. One of Jerome's quotes comes in his commentary on Isaiah. In this quote, Jerome mentions the Gospel of the Hebrews, gives this exact quote Origen gave, and, like Origen, attempts to explain its teaching symbolically.

Jerome - a Quote from the Gospel of the Hebrews Reflecting a Gnostic view of the Holy Spirit

Jerome, Commentary on Isaiah, 11. 9

"In the Gospel of the Hebrews that the Nazarenes read it says, 'Just now my mother, the Holy Spirit, took me. Now no one should be offended by this, because 'spirit' in Hebrew is feminine, while in our language [Latin] it is masculine and in Greek it is neuter. In divinity, however, there is no gender.'"

This quote demonstrates that Origen (c.185–254 AD) and Jerome (c.342-.420 AD) both used the same Gospel of the Hebrews which contained Gnostic doctrine. In fact, in the passage below, Jerome himself says that Origen used the Gospel of the Hebrews which he was quoting.

Jerome, Illustrious Men 2

"The Gospel also which is called the Gospel according to the Hebrews, and which I have recently translated into Greek and Latin and which also Origen often makes use of, after the account of the resurrection of the Saviour..."

Jerome mentions another addition to the text of Matthew's gospel where the Holy Spirit is described as the "mother" of Jesus.

Jerome, Commentary on Isaiah, 4 (on Isa. 11:2)

"According to the Gospel written in the Hebrew speech, which the Nazareans read, the whole fount of the Holy Spirit shall descend upon him ... Further in the Gospel which we have just mentioned we find the following written: 'And it came to pass when the Lord was come up out of the water, the whole fount of the Holy Spirit descended upon him and rested on him and said to him: 'My Son, in all the prophets was I waiting for thee that thou shouldest come and I might rest in thee. For thou art my rest; thou art my first-begotten Son that reignest for ever.'"(Quote from New Testament Apocrypha, Vol. 1 Gospels and Related Writings, Ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher, Trans. R. McL. Wilson, Westminster John Knox Press 1990, 177)

Leonard Swidler, writes in his book, Biblical Affirmations of Women, concerning this reference to the Holy Spirit as mother,

"Another motherly image of the Holy Spirit is found in the apocryphal Gospel to the Hebrews, written around 150AD, 'And it came to pass when the Lord [Jesus at his baptism in the Jordan River] came up out of the water, the whole fount of the Holy Spirit descended upon him and rested on him and said to him, 'My son...thou art my first-begotten Son that reignest for ever.' If there be any doubt that the Holy Spirit was depicted in the Gospel of the Hebrews as Jesus' mother, the following quotation will lay it to rest. 'Even so did my mother, the Holy Spirit, take me by one of my hairs and carry me away onto the great mountain Tabor.'"

3. The Gospel of the Hebrews reflected a Jewish emphasis.

Epiphanius indicates that the Ebionites mutilated the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew to reflect their Jewish emphasis.

1) The Ebionites changed the order in Matthew's Gospel giving prominence to the Pharisees, an important sect of leaders in Israel.

Epiphanius quotes a passage where the order of the text has been changed to give more prominence to the Pharisees, a very important sect of leaders in Israel.

Matthew's Greek Gospel text reads, "In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand...And the same John had his garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then, Jerusalem went out to him, and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan. And they were being baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said to them, 'Oh generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come?'"

Epiphanius quotes the parallel passage in the Gospel of the Hebrews as follows:

Epiphanius 30.13.4

"And 'John came baptizing, and there went out unto him Pharisees and they were baptised, and all Jerusalem.' And John had a garment of camel's hair and a girdle of skin about his loins, and his meat, it says, was wild honey, whose taste was the taste of manna, as a cake in oil."

In Matthew's Greek text, the Pharisees are mentioned after all the people in the area and in the context of a rebuke. In the Gospel of the Hebrews the Pharisees are mentioned first demonstrating their desire to be baptized before all the people.

Johann Michaelis explains this Jewish perspective on the prominence of the Pharisees, "Here the Pharisees are mentioned first, and then the inhabitants of Jerusalem in general, as if the Pharisees had set the example: whereas in our Gospels the Pharisees are mentioned last, which shows that they only followed the multitude. If Epiphanius has adhered closely to his original, this inversion in the Gospel of the Ebionites may have been owing to their respect for the Pharisees."14

Jerome - a Quote from the Gospel of the Hebrews Giving James, a greatly admired Jewish-Christian Leader, Prominence

Jerome mentions a story added to the text of Matthew's Gospel that gives prominence to James, the brother of the Lord, a highly esteemed leader by Jewish-Christians.

Jerome Lives Illustrious Men, 2

"The Gospel also which is called the Gospel according to the Hebrews, and which I have recently translated into Greek and Latin and which also Origen often makes use of, after the account of the resurrection of the Saviour says, 'but the Lord, after he had given his grave clothes to the servant of the priest, appeared to James (for James had sworn that he would not eat bread from that hour in which he drank the cup of the Lord until he should see him rising again from among those that sleep)' and again, a little later, it says 'Bring a table and bread,' said the Lord.' And immediately it is added, 'He brought bread and blessed and brake and gave to James the Just and said to him, 'my brother eat thy bread, for the son of man is risen from among those that sleep.'"

Grant, Freedman, and Scheudel, point out the Jewish emphasis in this story, "And the concern of this gospel for Jewish Christian tradition and authority is reflected in its story of the resurrection. Here it is James, the Lord's brother who is the earliest witness - not Peter. In this story, the author of Hebrews has managed to include several highly biased notions. First, he has made James the Just (a second century title for the Lord's brother) a guest at the Lord's Supper. Second, he has made James take an oath there like that which Jesus himself took. Third, he has introduced 'the high priest's slave' (Jn.18:10) into the resurrection story, though his reason for doing so is not clear. Fourth, Jesus appears in a Eucharistic setting strongly reminiscent of Luke 24:30, though James, not Cleopas and another is the witness to it. In general, the sole purpose of this story is to strengthen the claims of the Church of Jerusalem at the expense of the gentile Christians."¹⁵

Klauck adds his comments to this theme of the importance of James, "These two logia form a good introduction to a narrative in which James, the Lord's brother (not the Apostle James from the circle of the twelve), plays a key role alongside Jesus. The scene takes place after Easter, but also refers back to the pre-Easter situation of the Last Supper...The central concern of the text is to elaborate 1 Cor.15:7 by attributing the first appearance of the risen Lord to his brother James, thus legitimating him as head of the post-Easter community. James was the great hero of Jewish Christianity, where he was called "the just" (as in this text). So popular was this tradition among Jewish Christians that we have six attestations of it...The narrative retrospect intends to assert that James, the Lord's brother, was present at the last supper where he drank from the chalice of the Lord...James takes a vow, analogous to Jesus' vow at Mk.14:24, not to read again unless Jesus rises from the dead. Here too, an apologetic argument can be discerned: if James - the just man - deviates from his vow, the only reason can be that the resurrection has indeed taken place and the risen Lord has encouraged his brother to resume eating."¹⁶

Vielhauer and Strecker also bring out the significance of this emphasis on James, "The Jewish-Christian character of the Gospel of the Hebrews is indicated not merely by the title but above all by the emphasis on James the brother of the Lord, who according to the reports of the NT (Gal. 2; Acts 15; 21:18f.) and of Hegesippus (Eusebius, H.E. 1123.4-18) was the champion of a strict Jewish Christianity and leader of the early Jerusalem Church. Since contrary to the historical facts he is distinguished as a participant of Jesus' last supper and as the first witness and consequently the most important guarantor of the resurrection, it is clear that for the Gospel of the Hebrews he is the highest authority in the circle of Jesus' acquaintances. This trait also has a striking parallel in the Coptic Gospel of Thomas."¹⁷

The Gospel of Thomas, another Gnostic-Jewish "gospel" also gives prominence to James.

Gospel of Thomas 12

"The disciples said to Jesus, 'We know that you will depart from us. Who is to be our leader?' Jesus said to them, 'Wherever you are, you are to go to James the righteous, for whose sake heaven and earth came into being.'" (Quote from The Nag Hammadi Library, James M. Robinson, ed., The Nag Hammadi Library, Revised Edition, HarperCollins, San Francisco, 1990.)

The Errors in the Gospel of the Hebrews

The Gospel of the Hebrews has two major errors in it, which are not in Matthew's Gospel or the other New Testament Gospels.

1. A Historical Error Concerning the Time of John the Baptist's Ministry

The Gospel of the Hebrews states that John the Baptist began his ministry at the time of King Herod of Judea who actually was king at the birth of Christ some thirty years earlier not during the time of John the Baptist's ministry. This demonstrates that the Gospel of the Hebrews must have been written by an author(s) far removed from the actual time of the events. A contemporary author to the events would never have made such a serious historical mistake.

The following passage from the Gospel of Hebrews which Epiphanius quotes contains this historical error which is not in Matthew's Greek Gospel.

Epiphanius 30.13.6

"But their Gospel begins: 'It came to pass in the days of Herod, king of Judaea, in the high priesthood of Caiaphas, that a certain man, John by name, came baptizing with the baptism of repentance in the river Jordan, and he was said to be of the lineage of Aaron the priest, the son of Zacharias and Elisabeth; and all went out to him.'"

Johann Michaelis points out this historical error,

"This strange historical blunder, which makes John the Baptist preach in the time of Herod king of Judaea, who had been dead nearly thirty years, when John began to preach, is a very sufficient proof that St. Matthew was not the author of this passage: for no man who was a contemporary with John could have imagined that Herod was then king of Judaea."18

This demonstrates that the author(s) of Gospel of the Hebrews was far removed from the time of the actual events of Jesus and the apostles.

2. A Chronological Error Concerning the Calling of Matthew by Jesus

The Gospel of the Hebrews states that Matthew appeared with Jesus before he was called as an apostle by Jesus as he is in the other gospels.

This chronological error appears in the following passage from the Gospel of the Hebrews given by Epiphanius.

Epiphanius 30.13.2-3

"Now in what they call a Gospel according to Matthew, though it is not entirely complete, but is corrupt and mutilated - and they call this thing 'Hebrew'! - the following passage occurs, 'There was a certain man named Jesus, and he was about thirty years of age, who chose us. And coming to Capernaum, he entered the house of Simon surnamed Peter, and opened his mouth and said, 'Passing by the Sea of Tiberias I chose John and James, the sons of Zebedee, and Simon and Andrew and [Philip and Bartholomew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Thomas], Thaddeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot. Thee likewise Matthew, seated at the receipt of custom, did I call, and thou didst follow me. I will, then. That ye be twelve apostles as a testimony to Israel.'"

Johann Michaelis comments on this error,

"This history is not the same as that which is given Matt. 8:14 where it is related that Jesus went into

the house of Peter, but no mention is made of any speech to the Apostles. It is one of the additions to this Gospel, and might possibly be true, if St. Matthew's name had not been mentioned, who was not called to be an apostle, till after this visit in the house of Peter.”¹⁹

3. An Error of Contradiction Concerning James the Just and the Last Supper

Jerome, as seen in an earlier point, quotes a passage from the Gospel of the Hebrews, which portrays James the Just, the brother of the Lord, at the Last Supper. However, Matthew and the other gospels clearly indicate that only the twelve were at the Last Supper and James the brother of the Lord, was not one of the twelve. This contradicts what the canonical gospels clearly state, including Greek Matthew. It was inserted to give James, the brother of the Lord, greater prominence. It also demonstrates that the Gospel of the Hebrews was written in the second century since the title “James the Just” was not used until then.

Jerome Lives Illustrious Men, 2

“The Gospel also which is called the Gospel according to the Hebrews, and which I have recently translated into Greek and Latin and which also Origen often makes use of, after the account of the resurrection of the Saviour says, ‘but the Lord, after he had given his grave clothes to the servant of the priest, appeared to James (for James had sworn that he would not eat bread from that hour in which he drank the cup of the Lord until he should see him rising again from among those that sleep)’ and again, a little later, it says ‘Bring a table and bread,’ said the Lord.’ And immediately it is added, ‘He brought bread and blessed and brake and gave to James the Just and said to him, ‘my brother eat thy bread, for the son of man is risen from among those that sleep.’”

Grant, Freedman, and Scheedel, point out this error,

“In this story, the author of Hebrews has managed to include several highly biased notions. First, he has made James the Just (a second century title for the Lord’s brother) a guest at the Lord’s Supper.”²⁰

The Language of the Gospel of the Hebrews

1. Epiphanius indicates that the Gospel of the Hebrews used by the Ebionites was in the Hebrew (Aramaic) language.

Epiphanius 30.3.7

“They too accept the Gospel according to Matthew. Like the Cerinthians and Merinthians, they too use it alone. They call it, ‘According to the Hebrews,’ and it is true to say that only Matthew put the setting forth and the preaching of the Gospel into the New Testament in the Hebrew language and alphabet.”

The statement about Matthew’s writing in Hebrew implies that the Gospel of Matthew which the Ebionites called “According to the Hebrews” was written in Hebrew (Aramaic).

2. Jerome said that the Gospel of the Hebrews which was read by the Nazareans and Ebionites was in Hebrew which he had translated into Greek and Latin.

1) In his Dialogue Against Pelagius, Jerome stated that the Gospel according to the Hebrews was written in the Chaldean and Syriac language, but written in Hebrew letters.

The Aramaic language (Syro-Chaldaic) was written with the Hebrew alphabet (Hebrew letters) in the first century.

Jerome Dialogue against Pelagius, 3.2

"In the Gospel according to the Hebrews, which is written in the Chaldee and Syriac language, but in Hebrew characters, and is used by the Nazarenes to this day..."

2) In his commentary on Matthew, Jerome stated that he translated the Gospel according to the Hebrews into Greek and Latin from the Hebrew (Aramaic).

Jerome On Matt. 12.13

"In the Gospel which the Nazarenes and Ebionites use (which I have lately translated into Greek from the Hebrew, and which is called by many (or most) people the original of Matthew)..."

(Quote from M.R. James, The Apocryphal New Testament, The Apocryphile Press, 2004, 4-5)

3) In his commentary on Matthew, Jerome also demonstrates that the Gospel of the Hebrews was written in Hebrew (Aramaic) by giving a Hebrew word (mahar) that occurs in its text.

The Greek Matthew had "epiousion" for which Jerome translates "essential to existence." However, the Gospel of the Hebrews had the Hebrew word "mahar" which means "of tomorrow."

Jerome Commentary on Matthew 6:11

In the so-called Gospel according to the Hebrews instead of 'essential to existence' I found 'mahar' which means 'of tomorrow' so that the sense is: 'Our bread of tomorrow - that is, of the future - give us this day.'"

(Quote from New Testament Apocrypha, Vol. 1 Gospels and Related Writings, Ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher, Trans. R. McL. Wilson, Westminster John Knox Press 1990, 160)

The Date of the Gospel of the Hebrews

The Gospel of the Hebrews was most likely written in the middle to late second century. The earliest references to the Gospel of the Hebrews come from the latter part of the second century. There is no mention of it before that time.

Ron Cameron summarizes the evidence for the dating the Gospel of the Hebrews when he writes, "Hegesippus (late in the second century) and Eusebius (early in the fourth century) attest to the existence of this gospel, but do not quote from it. Fragments are preserved in the writings of Clement of Alexandria (late in the second century), Origen (early in the third century), and Cyril (Bishop of Jerusalem, ca. 350 C.E.). Jerome (ca. 400 C.E.) also preserves several fragments, all of which he probably reproduced from the writings of Origen."²¹

1. The first mention of the Gospel of the Hebrews does not come before the late second century.

Eusebius states that Hegesippus who wrote c.185 AD quoted from the Gospel of the Hebrews.

Eusebius Church History 4.22

"He [Hegisippus] wrote much else, some of which I have already quoted, and cites the Gospel of the Hebrews, the Syriac Gospel, and especially works of Hebrew language and oral tradition, showing that he was a Hebrew convert." (Quote from Eusebius, Church History, tr. Paul L. Maier, Kregel Publications, 1999, 158)

Clement of Alexandria (c.150AD-215AD) quotes from the Gospel of the Hebrews.

Clement of Alexandria, Stromata 2.9

"So also in the Gospel to the Hebrews it is written, 'He that wonders shall reign, and he that has reigned shall rest.'"

2. The Ebionites whom Epiphanius says mutilated the Gospel of Matthew and called it the Gospel According to the Hebrews emerged in the late second century as a heretical group.

Epiphanius indicated that the Ebionites forged and mutilated the Gospel of Matthew (as seen earlier) and called it the Gospel of the Hebrews. This coincides with the first mention of the Ebionites which was by Irenaeus in the late second century.

Irenaeus, who wrote in the latter part of the second century, is the first writer to mention the Ebionites. Their origin coincides in time with the origin of the Gospel of the Hebrews, which is consistent with the proposition that the Ebionites created the Gospel of the Hebrews.

Irenaeus, however, does not mention the Gospel of the Hebrews when he refers to the Ebionites. He says that they used the Gospel of Matthew.

Irenaeus 1.26.2

"Those who are called Ebionites agree that the world was made by God; but their opinions with respect to the Lord are similar to those of Cerinthus and Carpocrates. They use the Gospel according to Matthew only, and repudiate the Apostle Paul, maintaining that he was an apostate from the law. As to the prophetic writings, they endeavour to expound them in a somewhat singular manner: they practise circumcision, persevere in the observance of those customs which are enjoined by the law, and are so Judaic in their style of life, that they even adore Jerusalem as if it were the house of God."

Irenaeus 3.11.7

"For the Ebionites, who use Matthew's Gospel are confuted out of this very same, making false suppositions with regard to the Lord."

This is evidence of Epiphanius' assertion that the Ebionites mutilated the Gospel of Matthew and referred to it as the Gospel According to the Hebrews.

Epiphanius tells us of two major groups claiming a "Jewish-Christian" gospel, the Nazareans and the Ebionites. The Nazareans were not Gnostic. They tried to combine the Jewish law with the Christian gospel. The Ebionites were a far more radical group that came out of the Nazareans. They combined the Jewish law, the Christian gospel, and Gnosticism.

Epiphanius 30.1.1

"Following these [Nazareans] and holding the same views, Ebion, the Ebionites founder, emerged in

his turn - a monstrosity with many shapes, who practically formed the snake-like shape of the mythical many headed hydra in himself. He was of the Nazorean's school, but preached and taught differently from them."

Epiphanius 30.2.1

For Ebion was contemporary with the Nazoraeans, since he was their ally, was derived from them.

The Ebionites and Nazareans most likely originally used the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew earlier in their history around middle of the second century, then the Ebionites began changing it to coincide with their Jewish Gnostic views. Irenaeus who had not seen their Gospel assumed that the Ebionites used the pure form of the Gospel of Matthew because this is what they originally did. Even after they had corrupted it, they still claimed it was the Gospel of Matthew, which they also referred to as the Gospel of the Hebrews. Irenaeus lived as the Gospel of the Hebrews first emerged and was probably not familiar with it. Eventually, by the time of Jerome, the Nazareans had adopted the Gospel of the Hebrews as well.

Philip Schaff explains why Irenaeus may not have mentioned the use of the Gospel of the Hebrews by the Ebionites and how that fits into the history of the Gospel of the Hebrews when he writes, "Eusebius is the first to tell us that the Ebionites used the Gospel according to the Hebrews. Irenaeus says that they used the Gospel of Matthew, and the fact that he mentions no difference between it and the canonical Matthew shows that, so far as he knew, they were the same. But according to Eusebius, Jerome, and Epiphanius the Gospel according to the Hebrews was used by the Ebionites, and...this Gospel cannot have been identical with the canonical Matthew. Either, therefore, the Gospel used by the Ebionites in the time of Irenaeus, and called by him simply the Gospel of Matthew, was something different from the canonical Matthew, or else the Ebionites had given up the Gospel of Matthew for another and a different gospel..."

The former is much more probable, and the difficulty may be most simply explained by supposing that the Gospel according to the Hebrews is identical with the so-called Hebrew Gospel of Matthew, or at least that it passed among the earliest Jewish Christians under Matthew's name, and that Irenaeus, who was not personally acquainted with the sect, simply hearing that they used a Gospel of Matthew, naturally supposed it to be identical with the canonical Gospel. In the time of Jerome a Hebrew "Gospel according to the Hebrews" was used by the "Nazarenes and Ebionites" as the Gospel of Matthew. Jerome refrains from expressing his own judgment as to its authorship, but that he did not consider it in its existing form identical with the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew is clear from his words in *de vir. ill. [Illustrious Men]* chap. 3, taken in connection with the fact that he himself translated it into Greek and Latin, as he states in chap. 2...

But none of these facts militate against the assumption that the Gospel of the Hebrews in its original form was identical with the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew, or at least passed originally under this name among Jewish Christians...Moreover, it is quite conceivable that, in the course of time, the original Gospel according to the Hebrews underwent alterations, especially since it was in the hands of a sect which was growing constantly more heretical, and that, therefore, its resemblance to the canonical Matthew may have been even less in the time of Eusebius and Jerome than at the beginning."22

3. Epiphanius quotes a passage from the Gospel of the Hebrews that has incorporated parts of the synoptic gospels which evidences a date well into the second century.

Epiphanius 30.13.7

"And after saying a number of things, it adds, 'When the people had been baptized, Jesus came also and was baptized by John. And as he came up out of the water, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove which descended and entered into him. And (there came) a voice saying, 'Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.' And again: 'This day have I begotten thee.' And straightway a great light shone round about the place. 'Seeing this,' it says, John said unto him, 'Who art thou, Lord?' And again (there came) a voice from heaven, 'This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.'"

This passage from the Gospel of the Hebrews seeks to harmonize the different words of the voice coming from heaven in the synoptic gospels.

Matt.3:17 says,

"And a voice came from heaven, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'"

Mk.1:11 and Lu.3:22 says,

"And a voice came from heaven, which said, 'Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.'"

4. Jerone nentions a passage that calls Janes, the brother of the Lord, "the Just" which is a second century title for Janes.

The use of this title demonstrates that the Gospel of the Hebrews had to have been written after the use of this title became popular. Therefore, the Gospel of the Hebrews was written in the second century or beyond.

Jerome Lives Illustrious Men, 2

"The Gospel also which is called the Gospel according to the Hebrews, and which I have recently translated into Greek and Latin and which also Origen often makes use of, after the account of the resurrection of the Saviour says, 'but the Lord, after he had given his grave clothes to the servant of the priest, appeared to James (for James had sworn that he would not eat bread from that hour in which he drank the cup of the Lord until he should see him rising again from among those that sleep)' and again, a little later, it says 'Bring a table and bread,' said the Lord.' And immediately it is added, 'He brought bread and blessed and brake and gave to James the Just and said to him, 'my brother eat thy bread, for the son of man is risen from among those that sleep.'"

Grant, Freedman, and Scheodel, shares the age of this epithet,

"In this story, the author of Hebrews has managed to include several highly biased notions. First, he has made James the Just (a second century title for the Lord's brother) a guest at the Lord's Supper."²³

Orthodox Christians' Views of the Gospel of the Hebrews

1. The Gospel of the Hebrews was not perceived as a heretical work at the time of Clement, Origen and Eusebius.

Clement and Origen quote the Gospel of the Hebrews to support their points as seen in the quotes above, but they do not give it the same authority or credibility as the canonical gospels. However, they do not call it heretical either.

In regard to Origen's view of the Gospel of the Hebrews, Johann Michaelis writes, "It is more certain that Origen was acquainted with this Gospel, for he has sometimes quoted it in his Commentary on St. Matthew: but he did not receive it as the genuine work of an Apostle."²⁴

2. Eusebius says that the Gospel of the Hebrews was considered part of the disputed books, but Hebrew Christians used it.

Eusebius 3.25.3-5

"At this point it may be appropriate to list the New Testament writings already referred to. The holy quartet of the Gospels are first, followed by the Acts of the Apostles. Next are Paul's epistles, 1 John, and 1 Peter. The Revelation of John may be added, the arguments regarding which I shall discuss at the proper time. These are the recognized books. Those that are disputed yet known to most are the epistles called James, Jude, 2 Peter, and the so-named 2 and 3 John, the work of the Evangelist or of someone else with the same name.

Among the spurious books are the Acts of Paul, the Shepherd [of Hermas], the Revelation of Peter, the alleged epistle of Barnabas, the so-called Teachings of the Apostles [Didache], as well as the Revelation of John, if appropriate here: some reject it, others accept it, as stated before. In addition, some have included the Gospel of the Hebrews in the list, for which those Hebrews who have accepted Christ have a special fondness. These would all be classified with the disputed books, those not canonical yet familiar to most church writers, which I have listed separately in order to distinguish them from those writings that are true, genuine, and accepted in the tradition of the church.

Writings published by heretics under the names of the apostles, such as the Gospels of Peter, Thomas, Matthias, and others, or the Acts of Andrew, John, and other apostles have never been cited by any in the succession of church writers. The type of phraseology used contrasts with apostolic style, and the opinions and thrusts of their contents are so dissonant from true orthodoxy that they show themselves to be forgeries of heretics. Accordingly, they ought not be reckoned even among the spurious books but discarded as impious and absurd."

(Quote from Eusebius, Church History, Trans. Paul Maier, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI, 1999, 115)

Notice that Eusebius does not classify the Gospel of the Hebrews under the heretics' writings such as the Gospels of Peter or Thomas. He classifies it as part of the disputed books.

3. Epiphanius says that the Gospel of the Hebrews was heretical, a corrupted and mutilated version of the Gospel of Matthew.

Epiphanius, in his Panarion, called the Gospel of the Hebrews a forged and mutilated Gospel of Matthew, thus heretical. He gave evidence of its heretical nature by sharing passages taken from the Gospel of the Hebrews. Some of these passages have been already seen in the section of this article detailing the Gnostic teachings of the gospel.

Epiphanius 30.13.2

"In the Gospel that is in general use amongst them, which is called according to Matthew, which however is not whole (and) complete but forged and mutilated - they call it the Hebrew Gospel - it is reported..."

(Quote from New Testament Apocrypha, Vol. 1 Gospels and Related Writings, Ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher, Trans. R. McL. Wilson, Westminster John Knox Press 1990, 170)

4. Jerome quotes from the Gospel of the Hebrews and says it is thought to be the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew, but he never uses it in an authoritative way.

Jerome never used the Gospel of the Hebrews in his interpretation of the Gospel of Matthew and never chose one of its texts as a superior reading over the Greek Matthew.

When Jerome found two different readings between the Gospel of the Hebrews in Hebrew and the Gospel of Matthew in Greek, he did not use the reading from the Gospel of the Hebrews although he mentioned it.

In the Greek Gospel of Matthew, the text in a sentence in the Lord's prayer which says, "Give us this day our daily bread," the Greek word translated "daily" is "epiousion." The Gospel of the Hebrews had the Hebrew word "mahar" which means "of tomorrow." Jerome chose the Greek Gospel reading in translating his Latin text.

Johann Michaelis mentions this choice by Jerome,

"Jerome used the reading from the Greek Matthew over the reading from the Gospel of the Hebrews in regards to epiousion."25

Michaelis gives another example of Jerome not using the Gospel of the Hebrews to settle translation issues, "This answer applies with still greater force to another example quoted by Mill from Matthew 24:36. 'But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.' On this passage Jerome observes, that in some copies the words, 'nor the Son,' were added: but he does not appeal to the Hebrew Gospel to determine whether they were genuine. Now suppose he had found these words in the Hebrew Gospel, the question to be asked is: ought he, as a critic, to have used this as an argument in favour of their authenticity? Certainly not. For since many of the Nazarenes denied the divinity of Christ, and this very reading has been used as an argument against the divinity, Jerome must necessarily have suspected that it was one of the many additions, which had been made to the Hebrew Gospel."26

Michaelis shows by these two examples, that although Jerome seems to give some credibility to the Gospel of the Hebrews, he never gave it the same authenticity and authority of the Greek Gospel of Matthew.

The Lack of Consensus

This lack of consensus of the orthodox church regarding the Gospel of the Hebrews may have been due to the following reasons:

1) The language of Hebrew (Aramaic) in which it was written was not well known in the Mediterranean world and therefore it would only be read by a small group of Hebrew Christians. Many church leaders did not have an opinion about it because they never read it.

2) Its Gnostic parts are spread throughout the book and are given in a far more subtle form than the more obvious Gnostic Gospels such as the Gospel of Peter or Judas. Origen and Jerome tried to interpret its Gnostic statements to align with orthodox Christian doctrine.

3) The Nazareans and Ebionites were not as well-known in Irenaeus' and Eusebius' time as they were in the time of Epiphanius and Jerome. Many Christian leaders in the second century such as Irenaeus may have taken the Ebionites at their word, that they were using the Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew and not realized it had been changed.

4) It is only when the Ebionites became more and more radical in their Gnostic beliefs and a Christian leader such as Epiphanius investigated them and their Gospel of the Hebrews that its true nature became known. Then it was condemned as heretical.

For more scholarly support for the concept of the Gospel of the Hebrews as a severely corrupted version of the original Hebrew Gospel of Matthew, please see *The Disappearance of Matthew's Hebrew Gospel*.

The Book of Baruch (See the attached E-book)

The Questions of Bartholomew

Jerome, in the prologue to his Commentary on Matthew, mentions a number of apocryphal Gospels -those according to the Egyptians, Thomas, Matthias, Bartholomew, the Twelve, Basilides, and Apelles: probably he depends upon Origen, for he himself disliked and avoided apocryphal books, with few exceptions; the Gospel according to the Hebrews, for instance, he hardly reckoned as apocryphal. Of this Gospel of Bartholomew we have no sort of description: we find it condemned in the Gelasian Decree, which may mean either that the compiler of the Decree knew a book of that name, or that he took it on trust from Jerome. In the pseudo-Dionysian writings two sentences are quoted from 'the divine Bartholomew,' and a third has just been brought to light from the kindred 'book of Hierotheus'. But one cannot be sure that these writers are quoting real books.

We have, however, a writing attributed to Bartholomew which attained some popularity; the manuscripts do not call it a Gospel, but the Questions of Bartholomew. It contains ancient elements, and I think that MM. Wilmart and Tisserant have made out their claim that it at least represents the old Gospel. I therefore give a translation of it here.

It exists in three languages, and not, apparently, in a very original form in any of them: Greek is the original language, of which we have two manuscripts, at Vienna and Jerusalem; Latin 1, consisting of two leaves of extracts, of the ninth century; Latin 2, complete: see below; Slavonic (i-iv. 15). The Greek text may be as old as the fifth century; the Latin 2 of the sixth or seventh.

In the *Revue Biblique* for 1913 the Latin fragments and a fresh Greek text were published by MM. Wilmart and Tisserant, with the variants of the other authorities and in 1921-2 yet another text, a complete Latin one, appeared in the same periodical, edited by Professor Moricca from a manuscript in the Casanatensian library at Rome in which the text is, in parts, tremendously

expanded. This copy is of the eleventh century and came from the monastery of Monte Amiata. The Latin is exceedingly incorrect, and there are many corruptions, and interpolations which extend to whole pages of closely printed text. I cite it as Lat. 2.

I take the Greek and Slavonic, where they exist, as the basis of my version, and add some passages from the Latin. The main topics, common to two or more of the texts, are:

- i. The descent into Hell: the number of souls saved and lost.
- ii. The Virgin's account of the Annunciation.
- iii. The apostles see the bottomless pit.
- iv. The devil is summoned and gives an account of his doings.
- v. Questions about the deadly sins. Commission of the apostles to preach. Departure of Christ. (This reads like a late addition.)

GOSPEL (QUESTIONS) OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW

(the opening 3 verses are given from each of the three texts)

Greek. 1 After the resurrection from the dead of our Lord Jesus Christ, Bartholomew came unto the Lord and questioned him, saying: Lord, reveal unto me the mysteries of the heavens.

2 Jesus answered and said unto him: If I put off the body of the flesh, I shall not be able to tell them unto thee.

3 Om.

Slavonic. 1 Before the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, the apostles said: Let us question the Lord: Lord, reveal unto us the wonders.

2 And Jesus said unto them: If I put off the body of the flesh, I cannot tell them unto you.

3 But when he was buried and risen again, they all durst not question him, because it was not to look upon him, but the fullness of his Godhead was seen.

4 But Bartholomew, Cc.

Latin 2. At that time, before the Lord Jesus Christ suffered, all the disciples were gathered together, questioning him and saying: Lord, show us the mystery in the heavens.

2 But Jesus answered and said unto them: If I put not off the body of flesh I cannot tell you.

3 But after that he had suffered and risen again, all the apostles, looking upon him, durst not question him, because his countenance was not as it had been aforetime, but showed forth the fullness of power.

Greek. 4 Bartholomew therefore drew near unto the Lord and said: I have a word to speak unto thee, Lord.

5 And Jesus said to him: I know what thou art about to say; say then what thou wilt, and I will answer thee.

6 And Bartholomew said: Lord, when thou wentest to be hanged upon the cross, I followed thee afar off and saw thee hung upon the cross, and the angels coming down from heaven and worshipping thee. And when there came darkness, 7 I beheld, and I saw thee that thou wast vanished away from the cross and I heard only a voice in the parts under the earth, and great wailing and gnashing of teeth on a sudden. Tell me, Lord, whither wentest thou from the cross?

8 And Jesus answered and said: Blessed art thou, Bartholomew, my beloved, because thou sawest this mystery, and now will I tell thee all things whatsoever thou askest me. 9 For when I vanished away from the cross, then went I down into Hades that I might bring up Adam and all them that were with him, according to the supplication of Michael the archangel.

10 Then said Bartholomew: Lord, what was the voice which was heard?

11 Jesus saith unto him: Hades said unto Beliar: As I perceive, a God cometh hither. [*Slavonic and Latin 2 continue:*] And the angels cried unto the powers, saying: Remove your gates, ye princes, remove the everlasting doors, for behold the King of glory cometh down.

12 Hades said: Who is the King of glory, that cometh down from heaven unto us?

13 And when I had descended five hundred steps, Hades was troubled, saying: I hear the breathing of the Most High, and I cannot endure it. (latin 2. He cometh with great fragrance and I cannot bear it.) 14 But the devil answered and said: Submit not thyself, O Hades, but be strong: for God himself hath not descended upon the earth. 15 But when I had descended yet five hundred steps, the angels and the powers cried out: Take hold, remove the doors, for behold the King of glory cometh down. And Hades said: O, woe unto me, for I hear the breath of God.]

Greek. 16-17 And Beliar said unto Hades: Look carefully who it is that , for it is Elias, or Enoch, or one of the prophets that this man seemeth to me to be. But Hades answered Death and said: Not yet are six thousand years accomplished. And whence are these, O Beliar; for the sum of the number is in mine hands.

[*Slavonic.* 16 And the devil said unto Hades: Why affrightest thou me, Hades? it is a prophet, and he hath made himself like unto God: this prophet will we take and bring him hither unto those that think to ascend into heaven. 17 And Hades said: Which of the prophets is it? Show me: Is it Enoch the scribe of righteousness? But God hath not suffered him to come down upon the earth before the end of the six thousand years. Sayest thou that it is Elias, the avenger? But before he cometh not down. What shall I do, whereas the destruction is of God: for surely our end is at hand? For I have the number (of the years) in mine hands.]

Greek. 18 : Be not troubled, make safe thy gates and strengthen thy bars: consider, God cometh not down upon the earth.

19 Hades saith unto him: These be no good words that I hear from thee: my belly is rent, and mine inward parts are pained: it cannot be but that God cometh hither. Alas, whither shall I flee before the face of the power of the great king? Suffer me to enter into myself (thyself, Latin): for before (of, latin) thee was I formed.

20 Then did I enter in and scourged him and bound him with chains that cannot be loosed, and brought forth thence all the patriarchs and came again unto the cross.

21 Bartholomew saith unto him: [latin 2, I saw thee again, hanging upon the cross, and all the dead arising and worshipping thee, and going up again into their sepulchres.] Tell me, Lord, who was he whom the angels bare up in their hands, even that man that was very great of stature? [Slav., Latin. 2, And what spakest thou unto him that he sighed so sore?]

22 Jesus answered and said unto him: It was Adam the first-formed, for whose sake I came down from heaven upon earth. And I said unto him: I was hung upon the cross for thee and for thy children's sake. And he, when he heard it, groaned and said: So was thy good pleasure, O Lord.

23 Again Bartholomew said: Lord, I saw the angels ascending before Adam and singing praises.

24 But one of the angels which was very great, above the rest, would not ascend up with them: and there was in his hand a sword of fire, and he was looking steadfastly upon thee only.

[Slav. 25 And all the angels besought him that he would go up with them, but he would not. But when thou didst command him to go up, I beheld a flame of fire issuing out of his hands and going even unto the city of Jerusalem.

26 And Jesus said unto him: Blessed art thou, Bartholomew my beloved because thou sawest these mysteries. This was one of the angels of vengeance which stand before my Father's throne: and this angel sent he unto me.

27 And for this cause he would not ascend up, because he desired to destroy all the powers of the world. But when I commanded him to ascend up, there went a flame out of his hand and rent asunder the veil of the temple, and parted it in two pieces for a witness unto the children of Israel for my passion because they crucified me. (Lat. 1. But the flame which thou sawest issuing out of his hands smote the house of the synagogue of the Jews, for a testimony of me wherein they crucified me.)).

Greek. 28 And when he had thus spoken, he said unto the apostles: Tarry for me in this place, for today a sacrifice is offered in paradise. 29 And Bartholomew answered and said unto Jesus: Lord, what is the sacrifice which is offered in paradise? And Jesus said: There be souls of the righteous which to-day have departed out of the body and go unto paradise, and unless I be

30 And Bartholomew said: Lord, how many souls depart out of the world daily? Jesus saith unto him: Thirty thousand.

31 Bartholomew saith unto him: Lord, when thou wast with us teaching the word, didst thou receive the sacrifices in paradise? Jesus answered and said unto him: Verily I say unto thee, my beloved, that I both taught the word with you and continually sat with my Father, and received the sacrifices in paradise everyday. 32 Bartholomew answered and said unto him: Lord, if thirty thousand souls depart out of the world every day, how many souls out of them are found righteous? Jesus saith unto him: Hardly fifty [three] my beloved. 33 Again Bartholomew saith: And how do three only enter into paradise? Jesus saith unto him: The [fifty] three enter into paradise or are laid up in Abraham's bosom: but the others go into the place of the resurrection, for the three are not like unto the fifty.

34 Bartholomew saith unto him: Lord, how many souls above the number are born into the world daily? Jesus saith unto him: One soul only is born above the number of them that depart.[30, Cc., Latin 1. Bartholomew said: How many are the souls which depart out of the body every day? Jesus said: Verily I say unto thee, twelve (thousand) eight hundred, four score and three souls depart out of the body every day.]

35 And when he had said this he gave them the peace, and vanished away from them.

II

1 Now the apostles were in the place [Cherubim, Cheltoura, Chritir] with Mary.

2 And Bartholomew came and said unto Peter and Andrew and John: Let us ask her that is highly favoured how she conceived the incomprehensible, or how she bare him that cannot be carried, or how she brought forth so much greatness. But they doubted to ask her.

3 Bartholomew therefore said unto Peter: Thou that art the chief, and my teacher, draw near and ask her. But Peter said to John: Thou art a virgin and undefiled (and beloved) and thou must ask her.

4 And as they all doubted and disputed, Bartholomew came near unto her with a cheerful countenance and said to her: Thou that art highly favoured, the tabernacle of the Most High, unblemished we, even all the apostles, ask thee (or All the apostles have sent me to ask thee) to tell us how thou didst conceive the incomprehensible, or how thou didst bear him that cannot be

5 But Mary said unto them: Ask me not (or Do ye indeed ask me) concerning this mystery. If I should begin to tell you, fire will issue forth out of my mouth and consume all the world.

6 But they continued yet the more to ask her. And she, for she could not refuse to hear the apostles, said: Let us stand up in prayer.

7 And the apostles stood behind Mary: but she said unto Peter: Peter, thou chief, thou great pillar, standest thou behind us? Said not our Lord: the head of the man is Christ ? now therefore stand ye before me and pray.

8 But they said unto her: In thee did the Lord set his tabernacle, and it was his good pleasure that thou shouldest contain him, and thou oughtest to be the leader in the prayer (al. to go with us to).

9 But she said unto them: Ye are shining stars, and as the prophet said, 'I did lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence shall come mine help'; ye, therefore, are the hills, and it behoveth you to pray.

10 The apostles say unto her: Thou oughtest to pray, thou art the mother of the heavenly king.

11 Mary saith unto them: In your likeness did God form the sparrows, and sent them forth into the four corners of the world.

12 But they say unto her: He that is scarce contained by the

13 Then Mary stood up before them and spread out her hands toward the heaven and began to speak thus: Elphue Zarethra Charboum Nemioth Melitho Thraboutha Mephnounos Chemiath Aroua Maridon Elison Marmiadon Seption Hesaboutha Ennouna Saktinos Athoor Belelam Opheoth

Abo Chrasar (this is the reading of one Greek copy: the others and the Slavonic have many differences as in all such cases: but as the original words-assuming them to have once had a meaning-are hopelessly corrupted, the matter is not of importance), which is in the Greek tongue(Hebrew, Slav.): O God the exceeding great and all-wise and king of the worlds (ages), that art not to be described, the ineffable, that didst establish the greatness of the heavens and all things by a word, that out of darkness (or the unknown) didst constitute and fasten together the poles of heaven in harmony, didst bring into shape the matter that was in confusion, didst bring into order the things that were without order, didst part the misty darkness from the light, didst establish in one place the foundations of the waters, thou that makest the beings of the air to tremble, and art the fear of them that are on (or under) the earth, that didst settle the earth and not suffer it to perish, and filledst it, which is the nourisher of all things, with showers of blessing: (Son of) the Father, thou whom the seven heavens hardly contained, but who wast well-pleased to be contained without pain in me, thou that art thyself the full word of the Father in whom all things came to be: give glory to thine exceeding great name, and bid me to speak before thy holy

14 And when she had ended the prayer she began to say unto them: Let us sit down upon the ground; and come thou, Peter the chief, and sit on my right hand and put thy left hand beneath mine armpit; and thou, Andrew, do so on my left hand; and thou, John, the virgin, hold together my bosom; and thou, Bartholomew, set thy knees against my back and hold my shoulders, lest when I begin to speak my bones be loosed one from another.

15 And when they had so done she began to say: When I abode in the temple of God and received my food from an angel, on a certain day there appeared unto me one in the likeness of an angel, but his face was incomprehensible, and he had not in his hand bread or a cup, as did the angel which came to me aforetime.

16 And straightway the robe (veil) of the temple was rent and there was a very great earthquake, and I fell upon the earth, for I was not able to endure the sight of him.

17 But he put his hand beneath me and raised me up, and I looked up into heaven and there came a cloud of dew and sprinkled me from the head to the feet, and he wiped me with his robe.

18 And said unto me: Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the chosen vessel, grace inexhaustible. And he smote his garment upon the right hand and there came a very great loaf, and he set it upon the altar of the temple and did eat of it first himself, and gave unto me also.

19 And again he smote his garment upon the left hand and there came a very great cup full of wine: and he set it upon the altar of the temple and did drink of it first himself, and gave also unto me. And I beheld and saw the bread and the cup whole as they were.

20 And he said unto me: Yet three years, and I will send my word unto thee and then shalt conceive my (or a) son, and through him shall the whole creation be saved. Peace be unto

21 And when he had so said he vanished away from mine eyes, and the temple was restored as it had been before.

22 And as she was saying this, fire issued out of her mouth; and the world was at the point to come to an end: but Jesus appeared quickly (lat. 2, and laid his hand upon her mouth) and said unto

Mary: Utter not this mystery, or this day my whole creation will come to an end (Lat. 2, and the flame from her mouth ceased). And the apostles were taken with fear lest haply the Lord should be wroth with them.

III

1 And he departed with them unto the mount Mauria

(Lat. 2, Mambre), and sat in the midst of them. 2 But they doubted to question him, being afraid.

3 And Jesus answered and said unto them: Ask me what ye will that I should teach you, and I will show it you. For yet seven days, and I ascend unto my Father, and I shall no more be seen of you in this likeness.

4 But they, yet doubting, said unto him: Lord, show us the deep (abyss) according unto thy promise.

5 And Jesus said unto them: It is not good (Lat. 2, is good) for you to see the deep: notwithstanding, if ye desire it, according to my promise, come, follow me and behold.

6 And he led them away into a place that is called Cherubim (Cherukt Slav., Chairoudee Gr., Lat. 2 omits), that is the place of truth.

7 And he beckoned unto the angels of the West and the earth was rolled up like a volume of a book and the deep was revealed unto them.

8 And when the apostles saw it they fell on their faces upon the earth.

9 But Jesus raised them up, saying: Said I not unto you, 'It is not good for you to see the deep'. And again he beckoned unto the angels, and the deep was covered up.

IV

1 And he took them and brought them again unto the Mount of olives.

2 And Peter said unto Mary: Thou that art highly favoured, entreat the Lord that he would reveal unto us the things that are in the heavens.

3 And Mary said unto Peter: O stone hewn out of the rock, did not the Lord build his church upon thee? Go thou therefore first and ask him.

4 Peter saith again: O tabernacle that art spread abroad . 5 Mary saith: Thou art the image of Adam: was not he first formed and then Eve? Look upon the sun, that according to the likeness of Adam it is bright. and upon the moon, that because of the transgression of Eve it is full of clay. For God did place Adam in the east and Eve in the west, and appointed the lights that the sun should shine on the earth unto Adam in the east in his fiery chariots, and the moon in the west should give light unto Eve with a countenance like milk. And she defiled the commandment of the Lord. Therefore was the moon stained with clay (Lat. 2, is cloudy) and her light is not bright. Thou therefore, since thou art the likeness of Adam, oughtest to ask him: but in me was he contained that I might recover the strength of the female.

6 Now when they came up to the top of the mount, and the Master was withdrawn from them a little space, Peter saith unto Mary: Thou art she that hast brought to nought the transgression of Eve, changing it from shame into joy; it is lawful, therefore, for thee to ask.

7 When Jesus appeared again, Bartholomew saith unto him: Lord, show us the adversary of men that we may behold him, of what fashion he is, and what is his work, and whence he cometh forth, and what power he hath that he spared not even thee, but caused thee to be hanged upon the tree.

8 But Jesus looked upon him and said: Thou bold heart! thou askest for that which thou art not able to look upon.

9 But Bartholomew was troubled and fell at Jesus' feet and began to speak thus: O lamp that cannot be quenched, Lord Jesus Christ, maker of the eternal light that hast given unto them that love thee the grace that beautifieth all, and hast given us the eternal light by thy coming into the world, that hast accomplished the work of the Father, hast turned the shame-facedness of Adam into mirth, hast done away the sorrow of Eve with a cheerful countenance by thy birth from a virgin: remember not evil against me but grant me the word of mine asking. (Lat. 2, who didst come down into the world, who hast confirmed the eternal word of the Father, who hast called the sadness of joy, who hast made the shame of Eve glad, and restored her by vouchsafing to be contained in the womb.)

10 And as he thus spake, Jesus raised him up and said unto him: Bartholomew, wilt thou see the adversary of men? I tell thee that when thou beholdest him, not thou only but the rest of

11 But they all said unto him: Lord, let us behold him.

12 And he led them down from the Mount of Olives and looked wrathfully upon the angels that keep hell (Tartarus), and beckoned unto Michael to sound the trumpet in the height of the heavens. And Michael sounded, and the earth shook, and Beliar came up, being held by 660 (560 Gr., 6,064 Lat. 1, 6,060 Lat. 2) angels and bound with fiery chains. 12 And the length of him was 1,600 cubits and his breadth 40 (Lat. 1, 300, Slav. 17) cubits (Lat. 2, his length 1,900 cubits, his breadth 700, one wing of him 80), and his face was like a lightning of fire and his eyes full of darkness (like sparks, Slav.). And out of his nostrils came a stinking smoke; and his mouth was as the gulf of a precipice, and the one of his wings was four-score cubits.

14 And straightway when the apostles saw him, they fell to the earth on their faces and became as dead.

15 But Jesus came near and raised the apostles and gave them a spirit of power, and he saith unto Bartholomew: Come near, Bartholomew, and trample with thy feet on his neck, and he will tell thee his work, what it is, and how he deceiveth men.

16 And Jesus stood afar off with the rest of the apostles.

17 And Bartholomew feared, and raised his voice and said: Blessed be the name of thine immortal kingdom from henceforth even for ever. And when he had spoken, Jesus permitted him, saying: Go and tread upon the neck of Beliar: and Bartholomew ran quickly upon him and trode upon his neck: and Beliar trembled. (For this verse the Vienna MS. has: And Bartholomew raised his voice and said thus: O womb more spacious than a city, wider than the spreading of the heavens, that contained

him whom the seven heavens contain not, but thou without pain didst contain sanctified in thy bosom, Cc.: evidently out of place. Latin 1 has only: Then did Antichrist tremble and was filled with fury.)

18 And Bartholomew was afraid, and fled, and said unto Jesus: Lord, give me an hem of thy garments (Lat. 2, the kerchief (?) from thy shoulders) that I may have courage to draw near unto him.

19 But Jesus said unto him: Thou canst not take an hem of my garments, for these are not my garments which I wore before I was crucified.

20 And Bartholomew said: Lord, I fear lest, like as he spared not thine angels, he swallow me up also.

21 Jesus saith unto him: Were not all things made by my word, and by the will of my Father the spirits were made subject unto Solomon? thou, therefore, being commanded by my word, go in my name and ask him what thou wilt. (lat. 2 omits 20.)

22 [And Bartholomew made the sign of the cross and prayed unto Jesus and went behind him. And Jesus said to him: Draw near. And as Bartholomew drew near, fire was kindled on every side, so that his garments appeared fiery. Jesus saith to Bartholomew: As I said unto thee, tread upon his neck and ask him what is his power.] And Bartholomew went and trode upon his neck, and pressed down his face into the earth as far as his ears.

23 And Bartholomew saith unto him: Tell me who thou art and what is thy name. And he said to him: Lighten me a little, and I will tell thee who I am and how I came hither, and what my work is and what my power is.

24 And he lightened him and saith to him: Say all that thou hast done and all that thou doest.

25 And Beliar answered and said: If thou wilt know my name, at the first I was called Satanael, which is interpreted a messenger of God, but when I rejected the image of God my name was called Satanas, that is, an angel that keepeth hell (Tartarus).

26 And again Bartholomew saith unto him: Reveal unto me all things and hide nothing from me.

27 And he said unto him: I swear unto thee by the power of the glory of God that even if I would hide aught I cannot, for he is near that would convict me. For if I were able I would have destroyed you like one of them that were before you.

28 For, indeed, I was formed (al. called) the first angel: for when God made the heavens, he took a handful of fire and formed me first, Michael second [Vienna MS. here has these sentences: for he had his Son before the heavens and the earth and we were formed (for when he took thought to create all things, his Son spake a word), so that we also were created by the will of the Son and the consent of the Father. He formed, I say, first me, next Michael the chief captain of the hosts that are above], Gabriel third, Uriel fourth, Raphael fifth, Nathanael sixth, and other angels of whom I cannot tell the names. [Jerusalem MS., Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Uriel, Xathanael, and other 6,000 angels. Lat. 1, Michael the honour of power, third Raphael, fourth Gabriel, and other seven. Lat. 2, Raphael third, Gabriel fourth, Uriel fifth, Zathael sixth, and other six.] For they are the rod-

bearers (lictors) of God, and they smite me with their rods and pursue me seven times in the night and seven times in the day, and leave me not at all and break in pieces all my power. These are the (twelve, lat. 2) angels of vengeance which stand before the throne of God: these are the angels that were first formed.

30 And after them were formed all the angels. In the first heaven are an hundred myriads, and in the second an hundred myriads, and in the third an hundred myriads, and in the fourth an hundred myriads, and in the fifth an hundred myriads, and in the sixth an hundred myriads, and in the seventh (an hundred myriads, and outside the seven heavens, Jerusalem MS.) is the first firmament (flat surface) wherein are the powers which work upon men.

31 For there are four other angels set over the winds. The first angel is over the north, and he is called Chairoum (. . . broil, Jerusalem MS.; lat. 2, angel of the north, Mauch), and hath in his hand a rod of fire, and restraineth the super-fluity of moisture that the earth be not overmuch wet.

32 And the angel that is over the north is called Oertha (Lat. 2, Alfatha): he hath a torch of fire and putteth it to his sides, and they warm the great coldness of him that he freeze not the world.

33 And the angel that is over the south is called Kerkoutha (Lat. 2, Cedar) and they break his fierceness that he shake not the earth.

34 And the angel that is over the south-west is called Naoutha, and he hath a rod of snow in his hand and putteth it into his mouth, and quencheth the fire that cometh out of his mouth. And if the angel quenched it not at his mouth it would set all the world on fire.

35 And there is another angel over the sea which maketh it rough with the waves thereof.

36 But the

37 Bartholomew saith unto him: Flow chastisest thou the souls of men? 38 Beliar saith unto him: Wilt thou that I declare unto thee the punishment of the hypocrites, of the back-biters, of the jesters, of the idolaters, and the covetous, and the adulterers, and the wizards, and the diviners, and of them that believe in us, and of all whom I look upon (deceive?)?

(38 Lat. 2: When I will show any illusion by them. But they that do these things, and they that consent unto them or follow them, do perish with me.

39 Bartholomew said unto him: Declare quickly how thou persuadest men not to follow God and thine evil arts, that are slippery and dark, that they should leave the straight and shining paths of the Lord.) 39 Bartholomew saith unto him: I will that thou declare it in few words.

40 And he smote his teeth together, gnashing them, and there came up out of the bottomless pit a wheel having a sword flashing with fire, and in the sword were pipes.

41 And I (he) asked him, saying: What is this sword?

42 And he said: This sword is the sword of the gluttonous: for into this pipe are sent they that through their gluttony devise all manner of sin; into the second pipe are sent the backbiters which backbite their neighbour secretly; into the third pipe are sent the hypocrites and the rest whom I overthrow by my contrivance. (Lat. 2:40 And Antichrist said: I will tell thee. And a wheel came up out

of the abyss, having seven fiery knives. The first knife hath twelve pipes (canales) . . . 42 Antichrist answered: The pipe of fire in the first knife, in it are put the casters of lots and diviners and enchanter, and they that believe in them or have sought them, because in the iniquity of their heart they have invented false divinations. In the second pipe of fire are first the blasphemers ... suicides ... idolaters.... In the rest are first perjurers . . . (long enumeration).)

43 And Bartholomew said: Dost thou then do these things by thyself alone?

44 And Satan said: If I were able to go forth by myself, I would have destroyed the whole world in three days: but neither I nor any of the six hundred go forth. For we have other swift ministers whom we command, and we furnish them with an hook of many points and send them forth to hunt, and they catch for us souls of men, enticing them with sweetness of divers baits, that is by drunkenness and laughter, by backbiting, hypocrisy, pleasures, fornication, and the rest of the

45 And I will tell thee also the rest of the names of the angels. The angel of the hail is called Mermeoth, and he holdeth the hail upon his head, and my ministers do adjure him and send him whither they will. And other angels are there over the snow, and other over the thunder, and other over the lightning, and when any spirit of us would go forth either by land or by sea, these angels send forth fiery stones and set our limbs on fire. (Lat. 2 enumerates all the transgressions

46 Bartholomew saith: Be still (be muzzled) thou dragon of the pit.

47 And Beliar said: Many things will I tell thee of the angels. They that run together throughout the heavenly places and the earthly are these: Mermeoth, Onomatath, Douth, Melioth, Charouth, Graphathas, Oethra, Nephonos, Chalkatoura. With them do fly (are administered?) the things that are in heaven and on earth and under the earth.

48 Bartholomew saith unto him: Be still (be muzzled) and be faint, that I may entreat my Lord.

49 And Bartholomew fell upon his face and cast earth upon his head and began to say: O Lord Jesu Christ, the great and glorious name. All the choirs of the angels praise thee, O Master, and I that am unworthy with my lips . . . do praise thee, O Master. Hearken unto me thy servant, and as thou didst choose me from the receipt of custom and didst not suffer me to have my conversation unto the end in my former deeds, O Lord Jesu Christ, hearken unto me and have mercy upon the sinners.

50 And when he had so said, the Lord saith unto him: Rise up, suffer him that groaneth to arise: I will declare the rest unto thee.

51 And Bartholomew raised up Satan and said unto him: Go unto thy place, with thine angels, but the Lord hath mercy upon all his world. (50, 51, again enormously amplified in lat. 2. Satan complains that he has been tricked into telling his secrets before the time. The interpolation is to some extent dated by this sentence: ' Simon Magus and Zaroos and Arfaxir and Jannes and Mambres are my brothers.' Zaroos and Arfaxatare wizards who figure in the Latin Acts of Matthew and of Simon and Jude (see below).

52 But the devil said: Suffer me, and I will tell thee how I was cast down into this place and how the Lord did make man.

53 I was going to and fro in the world, and God said unto Michael: Bring me a clod from the four corners of the earth, and water out of the four rivers of paradise. And when Michael brought them God formed Adam in the regions of the east, and shaped the clod which was shapeless, and stretched sinews and veins upon it and established it with Joints; and he worshipped him, himself for his own sake first, because he was the image of God, therefore he worshipped him.

54 And when I came from the ends of the earth Michael said: Worship thou the image of God, which he hath made according to his likeness. But I said: I am fire of fire, I was the first angel formed, and shall worship clay and matter?

55 And Michael saith to me: Worship, lest God be wroth with thee. But I said to him: God will not be wroth with me; but I will set my throne over against his throne, and I will be as he is. Then was God wroth with me and cast me down, having commanded the windows of heaven to be opened.

56 And when I was cast down, he asked also the six hundred that were under me, if they would worship: but they said: Like as we have seen the first angel do, neither will we worship him that is less than ourselves. Then were the six hundred also cast down by him with me.

57 And when we were cast down upon the earth we were senseless for forty years, and when the sun shone forth seven times brighter than fire, suddenly I awaked; and I looked about and saw the six hundred that were under me senseless.

58 And I awaked my son Salpsan and took him to counsel how I might deceive the man on whose account I was cast out of the heavens.

59 And thus did I contrive it. I took a vial in mine hand and scraped the sweat from off my breast and the hair of mine armpits, and washed myself (Lat. 2, I took fig leaves in my hands and wiped the sweat from my bosom and below mine arms and cast it down beside the streams of waters. 69 is greatly prolonged in this text) in the springs of the waters whence the four rivers flow out, and Eve drank of it and desire came upon her: for if she had not drunk of that water I should not have been able to deceive her.

61 And Bartholomew came and fell at Jesus' feet and began with tears to say thus: Abba, Father, that art past finding out by us, Word of the Father, whom the seven heavens hardly contained, but who wast pleased to be contained easily and without pain within the body of the Virgin: whom the Virgin knew not that she bare: thou by thy thought hast ordained all things to be: thou givest us that which we need before thou art entreated.

62 Thou that didst wear a crown of thorns that thou mightest prepare for us that repent the precious crown from heaven; that didst hang upon the tree, that (a clause gone): (lat. 2, that thou mightest turn from us the tree of lust and concupiscence (etc., etc.). The verse is prolonged for over 40 lines) (that didst drink wine mingled with gall) that thou mightest give us to drink of the wine of compunction, and wast pierced in the side with a spear that thou mightest fill us with thy body and thy blood:

63 Thou that gavest names unto the four rivers: to the first Phison, because of the faith (pistis) which thou didst appear in the world to preach; to the second Geon, for that man was made of earth (ge); to the third Tigris, because by thee was revealed unto us the consubstantial Trinity in the

heavens (to make anything of this we must read Trigris); to the fourth Euphrates, because by thy presence in the world thou madest every soul to rejoice (euphranai) through the word of immortality.

64 My God, and Father, the greatest, my King: save, Lord, the sinners.

65 When he had thus prayed Jesus said unto him: Bartholomew, my Father did name me Christ, that I might come down upon earth and anoint every man that cometh unto me with the oil of life: and he did call me Jesus that I might heal every sin of them that know not . . . and give unto men (several corrupt words: the

66 And again Bartholomew saith unto him: Lord, is it lawful for me to reveal these mysteries unto every man? Jesus saith unto him: Bartholomew, my beloved, as many as are faithful and are able to keep them unto themselves, to them mayest thou entrust these things. For some there are that be worthy of them, but there are also other some unto whom it is not fit to entrust them: for they are vain (swaggerers), drunkards, proud, unmerciful, partakers in idolatry, authors of fornication, slanderers, teachers of foolishness, and doing all works that are of the devil, and therefore are they not worthy that these should be entrusted to them.

68 And also they are secret, because of those that cannot contain them; for as many as can contain them shall have a part in them. Herein (Hitherto?) therefore, my beloved, have I spoken unto thee, for blessed art thou and all thy kindred which of their choice have this word entrusted unto them; for all they that of my judgement.

69 Then I, Bartholomew, which wrote these things in mine heart, took hold on the hand of

Glory be to thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, that givest unto all thy grace which all we have perceived. Alleluia.

Glory be to thee, O Lord, the life of sinners.

Glory be to thee, O Lord, death is put to shame.

Glory be to thee, O Lord, the treasure of righteousness.

For unto God do we sing.

70 And as Bartholomew thus spake again, Jesus put off his mantle and took a kerchief from the neck of Bartholomew and began to rejoice and say (70 lat. 2, Then Jesus took a kerchief (?) I and said: I am good: mild and gracious and merciful, strong and righteous, wonderful and holy): I am good. Alleluia. I am meek and gentle. Alleluia. Glory be to thee, O Lord: for I give gifts unto all them that desire me. Alleluia.

Glory be to thee, O Lord, world without end. Amen. Alleluia.

71 And when he had ceased, the apostles kissed him, and he gave them the peace of love.

VI

1 Bartholomew saith unto him: Declare unto us, Lord what sin is heavier than all sins?

2 Jesus saith unto him: Verily I say unto thee that hypocrisy and backbiting is heavier than all sins: for because of them, the prophet said in the psalm, that 'the ungodly shall not rise in the judgement, neither sinners in the council of the righteous', neither the ungodly in the judgement of my Father. Verily, verily, I say unto you, that every sin shall be forgiven unto every man, but the sin against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven.

3 And Bartholomew saith unto him: What is the sin against the Holy Ghost?

4 Jesus saith unto him: Whosoever shall decree against any man that hath served my holy Father hath blasphemed against the Holy Ghost: For every man that serveth God worshipfully is worthy of the Holy Ghost, and he that speaketh anything evil against him shall not be forgiven.

5 Woe unto him that sweareth by the head of God, yea woe (?) to him that sweareth falsely by him truly. For there are twelve heads of God the most high: for he is the truth, and in him is no lie, neither forswearing.

6 Ye, therefore, go ye and preach unto all the world the word of truth, and thou, Bartholomew, preach this word unto every one that desireth it; and as many as

7 Bartholomew saith: O Lord, and if any sin with sin of the body, what is their reward?

8 And Jesus said: It is good if he that is baptized present his baptism blameless: but the pleasure of the flesh will become a lover. For a single marriage belongeth to sobriety: for verily I say unto thee, he that sinneth after the third marriage (wife) is unworthy of God. (8 Lat. 2 is to this effect: . . . But if the lust of the flesh come upon him, he ought to be the husband of one wife. The married, if they are good and pay tithes, will receive a hundredfold. A second marriage is lawful, on condition of the diligent performance of good works, and due payment of tithes: but a third marriage is reprobated: and virginity is best.)

9 But ye, preach ye unto every man that they keep themselves from such things: for I depart not from you and I do supply you with the Holy Ghost. (lat. 2, At the end of 9, Jesus ascends in the clouds, and two angels appear and say: 'Ye men of Galilee', and the rest)

10 And Bartholomew worshipped him with the apostles, and glorified God earnestly, saying: Glory be to thee, Holy Father, Sun unquenchable, incomprehensible, full of light. Unto thee be glory, unto thee honour and adoration, world without end. Amen. (Lat. 2, End of the questioning of the most blessed Bartholomew and (or) the other apostles with the Lord Jesus Christ.)

THE BOOK OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST BY BARTHOLOMEW THE APOSTLE

Introduction: This exists in Coptic only. There are several recessions of it: the most complete is in a manuscript recently acquired by the British Museum (Or. 6804), and translated first by W. E. Crum (Rustafjaell's light of Egypt, 1910) and then edited and translated by Sir E. A. Wallis Budge (Coptic Apocrypha in the dialect of Upper Egypt, 1913). Other fragments are in the publications of Lacau and Revillout. No full translation, but only an analysis, will be offered here. Five leaves are wanting at the beginning of the British Museum MS. The contents of these can be partly filled up from Lacau and Revillout. But in the first place a passage (p. 193, Budge) may be quoted which shows something of the setting of the book: 'Do not let this book come into the hand of any man who is an

unbeliever and a heretic. Behold this is the seventh time that I have commanded thee, O my son Thaddaeus, concerning these mysteries. Reveal not thou them to any impure man, but keep them safely. ' We see that the book was addressed by Bartholomew to his son Thaddaeus, and this would no doubt have been the subject of some of the opening lines of the

Next we may place the two fragments, one about the child of Joseph of Arimathaea, the other about the cock raised to life, which have been already described as nos. 7 and 8 of the Coptic narratives of the Passion (pp. 149, 150). The order is uncertain. Then we have a piece which in Revillout is no. 12 (p. 165), in Lacauno. 3 (p. 34). Lacau gives it partly in two recessions.

Christ is on the cross, but his side has been pierced, and he is dead.

A man in the crowd named Ananias, of Bethlehem, rushes to the cross and embraces and salutes the body breast to breast, hand to hand, and denounces the Jews. A voice comes from the body of Jesus and blesses Ananias, promising him incorruption and the name of ' the first fruits of the immortal fruit '. The priests decide to stone Ananias: he utters words of exultation. The stoning produces no effect. They cast him into a furnace where he remains till Jesus has risen. At last they pierce him with a spear.

The Saviour takes his soul to heaven, and blesses him.

There can be but little matter lost between this and the opening of the British Museum MS., in the first lines of which the taking of Ananias' soul to heaven is mentioned.

We now take up the British Museum MS. as our basis. Certain passages of it are preserved in Paris fragments which partly overlap each other, and so three different texts exist for some parts: but it will not be important for our purpose to note many of the variations.

Joseph of Arimathaea buried the body of Jesus. Death came into Amente (the underworld), asking who the new arrival was, for he detected a disturbance.

He came to the tomb of Jesus with his six sons in the form of serpents. Jesus lay there (it was the second day, i. e. the Saturday) with his face and head covered with napkins.

Death addressed his son the Pestilence, and described the commotion which had taken place in his domain. Then he spoke to the body of Jesus and asked, 'Who art thou?' Jesus removed the napkin that was on his face and looked in the face of Death and laughed at him. Death and his sons fled. Then they approached again, and the same thing happened. He addressed Jesus again at some length, suspecting, but not certain, who he was.

Then Jesus rose and mounted into the chariot of the Cherubim. He wrought havoc in Hell, breaking the doors, binding the demons Beliar and Melkir (cf. Melkira in the Ascension of Isaiah), and delivered Adam and the holy souls.

Then he turned to Judas Iscariot and uttered a long rebuke, and described the sufferings which he must endure. Thirty names of sins are given, which are the snakes which were sent to devour him.

Jesus rose from the dead, and Abbaton (Death) and Pestilence came back to Amente to protect it, but they found it wholly desolate, only three souls were left in it (those of Herod, Cain, and Judas, says the Paris MS.).

Meanwhile the angels were singing the hymn which the Seraphim sing at dawn on the Lord's day over his body and his blood.

Early in the morning of the Lord's day the women went to the tomb. They were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James whom Jesus delivered out of the hand of Satan, Salome who tempted him, Mary who ministered to him and Martha her sister, Joanna (al. Susanna) the wife of Chuza who had renounced the marriage bed, Berenice who was healed of an issue of blood in Capernaum, Lia (Leah) the widow whose son he raised at Nain, and the woman to whom he said, 'Thy sins which are many are forgiven thee'.

These were all in the garden of Philogenes, whose son Simeon Jesus healed when he came down from the Mount of Olives with the apostles (probably the lunatic boy at the Mount of Transfiguration).

Mary said to Philogenes: If thou art indeed he, I know thee. Philogenes said: Thou art Mary the mother of Thalkamarimath, which means joy, blessing, and gladness. Mary said: If thou have borne him away, tell me where thou hast laid him and I will take him away: fear not. Philogenes told how the Jews sought a safe tomb for Jesus that the body might not be stolen, and he offered to place it in a tomb in his own garden and watch over it: and they sealed it and departed. At midnight he rose and went out and found all the orders of angels: Cherubim Seraphim, Powers, and Virgins. Heaven opened, and the Father raised Jesus. Peter, too, was there and supported Philogenes, or he would have died.

The Saviour then appeared to them on the chariot of the Father and said to Mary: Mari Khar Mariath (Mary the mother of the Son of God). Mary answered: Rabbouni Kathiathari Mioth (The Son of God the Almighty, my Lord, and my Son.). A long address to Mary from Jesus follows, in the course of which he bids her tell his brethren, 'I ascend unto my Father and your Father', Cc. Mary says: If indeed I am not permitted to touch thee, at least bless my body in which thou didst deign to dwell.

Believe me, my brethren the holy apostles, I, Bartholomew beheld the Son of God on the chariot of the Cherubim. All the heavenly hosts were about him. He blessed the body of Mary.

She went and gave the message to the apostles, and Peter blessed her, and they rejoiced.

Jesus and the redeemed souls ascended into Heaven, and the Father crowned him. The glory of this scene Bartholomew could not describe. It is here that he enjoins his son Thaddaeus not to let this book fall into the hands of the impure (quoted above).

Then follows a series of hymns sung in heaven, eight in all, which accompany the reception of Adam and the other holy souls into glory. Adam was eighty cubits high and Eve fifty. They were brought to the Father by Michael. Bartholomew had never seen anything to compare with the beauty and Glory of Adam, save that of Jesus. Adam was forgiven, and all the angels and saints rejoiced and saluted him, and departed each to their place.

Adam was set at the gate of life to greet all the righteous as they enter, and Eve was set over all the women who had done the will of God, to greet them as they come into the city of Christ.

As for me, Bartholomew, I remained many days without food or drink, nourished by the glory of the vision.

The apostles thanked and blessed Bartholomew for what he had told them: he should be called the apostle of the mysteries of God. But he protested: I am the least of you all, a humble workman. Will not the people of the city say when they see me, 'Is not this Bartholomew the man of Italy, the gardener the dealer in vegetables? Is not this the man that dwelleth in the garden of Hierocrates the governor of our city? How has he attained this greatness?

The next words introduce a new section.

At the time when Jesus took us up into the Mount of Olives he spoke to us in an unknown tongue, which he revealed to us, saying: Anetharath (or Atharath Thaurath). The heavens were opened and we all went up into the seventh heaven (so the London MS.: in the Paris copy only Jesus went up, and the apostles gazed after him). He prayed the Father to bless us.

The Father, with the Son and the Holy Ghost, laid His hand on the head of Peter (and made him archbishop of the whole world: Paris B). All that is bound or loosed by him on earth shall be so in heaven; none who is not ordained by him shall be accepted. Each of the apostles was separately blessed (there are omissions of single names in one or other of the three texts). Andrew, James, John, Philip (the cross will precede him wherever he goes), Thomas, Bartholomew (he will be the depositary of the mysteries of the Son), Matthew (his shadow will heal the sick) James son of Alphaeus, Simon Zelotes, Judas of James, Thaddeus, Matthias who was rich and left all to follow Jesus).

And now, my brethren the apostles, forgive me: I, Bartholomew, am not a man to be honoured.

The apostles kissed and blessed him. And then, with Mary, they offered the Eucharist.

The Father sent the Son down into Galilee to console the apostles and Mary: and he came and blessed them and showed them his wounds, and committed them to the care of Peter, and gave them their commission to preach. They kissed his side and sealed themselves with the blood that flowed thence. He went up to heaven.

Thomas was not with them, for he had departed to his city, hearing that his son Siophanes (Theophanes?) was dead: it was the seventh day since the death when he arrived. He went to the tomb and raised him in the name of Jesus.

Siophanes told him of the taking of his soul by Michael: how it sprang from his body and lighted on the hand of Michael, who wrapped it in a fine linen cloth: how he crossed the river of fire and it seemed to him as water, and was washed thrice in the Acherusian lake: how in heaven he saw the twelve splendid thrones of the apostles, and was not permitted to sit on his father's throne.

Thomas and he went into the city to the consternation of all who saw them. He, Siophanes, addressed the people and told his story: and Thomas baptized 12,000 of them, founded a church, and made Siophanes its bishop.

Then Thomas mounted on a cloud and it took him to the Mount of Olives and to the apostles, who told him of the visit of Jesus: and he would not believe. Bartholomew admonished him. Then Jesus appeared, and made Thomas touch his wounds: and departed into heaven.

This is the second time that he showed himself to his disciples after that he had risen from the dead.

This is the Book of the Resurrection of Jesus the Christ, our Lord, in joy and gladness. In peace. Amen.

Peter said to the apostles: Let us offer the offering before we separate. They prepared the bread, the cup, and incense.

Peter stood by the sacrifice and the others round the Table. They waited (break in the text: Budge and others suppose an appearance of Christ, but I do not think this is correct: 4 1/2 lines are gone then there are broken words):

table . . . their hearts rejoiced . . . worshipped the Son of God. He took his seat . . . his Father (probably, who sitteth at the right hand of the Father). His Body was on the Table about which they were assembled; and they divided it. They saw the blood of Jesus pouring out as living blood down into the cup. Peter said: God hath loved us more than all, in letting us see these great honours: and our Lord Jesus Christ hath allowed us to behold and hath revealed to us the glory of his body and his divine blood. They partook of the body and blood-and then they separated and preached the word. (What is clearly indicated is a change in the elements: there is not room for a description of an appearance of Jesus: he says no word, and his departure is not mentioned.)

This writing may be better described as a rhapsody than a narrative. It bristles with contradictions of itself: Joseph and Philogenes both bury Jesus- Thomas raises the dead and will not believe in Christ's resurrection: and so forth. That Mary the mother of Jesus is identified with Mary Magdalene is typical of the disregard of history, and we have seen it in other Coptic documents. The interest of the authors centred in the hymns, blessings, salutations, and prayers, which in this analysis have been wholly omitted, but which occupy a large part of the original text. The glorification of St. Bartholomew is another purpose of the writer: the special blessings given to him recall the attitude which he takes in the Gospel (i. 1, 8) as inquiring into the mysteries of heaven, and seeing things which are hidden from others. Both Gospel and Book are specially interested in the Descent into Hell, the Resurrection, and the redemption of Adam.

Bartholomew (Nathanael) was told (in St. John's Gospel) that he would see the angels ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. This promise is fulfilled in the Gospel (i. 6, 231 and very often in the Book: in St. John we also read of his being 'under the fig-tree', and this was probably enough to suggest to the Coptic author of the Book that he was a gardener.

A date is hard to suggest. The British Museum MS. is assigned to the twelfth century; the Paris fragments are older. That of the Coptic literature of this class is usually supposed to belong to the fifth and sixth centuries; and I think this, or at latest the seventh century, may be the period when the book was produced.

The Hymn of Jesus

The Acts of John is an early 2nd-century Christian collection of Johannine narratives and traditions, long known in fragmentary form. The traditional author was said to be one Leucius Charinus, a companion and disciple of John. The Acts of John is considered one of the most significant of the apocryphal apostolic Acts. It preserves strains of early oral traditions about the "beloved disciple" and sole apostolic author of a canonical gospel text.

The Acts of John describe (possibly apocryphal) journeys of John, tales filled with dramatic and miraculous events, anecdotes and well-framed apostolic speeches. Many of these reveal strong docetistic tendencies in the John tradition, and at least one episode is really quite amusing (see section 60, the "tale of John and the bed bugs").

But our text also contains two extraordinary mystical sections which are in character distinct from the rest of the document. The first recounts the sacred words and actions of the Lord on the night before his death. This is followed directly by the second, recounting the vision John received of the Lord at the moment of the crucifixion. The first section (sections 94-96 in the James edition, below) has been in modern times titled the "Hymn of Jesus", and very likely preserves a text used in the liturgy of at least some Johannine communities. The vision text that follows, sometimes titled "the Mystery of the Cross" (sections 97-102), illustrates with great beauty the mystical depths penetrated by Johannine Christology. These two sections, presented below, make the Acts of John a crucially important document for understanding the visionary and Gnostic underpinnings within the tradition of John.

The complete text of the Acts of John, edited by M.R. James, is available in the Library. For a detailed introduction and commentary on the texts, see *The Hymn of Jesus* by G.R.S. Mead -- this is a complete transcription of Mead's translation and extended commentary on the *Hymn of Jesus*, originally published in the series "Echoes from the Gnosis". To introduce a modern Gnostic and psychological reading of this text, we also offer an online lecture by Dr. Stephan Hoeller, Highlights from the Acts of John: The Nature and End of Suffering (mp3 format, 80 min).

-- Lance S. Owens

The Hymn of the Lord

Which He Sang in Secret to the Holy Apostles, His Disciples

XCIV

Now before he was taken by the lawless Jews,
who also were governed by the lawless serpent,
he gathered all of us together and said:
Before I am delivered up unto them let us sing an hymn to the Father,
and so go forth to that which lieth before us.

He bade us therefore make as it were a ring,
holding one another's hands,

and himself standing in the midst he said:
Answer Amen unto me.
He began, then, to sing an hymn and to say:

Glory be to thee, Father.

And we, going about in a ring, answered him:
Amen.

Glory be to thee, Word:
Glory be to thee, Grace.
Amen.

Glory be to thee, Spirit:
Glory be to thee, Holy One:
Glory be to thy glory.
Amen.

We praise thee, O Father;
we give thanks to thee, O Light,
wherein darkness dwelleth not.
Amen.

XCV

Now whereas we give thanks, I say:

I would be saved, and I would save.
Amen.

I would be loosed, and I would loose.
Amen.

I would be wounded, and I would wound.
Amen.

I would be born, and I would bear.
Amen.

I would eat, and I would be eaten.
Amen.

I would hear, and I would be heard.
Amen.

I would be thought, being wholly thought.
Amen.

I would be washed, and I would wash.
Amen.

Grace danceth. I would pipe; dance ye all.

Amen.

I would mourn: lament ye all.

Amen.

The number Eight (Ogdoad) singeth praise with us.

Amen.

The number Twelve danceth on high.

Amen.

The Whole on high hath part in our dancing.

Amen.

Whoso danceth not, knoweth not what cometh to pass.

Amen.

I would flee, and I would stay.

Amen.

I would adorn, and I would be adorned.

Amen.

I would be united, and I would unite.

Amen.

A house I have not, and I have houses.

Amen.

A place I have not, and I have places.

Amen.

A temple I have not, and I have temples.

Amen.

A lamp am I to thee that beholdest me.

Amen.

A mirror am I to thee that perceivest me.

Amen.

A door am I to thee that knockest at me.

Amen.

A way am I to thee a wayfarer. .

XCVI

Now answer thou unto my dancing.

Behold thyself in me who speak,

and seeing what I do,

keep silence about my mysteries.

Thou that dancest, perceive what I do,

for thine is this passion of the manhood, which I am about to suffer.

For thou couldest not at all have understood what thou sufferest

if I had not been sent unto thee, as the word of the Father.
Thou that sawest what I suffer sawest me as suffering,
and seeing it thou didst not abide but wert wholly moved,
moved to make wise.
Thou hast me as a bed, rest upon me.

Who I am, thou shalt know when I depart.
What now I am seen to be, that I am not.
Thou shalt see when thou comest.

If thou hadst known how to suffer,
thou wouldest have been able not to suffer.
Learn thou to suffer, and thou shalt be able not to suffer.

What thou knowest not, I myself will teach thee.
Thy God am I, not the God of the traitor.
I would keep tune with holy souls.
In me know thou the word of wisdom.

Again with me say thou:

Glory be to thee, Father;
Glory to thee, Word;
Glory to thee, Holy Spirit.

And if thou wouldst know concerning me, what I was,
know that with a word did I deceive all things
and I was no whit deceived.
I have leaped:
but do thou understand the whole,
and having understood it, say:

Glory be to thee, Father.

Amen.

The Mystic Cross

XCVII

Thus, my beloved, having danced with us the Lord went forth. And we as men gone astray or dazed with sleep fled this way and that. I, then, when I saw him suffer, did not even abide by his suffering, but fled unto the Mount of Olives, weeping at that which had befallen. And when he was crucified on the Friday, at the sixth hour of the day, darkness came upon all the earth. And my Lord standing in the midst of the cave and enlightening it, said: John, unto the multitude below in Jerusalem I am being crucified and pierced with lances and reeds, and gall and vinegar is given me to drink. But

unto thee I speak, and what I speak hear thou. I put it into thy mind to come up into this mountain, that thou mightest hear those things which it behoveth a disciple to learn from his teacher and a man from his God.

XCVIII

And having thus spoken, he showed me a cross of light fixed, and about the cross a great multitude, not having one form: and in it (the cross) was one form and one likeness. And the Lord himself I beheld above the cross, not having any shape, but only a voice: and a voice not such as was familiar to us, but one sweet and kind and truly of God, saying unto me: John, it is needful that one should hear these things from me, for I have need of one that will hear. This cross of light is sometimes called the word by me for your sakes, sometimes mind, sometimes Jesus, sometimes Christ, sometimes door, sometimes a way, sometimes bread, sometimes seed, sometimes resurrection, sometimes Son, sometimes Father, sometimes Spirit, sometimes life, sometimes truth, sometimes faith, sometimes grace. And by these names it is called as toward men: but that which it is in truth, as conceived of in itself and as spoken of unto you, it is the marking-off of all things, and the firm uplifting of things fixed out of things unstable, and the harmony of wisdom, and indeed wisdom in harmony. There are of the right hand and the left, powers also, authorities, lordships and demons, workings, threatenings, wraths, devils, Satan, and the lower root whence the nature of the things that come into being proceeded.

XCIX

This cross, then, is that which joined all things unto itself by a word, and separate off the things that are from those that are below, and then also, being one, streamed forth into all things, making all into one. But this is not the cross of wood which thou wilt see when thou goest down hence: neither am I he that is on the cross, whom now thou seest not, but only hearest a voice. I was reckoned to be that which I am not, not being what I was unto many others: but they will call me (say of me) something else which is vile and not worthy of me. As, then, the place of rest is neither seen nor spoken of, much more shall I, the Lord thereof, be neither seen nor spoken of.

C

Now the uniform crowd around the Cross is the Lower Nature, but those whom thou seest in the Cross, if they have not also one form (it is because) every Limb of the One who came down has not yet been gathered together. But as soon as the Higher Nature and Race, coming to me in obedience to my Voice, is taken up, then what does not hear me now will become as thou art, and shall no longer be what it is now, but over them even as I am now. For until thou callest thyself mine, I am not that which I am, but if thou hearest me attentively, thou too shalt be as I am, while I shall be what I was, as soon as I have beside myself thee as I am. For from this thou art.

CI

Nothing, therefore, of the things which they will say of me have I suffered: nay, that suffering also which I showed unto thee and the rest in the dance, I will that it be called a mystery. For what thou art, thou seest, for I showed it thee; but what I am I alone know, and no man else. Suffer me then to keep that which is mine, and that which is thine behold thou through me, and behold me in truth, that I am, not what I said, but what thou art able to know, because thou art akin thereto. Thou

hearest that I suffered, yet did I not suffer; that I suffered not, yet did I suffer; that I was pierced, yet I was not smitten; hanged, and I was not hanged; that blood flowed from me, and it flowed not; and, in a word, what they say of me, that befell me not, but what they say not, that did I suffer. Now what those things are I signify unto thee, for I know that thou wilt understand. Perceive thou therefore in me the rest of the Word (Logos), the piercing of the Word, the blood of the Word, the wound of the Word, the hanging up of the Word, the suffering of the Word, the nailing (fixing) of the Word, the death of the Word. And so speak I, separating off the manhood. Perceive thou therefore in the first place of the Word; then shalt thou perceive the Lord, and in the third place the man, and what he hath suffered.

CII

When he had spoken unto me these things, and others which I know not how to say as he would have me, he was taken up, no one of the multitudes having beheld him. And when I went down I laughed them all to scorn, inasmuch as he had told me the things which they have said concerning him; holding fast this one thing in myself, that the Lord contrived all things symbolically and by a dispensation toward men, for their conversion and salvation.

The Apocalypse of Sophia (Expanded)

Beauty lifts our souls above, mundane concerns to realms of love. Sophia is the soul that falls asleep, identifies with the conditioned ego story associated with matter, and is awakened by Jesus, the spirit. The spirit arouses the soul with dreams, beauty, art, poetry, love, and life events, to remind her of his presence and their union. When the soul remembers she and spirit are One, the Christ-Self is revealed. This research utilizes heuristics, grounded in Jungian theory, to explore a vision of Sophia and Jesus marrying and an encounter with a living ouroboros that consisted of two slugs curled around an egg. The wholeness of Eden, in the Christ-Self archetype, is, and always was, available. There is no separation, brokenness, or anything to fix. That which is called evil is revealed to be the impetus for the creation of consciousness. The Apocalypse, meaning revelation, is the destruction of the material world, which the soul has identified with, to reveal the soul's truth of ouroboric wholeness. The beginning and end are the same. The soul realizes Christ, as she was in the beginning, like a child without judgment, all good, love, peace, and at rest. The soul unites Heaven and Earth, by surrendering to life, trusting that what appears reflects her state of consciousness, witnessing what arises while remaining rooted in stillness, accepting everything without judgment, and loving all unconditionally. The soul is free, home, and Eden is restored.

The Homily on Fasting by John Chrysostom

Against those who fast the fast of the Jews and against the Jews themselves. Delivered after the other homily has been given and five days before the Jewish fast.

THE WICKED AND UNCLEAN FAST of the Jews is now at our doors. Thought it is a fast, do not wonder that I have called it unclean. What is done contrary to God's purpose, be it sacrifice or fast, is the most abominable of all things. Their wicked fast will begin after five days. Ten days ago, or

more than ten, I anticipated this and gave an exhortation with the hope it would make your brothers safe. Let no one find fault and say my discourse was untimely because I gave it so many days beforehand. When a fever threatens, or any other disease, physicians anticipate this and with many remedies make safe and secure the body of the man who will be seized by the fever; they hurry to snatch his body from the dangers which threaten it before the patient experiences their onset.

(2) Since I, too, see that a very serious disease is going to come upon you, long beforehand I gave you solemn warning so that you might apply corrective measures before the evil attacked. This was my reason for not waiting until just before the days of fasting to exhort you. I did not want the lack of time to stop you from hunting out your brothers; I hoped that with the span of many days you might be able to track down with all fearlessness those who are suffering from this disease and restore them to health.

(3) Men who are going to celebrate a wedding or prepare a sumptuous feast do this same thing. They do not wait for the day itself. Long beforehand they speak with the fishermen and bird hunters so that the brevity of time may present no obstacle to preparing for the banquet. Since I, too, am going to set a banquet before you against the obstinacy of the Jews, I have gotten a head start in talking to you, the fishermen, that you may sweep up your weaker brothers in your nets and bring them to hear what I have to say.

(4) Those of you who did fish and have your catch securely in your nets, remain steadfast and bind them tight with your words of exhortation. Those of you who have not yet taken this goodly catch have time enough in these five days to trap and overcome your prey. So let us spread out the nets of instruction; like a pack of hunting dogs let us circle about and surround our quarry; let us drive them together from every side and bring them into subjection to the laws of the Church. If you think it is a good idea, let us send to pursue them the best of huntsmen, the blessed Paul, who once shouted aloud and said: "Behold, I, Paul, tell you that if you be circumcised, Christ will be of no advantage to you."

(5) When wild beasts and savage animals are hiding under a thicket and hear the shout of the hunter, they leap up in fear. The loud clamor drives them from their hiding and, even against their will, the hunter's cry forces them out, and many a time they fall right into the nets. So, too, your brothers are hiding in what I might call the thicket of Judaism. If they hear the shout of Paul, I am sure that they will easily fall into the nets of salvation and will put aside all the error of the Jews. For it is not Paul who spoke, but Christ, who moved Paul's soul. So when you hear him shout and say: "Behold, I, Paul, tell you," consider that only the shout is Paul's; the thought and the teaching are Christ's, who is speaking to Paul from within his heart.

(6) But someone might say: "Is there so much harm in circumcision that it makes Christ's whole plan of redemption useless? Yes, the harm of circumcision is as great as that, not because of its own but because of your obstinacy. There was a time when the law was useful and necessary, but now it has ceased and is fruitless. If you take it on yourself to be circumcised now, when the time is no longer right, it makes the gift of God useless. It is because you are not willing to come to him that Christ will be of no advantage to you. Suppose someone should be caught in the act of adultery and the foulest crimes and then be thrown into prison. Suppose, next, that judgment was going to be passed against him and that he would be condemned. Suppose that just at that moment a letter should come from the Emperor setting free from any accounting or examination all those detained

in prison. If the prisoner should refuse to take advantage of the pardon, remain obstinate and choose to be brought to trial, to give an account, and to undergo punishment, he will not be able thereafter to avail himself of the Emperor's favor. For when he made himself accountable to the court, examination, and sentence, he chose of his own accord to deprive himself of the imperial gift.

(7) This is what happened in the case of the Jews. Look how it is. All human nature was taken in the foulest evils. "All have sinned," say Paul. They were locked, as it were, in a prison by the curse of their transgression of the Law. The sentence of the judge was going to be passed against them. A letter from the King came down from heaven. Rather, the King himself came. Without examination, without exacting an account, he set all men free from the claims of their sin.

II

All, then, who run to Christ are saved by his grace and profit from his gift. But those who wish to find justification from the Law will also fall from grace. They will not be able to enjoy the King's loving-kindness because they are striving to gain salvation by their own efforts; they will draw down on themselves the curse of the Law because from the works of the Law no flesh will find justification. So it is that Paul says: "If you be circumcised, Christ will be of no advantage to you." For the man who strives to gain salvation from the works of the Laws has nothing in common with grace. This is what Paul hinted at when he said: "If out of grace, then not in virtue of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if out of works, no longer is it grace: otherwise work is no longer work." And again: "If justice be by the Law, then Christ died in vain." And again: "You who are justified in the Law are fallen from grace." You have died to the Law, you have become a corpse; hereafter you are no longer under its yoke, you are no longer subject to its necessity. Why, then, do you strive to make trouble for yourself when it is all to no purpose and in vain?

(2) When Paul said: "Behold, I, Paul, tell you," why did he add his name? Why did he not simply say: "Behold, I tell you"? He wanted to remind them of the zeal which he had shown with regard to Judaism. What he is saying is this: "If I were a gentile and knew nothing of Jewish matters, perhaps someone would say that, because I had no share in the Jewish plan and dispensation, because I did not know the power of circumcision, I reject it from the dogmas of the Church." This is why he added his name. He wished to remind them of what he had done in behalf of the Law. It is almost as if he were to say: "I do this not thorough hatred of circumcision but in full knowledge of the truth. I, Paul, say this, that Paul who was circumcised on the eighth day, who am an Israelite by birth, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Pharisee according to the Law, who zealously persecuted the Church, who entered houses, dragged out men and women, and handed them over into custody. All this could persuade even those who are very stupid that I set down this law not through any hatred nor in ignorance of things Jewish but in full knowledge of the surpassing truth of Christ. "And I testify again to every man who has himself circumcised, that he is bound to observe the Law".

(3) Why did he not say: "I exhort", or "I command", or "I say"? Why did he say: "I testify? So that he might, by this word, remind us of the future judgment. Where there are witnesses who testify, there also are judgments and sentences. He is frightening his hearer, then, by reminding him of the royal throne and by showing him that those very words will be his witness on that day when each man will give an account of what he has done, what he has said, and what he has heard. The Galatians heard

those words in days gone by. Let those who are sick with the Galatians' disease hear them again today. If they are not present, let them hear through you the words that Paul exclaimed and said: "I testify again to every man who has himself circumcised, that he is bound to observe the whole Law.

(4) Do not tell me that circumcision is just a single command; it is that very command which imposes on you the entire yoke of the Law. When you subject yourself to the rule of the Law in one part, you must also obey its commands in all other things. If you do not fulfill it, you must be punished and draw its curse upon yourself. When a sparrow has fallen into the hunter's net, even if only its foot is caught, all the rest of its body is caught as well. So, too, the man who fulfills a single commandment of the Law, be it circumcision or fasting, through that one commandment, has given the Law full power over himself; as long as he is willing, and if he is willing to obey a part of the Law, he cannot avoid obeying the whole Law.

(5) We do not say this in accusation of the Law. Heaven forbid! We say it because we wish to show forth the surpassing riches of the grace of Christ. For the Law is not contrary to Christ. How could it be, when he is the one who gave the Law, when the Law leads us to him? But we are forced to say all these things because of the untimely contentiousness of those who do not use the Law as they should. The ones who outrage the Law are those who bid us stand apart from it once and for all and come to Christ, and then tell us to hold fast to it again. The Law has profited our nature very much. I agree to that and would never deny it. But you Judaizers cling to it beyond the proper time and will not let us see how very useful it has been.

(6) It would be the greatest source of praise for a tutor if his young pupil no longer needed him to keep watch over his conduct because the lad had advanced so greater virtue. So, too, it would be the greatest praise for the Law that we no longer had need of its help. For the Law has brought that very thing to pass for us: it has prepared our soul to receive a greater philosophy.

(7) So it is that he who still sits at the feet of the Law and can see nothing greater than what is written therein derives no great profit from it. But I put the Law aside and ran to the loftier teachings of Christ; yet I could grant to the Law the greatest dignity because it made me such that I could go beyond the trivialities written therein and rise to the loftiness of the teaching which comes to us from Christ.

(8) The Law did profit our nature greatly, but only if it led us sincerely to Christ. If this be not the case, it did us harm by depriving us of the greater things because of our close attention to those which are less; it also hurt us by still keeping us in the countless wounds of our transgressions. Suppose there were two physicians, one weaker, the other stronger. If the weaker one applied medicines to the ulcers but could not free the sick man once and for all from the pain coming from his sores, then.....

III

"If therefore you are offering your gift at the altar, and there you remember that your brother has anything against you, > leave there your offering before the altar and go first to be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift". Christ did not say: "Submit your offering and then go away", but "Let it stay there unoffered and go first to be reconciled to your brother".

(2) Nor did he do this only here but again in another place. If a man has an infidel wife, that is, a gentile, he is not forced to put her away. For St. Paul said: "If any man has an unbelieving wife and she consents to live with him, let him not put her away. But if he has a wife who is a harlot and an adulteress, there is nothing to stop him from putting her away. For Christ said: "Everyone who puts away his wife save on account of immorality, causes her to commit adultery. And so he is allowed to put her away because of immorality.

(3) Do you see God's loving-kindness and concern? He says: "If your wife be a gentile, do not put her away. But if she be a harlot, I do not stop you from doing so". What he means is this: If she acts outrageously toward Me, do not put her away; if she outrages you, there is no one to stop you from putting her away." If God, then, showed us such honor, will we not deem him deserving of equal honor? Will we let him be outraged by our wives? Will we permit this even though we realize that the greatest punishment and vengeance will be stored up for us when we neglect the salvation of our wives?

(4) This is why he made you to be head of the wife. This is why Paul gave the order: "If wives wish to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home", so that you, like a teacher, a guardian, a patron, might urge her to godliness. Yet when the hour set for the services summons you to the church, you fail to rouse your wife from their sluggish indifference. But now that the devil summons your wives to the feast of the Trumpets and they turn a ready ear to this call, you do not restrain them. You let them entangle themselves in accusations of ungodliness, you let them be dragged off into licentious ways. For, as a rule, it is the harlots, the effeminate, and the whole chorus from the theater who rush to that festival.

(5) And why do I speak of the immorality that goes on there? Are you not afraid that your wife may not come back from there after a demon has possessed her soul? Did you not hear in my previous discourse the argument which clearly proved to us that demons dwell in the very souls of the Jews and in places in which they gather? Tell me, then. How do you Judaizers have the boldness, after dancing with demons, to come back to the assembly of the apostles? After you have gone off and shared with those who shed the blood of Christ, how is it that you do not shudder to come back and share in his sacred banquet, to partake of his precious blood? Do you not shiver, are you not afraid when you commit such outrages? Have you so little respect for that very banquet?

(6) I have spoken these words to you. You will speak them to those Judaizers, and they to their wives. "Fortify one another". If a catechumen is sick with this disease, let him be kept outside the church doors. If the sick one be a believer and already initiated, let him be driven from the holy table. For not all sins need exhortation and counsel; some sins, of their very nature, demand cure by a quick and sharp excision. The wounds we can tolerate respond to more gentle cures; those which have festered and cannot be cured, those which are feeding on the rest of the body, need cauterization with a point of steel. So is it with sins. Some need long exhortation; others need sharp rebuke.

(7) This is why Paul did not enjoin us to exhort in every case but also to rebuke sharply: "Wherefore rebuke them sharply". Therefore, I will now rebuke them sharply, so that they may accuse themselves and feel shame for what they have done. Then they will never again be hurt by that sinful fast.

(8) So I shall put aside exhortation henceforth as I testify and exclaim: "If any man does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let a curse be upon him". What greater evidence could there be that a man does not love our Lord than when he participates in the festival with those who slew Christ? It was not I who hurled the curse at them, but Paul. Rather, it was not Paul but Christ, who spoke through him and said earlier: "Those who are justified in the law have fallen away from grace".

(9) So speak these words to them, read aloud to them these texts. Show all your zeal in saving them. When you have snatched them from the devil's jaws, bring them to me on the day of the Jewish fast. Then, after I have kept the rest of my promise to you, let us, with one accord and with one voice, join our brothers in giving glory to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for to Him is glory forever. Amen.

The Letter of Ignatius to the Philippians

Ignatius, who is also called Theophorus, to the Church of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, which is at Philadelphia, in Asia, which has obtained mercy, and is established in the harmony of God, and rejoiceth unceasingly in the passion of our Lord, and is filled with all mercy through his resurrection; which I salute in the blood of Jesus Christ, who is our eternal and enduring joy, especially if [men] are in unity with the bishop, the presbyters, and the deacons, who have been appointed according to the mind of Jesus Christ, whom He has established in security, after His own will, and by His Holy Spirit.

Ignatius, who is also called Theophorus, to the Church of God the Father, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is at Philadelphia, which has obtained mercy through love, and is established in the harmony of God, and rejoiceth unceasingly, in the passion of our Lord Jesus, and is filled with all mercy through His resurrection; which I salute in the blood of Jesus Christ, who is our eternal and enduring joy, especially to those who are in unity with the bishop, and the presbyters, and the deacons, who have been appointed by the will of God the Father, through the Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to His own will, has firmly established His Church upon a rock, by a spiritual building, not made with hands, against which the winds and the floods have beaten, yet have not been able to overthrow it: yea, and may spiritual wickedness never be able to do so, but be thoroughly weakened by the power of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Chapter I.-Praise of the Bishop.

Which bishop, I know, obtained the ministry which pertains to the common [weal], not of himself, neither by men, nor through vainglory, but by the love of God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ; at whose meekness I am struck with admiration, and who by his silence is able to accomplish more than those who vainly talk. For he is in harmony with the commandments [of God], even as the harp is with its strings. Wherefore my soul declares his mind towards God a happy one, knowing it to be virtuous and perfect, and that his stability as well as freedom from all anger is after the example of the infinite meekness of the living God.

Having beheld your bishop, I know that he was not selected to undertake the ministry which pertains to the common [weal], either by himself or by men, or out of vainglory, but by the love of Jesus Christ, and of God the Father, who raised Him from the dead; at whose meekness I am struck

with admiration, and who by His silence is able to accomplish more than they who talk a great deal. For he is in harmony with the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, even as the strings are with the harp, and is no less blameless than was Zacharias the priest. Wherefore my soul declares his mind towards God a happy one, knowing it to be virtuous and perfect, and that his stability as well as freedom from all anger is after the example of the infinite meekness of the living God.

Chapter II.-Maintain Union with the Bishop.

Wherefore, as children of light and truth, flee from division and wicked doctrines; but where the shepherd is, there do ye as sheep follow. For there are many wolves that appear worthy of credit, who, by means of a pernicious pleasure, carry captive those that are running towards God; but in your unity they shall have no place.

Wherefore, as children of light and truth, avoid the dividing of your unity, and the wicked doctrine of the heretics, from whom "a defiling influence has gone forth into all the earth." But where the shepherd is, there do ye as sheep follow. For there are many wolves in sheep's clothing, who, by means of a pernicious pleasure, carry captive those that are running towards God; but in your unity they shall have no place.

Chapter III.-Avoid Schismatics.

Keep yourselves from those evil plants which Jesus Christ does not tend, because they are not the planting of the Father. Not that I have found any division among you, but exceeding purity. For as many as are of God and of Jesus Christ are also with the bishop. And as many as shall, in the exercise of repentance, return into the unity of the Church, these, too, shall belong to God, that they may live according to Jesus Christ. Do not err, my brethren. If any man follows him that makes a schism in the Church, he shall not inherit the kingdom of God. If any one walks according to a strange opinion, he agrees not with the passion [of Christ.].

Keep yourselves, then, from those evil planes which Jesus Christ does not tend, but that wild beast, the destroyer of men, because they are not the planting of the Father, but the seed of the wicked one. Not that I have found any division among you do I write these things; but I arm you beforehand, as the children of God. For as many as are of Christ are also with the bishop; but as many as fall away from him, and embrace communion with the accursed, these shall be cut off along with them. For they are not Christ's husbandry, but the seed of the enemy, from whom may you ever be delivered by the prayers of the shepherd, that most faithful and gentle shepherd who presides over you. I therefore exhort you in the Lord to receive with all tenderness those that repent and return to the unity of the Church, that through your kindness and forbearance they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, and becoming worthy of Jesus Christ, may obtain eternal salvation in the kingdom of Christ. Brethren, be not deceived. If any man follows him that separates from the truth, he shall not inherit the kingdom of God; and if any man does not stand aloof from the preacher of falsehood, he shall be condemned to hell. For it is obligatory neither to separate from the godly, nor to associate with the ungodly. If any one walks according to a strange opinion, he is not of Christ, nor a partaker of His passion; but is a fox, a destroyer of the vineyard of Christ. Have no fellowship with such a man, lest ye perish along with him, even should he be thy father, thy son, thy brother, or a member of thy family. For says [the Scripture], "Thine eye shall not spare him." You ought therefore to "hate those that hate God, and to waste away [with grief] on account of His

enemies." I do not mean that you should beat them or persecute them, as do the Gentiles "that know not the Lord and God; " but that you should regard them as your enemies, and separate yourselves from them, while yet you admonish them, and exhort them to repentance, if it may be they will hear, if it may be they will submit themselves. For our God is a lover of mankind, and "will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth." Wherefore "He makes His sun to rise upon the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust; " of whose kindness the Lord, wishing us also to be imitators, says, "Be ye perfect, even as also your Father that is in heaven is perfect."

Chapter IV.-Have But One Eucharist, Etc.

Take ye heed, then, to have but one Eucharist. For there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one cup to [show forth] the unity of His blood; one altar; as there is one bishop, along with the presbytery and deacons, my fellow-servants: that so, whatsoever ye do, ye may do it according to [the will of] God.

I have confidence of you in the Lord, that ye will be of no other mind. Wherefore I write boldly to your love, which is worthy of God, and exhort you to have but one faith, and one [kind of] preaching, and one Eucharist. For there is one flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ; and His blood which was shed for us is one; one loaf also is broken to all [the communicants], and one cup is distributed among them all: there is but one altar for the whole Church, and one bishop, with the presbytery and deacons, my fellow-servants. Since, also, there is but one unbegotten Being, God, even the Father; and one only-begotten Son, God, the Word and man; and one Comforter, the Spirit of truth; and also one preaching, and one faith, and one baptism; and one Church which the holy apostles established from one end of the earth to the other by the blood of Christ, and by their own sweat and toil; it behoves you also, therefore, as "a peculiar people, and a holy nation," to perform all things with harmony in Christ. Wives, be ye subject to your husbands in the fear of God; and ye virgins, to Christ in purity, not counting marriage an abomination, but desiring that which is better, not for the reproach of wedlock, but for the sake of meditating on the law. Children, obey your parents, and have an affection for them, as workers together with God for your birth [into the world]. Servants, be subject to your masters in God, that ye may be the freed-men of Christ. Husbands, love your wives, as fellow-servants of God, as your own body, as the partners of your life, and your co-adjutors in the procreation of children. Virgins, have Christ alone before your eyes, and His Father in your prayers, being enlightened by the Spirit. May I have pleasure in your purity, as that of Elijah, or as of Joshua the son of Nun, as of Melchizedek, or as of Elisha, as of Jeremiah, or as of John the Baptist, as of the beloved disciple, as of Timothy, as of Titus, as of Evodius, as of Clement, who departed this life in [perfect] chastity, Not, however, that I blame the other blessed [saints] because they entered into the married state, of which I have just spoken. For I pray that, being found worthy of God, I may be found at their feet in the kingdom, as at the feet of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob; as of Joseph, and Isaiah, and the rest of the prophets; as of Peter, and Paul, and the rest of the apostles, that were married men. For they entered into these marriages not for the sake of appetite, but out of regard for the propagation of mankind. Fathers, "bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; " and teach them the holy Scriptures, and also trades, that they may not indulge in idleness. Now [the Scripture] says, "A righteous father educates [his children] well; his heart shall rejoice in a wise son." Masters, be gentle towards your servants, as holy Job has taught you; for there is one nature, and one family of mankind. For "in Christ there is neither bond nor free."

Let governors be obedient to Caesar; soldiers to those that command them; deacons to the presbyters, as to high-priests; the presbyters, and deacons, and the rest of the clergy, together with all the people, and the soldiers, and the governors, and Caesar [himself], to the bishop; the bishop to Christ, even as Christ to the Father. And thus unity is preserved throughout. Let not the widows be wanderers about, nor fond of dainties, nor gadders from house to house; but let them be like Judith, noted for her seriousness; and like Anna, eminent for her sobriety. I do not ordain these things as an apostle: for "who am I, or what is my father's house," that I should pretend to be equal in honour to them? But as your "fellow-soldier," I hold the position of one who [simply] admonishes you.

Chapter V.-Pray for Me.

My brethren, I am greatly enlarged in loving you; and rejoicing exceedingly [over you], I seek to secure your safety. Yet it is not I, but Jesus Christ, for whose sake being bound I fear the more, inasmuch as I am not yet perfect. But your prayer to God shall make me perfect, that I may attain to that portion which through mercy has been allotted me, while I flee to the Gospel as to the flesh of Jesus, and to the apostles as to the presbytery of the Church. And let us also love the prophets, because they too have proclaimed the Gospel, and placed their hope in Him, and waited for Him; in whom also believing, they were saved, through union to Jesus Christ, being holy men, worthy of love and admiration, having had witness borne to them by Jesus Christ, and being reckoned along with [us] in the Gospel of the common hope.

My brethren, I am greatly enlarged in loving you; and rejoicing exceedingly [over you], I seek to secure your safety. Yet it is not I, but the Lord Jesus through me; for whose sake being bound, I fear the more, for I am not yet perfect. But your prayer to God shall make me perfect, that I may attain that to which I have been called, while I flee to the Gospel as to the flesh of Jesus Christ, and to the apostles as the presbytery of the Church. I do also love the prophets as those who announced Christ, and as being partakers of the same Spirit with the apostles. For as the false prophets and the false apostles drew [to themselves] one and the same wicked, deceitful, and seducing spirit; so also did the prophets and the apostles receive from God, through Jesus Christ, one and the same Holy Spirit, who is good, and sovereign, and true, and the Author of [saving] knowledge. For there is one God of the Old and New Testament, "one Mediator between God and men," for the creation of both intelligent and sensitive beings, and in order to exercise a beneficial and suitable providence [over them]. There is also one Comforter, who displayed His power in Moses, and the prophets, and apostles. All the saints, therefore, were saved by Christ, hoping in Him, and waiting for Him; and they obtained through Him salvation, being holy ones, worthy of love and admiration, having testimony borne to them by Jesus Christ, in the Gospel of our common hope.

Chapter VI.-Do Not Accept Judaism.

But if any one preach the Jewish law unto you, listen not to him. For it is better to hearken to Christian doctrine from a man who has been circumcised, than to Judaism from one uncircumcised. But if either of such persons do not speak concerning Jesus Christ, they are in my judgment but as monuments and sepulchres of the dead, upon which are written only the names of men. Flee therefore the wicked devices and snares of the prince of this world, lest at any time being conquered by his artifices, ye grow weak in your love. But be ye all joined together with an undivided heart. And I thank my God that I have a good conscience in respect to you, and that no one has it in

his power to boast, either privately or publicly, that I have burdened any one either in much or in little. And I wish for all among whom I have spoken, that they may not possess that for a testimony against them.

If any one preaches the one God of the law and the prophets, but denies Christ to be the Son of God, he is a liar, even as also is his father the devil, and is a Jew falsely so called, being possessed of mere carnal circumcision. If any one confesses Christ Jesus the Lord, but denies the God of the law and of the prophets, saying that the Father of Christ is not the Maker of heaven and earth, he has not continued in the truth any more than his father the devil, and is a disciple of Simon Magus, not of the Holy Spirit. If any one says there is one God, and also confesses Christ Jesus, but thinks the Lord to be a mere man, and not the only-begotten God, and Wisdom, and the Word of God, and deems Him to consist merely of a soul and body, such an one is a serpent, that preaches deceit and error for the destruction of men. And such a man is poor in understanding, even as by name he is an Ebionite. If any one confesses the truths mentioned, but calls lawful wedlock, and the procreation of children, destruction and pollution, or deems certain kinds of food abominable, such an one has the apostate dragon dwelling within him. If any one confesses the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and praises the creation, but calls the incarnation merely an appearance, and is ashamed of the passion, such an one has denied the faith, not less than the Jews who killed Christ. If any one confesses these things, and that God the Word did dwell in a human body, being within it as the Word, even as the soul also is in the body, because it was God that inhabited it, and not a human soul, but affirms that unlawful unions are a good thing, and places the highest happiness in pleasure, as does the man who is falsely called a Nicolaitan, this person can neither be a lover of God, nor a lover of Christ, but is a corrupter of his own flesh, and therefore void of the Holy Spirit, and a stranger to Christ. All such persons are but monuments and sepulchres of the dead, upon which are written only the names of dead men. Flee, therefore, the wicked devices and snares of the spirit which now worketh in the children of this world, lest at any time being overcome, ye grow weak in your love. But be ye all joined together with an undivided heart and a willing mind, "being of one accord and of one judgment," being always of the same opinion about the same things, both when you are at ease and in danger, both in sorrow and in joy. I thank God, through Jesus Christ, that I have a good conscience in respect to you, and that no one has it in his power to boast, either privately or publicly, that I have burdened any one either in much or in little. And I wish for all among whom I have spoken, that they may not possess that for a testimony against them.

Chapter VII.-I Have Exhorted You to Unity.

For though some would have deceived me according to the flesh, yet the Spirit, as being from God, is not deceived. For it knows both whence it comes and whither it goes, and detects the secrets [of the heart]. For, when I was among you, I cried, I spoke with a loud voice: Give heed to the bishop, and to the presbytery and deacons. Now, some suspected me of having spoken thus, as knowing beforehand the division caused by some among you. But He is my witness, for whose sake I am in bonds, that I got no intelligence from any man. But the Spirit proclaimed these words: Do nothing without the bishop; keep your bodies as the temples of God; love unity; avoid divisions; be the followers of Jesus Christ, even as He is of His Father.

For though some would have deceived me according to the flesh, yet my spirit is not deceived; for I have received it from God. For it knows both whence it comes and whither it goes, and detects the

secrets [of the heart]. For when I was among you, I cried, I spoke with a loud voice-the word is not mine, but God's-Give heed to the bishop, and to the presbytery and deacons. But if ye suspect that I spake thus, as having learned beforehand the division caused by some among you, He is my witness, for whose sake I am in bonds, that I learned nothing of it from the mouth of any man. But the Spirit made an announcement to me, saying as follows: Do nothing without the bishop; keep your bodies as the temples of God; love unity; avoid divisions; be ye followers of Paul, and of the rest of the apostles, even as they also were of Christ.

Chapter VIII.-The Same Continued.

I therefore did what belonged to me, as a man devoted to unity. For where there is division and wrath, God doth not dwell. To all them that repent, the Lord grants forgiveness, if they turn in penitence to the unity of God, and to communion with the bishop. I trust [as to you] in the grace of Jesus Christ, who shall free you from every bond. And I exhort you to do nothing out of strife, but according to the doctrine of Christ. When I heard some saying, If I do not find it in the ancient Scriptures, I will not believe the Gospel; on my saying to them, It is written, they answered me, That remains to be proved. But to me Jesus Christ is in the place of all that is ancient: His cross, and death, and resurrection, and the faith which is by Him, are undefiled monuments of antiquity; by which I desire, through your prayers, to be justified.

I therefore did what belonged to me, as a man devoted to unity; adding this also, that where there is diversity of judgment, and wrath, and hatred, God does not dwell. To all them that repent, God grants forgiveness, if they with one consent return to the unity of Christ, and communion with the bishop. I trust to the grace of Jesus Christ, that He will free you from every bond of wickedness. I therefore exhort you that ye do nothing out of strife, but according to the doctrine of Christ. For I have heard some saying, If I do not find the Gospel in the archives, I will not believe it. To such persons I say that my archives are Jesus Christ, to disobey whom is manifest destruction. My authentic archives are His cross, and death, and resurrection, and the faith which bears on these things, by which I desire, through your prayers, to be justified. He who disbelieves the Gospel disbelieves everything along with it. For the archives ought not to be preferred to the Spirit. "It is hard to kick against the pricks; " it is hard to disbelieve Christ; it is hard to reject the preaching of the apostles.

Chapter IX.-The Old Testament is Good: the New Testament is Better.

The priests indeed are good, but the High Priest is better; to whom the holy of holies has been committed, and who alone has been trusted with the secrets of God. He is the door of the Father, by which enter in Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the prophets, and the apostles, and the Church. All these have for their object the attaining to the unity of God. But the Gospel possesses something transcendent [above the former dispensation], viz., the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ, His passion and resurrection. For the beloved prophets announced Him, but the Gospel is the perfection of immortality. All these things are good together, if ye believe in love.

The priests indeed, and the ministers of the word, are good; but the High Priest is better, to whom the holy of holies has been committed, and who alone has been entrusted with the secrets of God. The ministering powers of God are good. The Comforter is holy, and the Word is holy, the Son of the Father, by whom He made all things, and exercises a providence over them all. This is the Way

which leads to the Father, the Rock, the Defence the Key, the Shepherd, the Sacrifice, the Door of knowledge, through which have entered Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, Moses and all the company of the prophets, and these pillars of the world, the apostles, and the spouse of Christ, on whose account He poured out His own blood, as her marriage portion, that He might redeem her. All these things tend towards the unity of the one and only true God. But the Gospel possesses something transcendent [above the former dispensation], viz. the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, His passion, and the resurrection itself. For those things which the prophets announced, saying, "Until He come for whom it is reserved, and He shall be the expectation of the Gentiles," have been fulfilled in the Gospel, [our Lord saying,] "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." All then are good together, the law, the prophets, the apostles, the whole company [of others] that have believed through them: only if we love one another.

Chapter X.-Congratulate the Inhabitants of Antioch on the Close of the Persecution.

Since, according to your prayers, and the compassion which ye feel in Christ Jesus, it is reported to me that the Church which is at Antioch in Syria possesses peace, it will become you, as a Church of God, to elect a deacon to act as the ambassador of God [for you] to [the brethren there], that he may rejoice along with them when they are met together, and glorify the name [of God]. Blessed is he in Jesus Christ, who shall be deemed worthy of such a ministry; and ye too shall be glorified. And if ye are willing, it is not beyond your power to do this, for the sake of God; as also the nearest Churches have sent, in some cases bishops, and in others presbyters and deacons.

Since, according to your prayers, and the compassion which ye feel in Christ Jesus, it is reported to me that the Church which is at Antioch in Syria possesses peace, it will become you, as a Church of God, to elect a bishop to act as the ambassador of God [for you] to [the brethren] there, that it may be granted them to meet together, and to glorify the name of God. Blessed is he in Christ Jesus, who shall be deemed worthy of such a ministry; and if ye be zealous [in this matter], ye shall receive glory in Christ. And if ye are willing, it is not altogether beyond your power to do this, for the sake of God; as also the nearest Churches have sent, in some cases bishops, and in others presbyters and deacons.

Chapter XI.-Thanks and Salutation.

Now, as to Philo the deacon, of Cilicia, a man of reputation, who still ministers to me in the word of God, along with Rheus Agathopus, an elect man, who has followed me from Syria, not regarding his life,-these bear witness in your behalf; and I myself give thanks to God for you, that ye have received them, even as the Lord you. But may those that dishonoured them be forgiven through the grace of Jesus Christ! The love of the brethren at Troas salutes you; whence also I write to you by Burrhus, who was sent along with me by the Ephesians and Smyrnaeans, to show their respect. May the Lord Jesus Christ honour them, in whom they hope, in flesh, and soul, and faith, and love, and concord! Fare ye well in Christ Jesus, our common hope.

Now, as to Philo the deacon, a man of Cilicia, of high reputation, who still ministers to me in the word of God, along with Gaius and Agathopus, an elect man, who has followed me from Syria, not regarding his life,-these also bear testimony in your behalf. And I myself give thanks to God for you, because ye have received them: and the Lord will also receive you. But may those that dishonoured

them be forgiven through the grace of Jesus Christ, "who wisheth not the death of the sinner, but his repentance." ` The love of the brethren at Troas salutes you; whence also I write to you by Burrhus, who was sent along with me by the Ephesians and Smyrnaeans, to show their respect: whom the Lord Jesus Christ will requite, in whom they hope, in flesh, and soul, and spirit, and faith, and love, and concord. Fare ye well in the Lord Jesus Christ, our common hope, in the Holy Ghost.

The Prayer of Gregory of Nazianzus

St. Gregory, you are known for your zeal
for the Catholic faith, love of liturgy,
and compassion and mercy toward those in need.
Please help and guide us
so that we may share in these virtues
and thereby bring Jesus into the hearts
of our families and all we encounter.
We especially ask for blessings on our parish family,
our priests and our deacons.

I also ask that you graciously intercede for me before God
so that I might be granted the special assistance
and graces that I seek
Help me to live as a faithful child of God
and to attain the eternal happiness of heaven.

St. Gregory the Great, pray for us.

The Homily on the Nativity by Cyril of Jerusalem

The Title of this Oration has given rise to a doubt whether it was preached on Dec. 25, 380, or on Jan. c, 381. The word Theophania is well known as a name for the Epiphany; which, however, according to Schaff,³⁸⁴² was originally a celebration both of the Nativity and the Baptism of our Lord. The two words seem both to have been used in the simplest sense of the Manifestation of God, and certainly were applied to Christmas Day. Thus Suidas, "The Epiphany is the Incarnation of the Saviour;" and Epiphanius (HFr., 53), "The Day of the Epiphany is the day on which Christ was born according to the flesh." But S. Jerome applies the word to the Baptism of Christ; "The day of the Epiphany is still venerable; not, as some think, on account of His Birth in the flesh; for then He was hidden, not manifested; but it agrees with the time at which it was said, This is My beloved Son (In Ezech. I.). There is also a Sermon, attributed to S. Chrysostom, "On the Baptism of Christ," in which it is expressly denied that the name Theophany applies to Christmas. The Oration itself, however, contains evidence to shew that the Festival of our Lord's Birth was kept at the earlier date; for in c. 1c the Preacher says, "A little later you shall see Jesus submitting to be purified in the river Jordan for my purification." And another piece of evidence occurs in the oration In Sancta Lumina, c. 14,

“At His Birth we duly kept festival, both I the leader of the feast, ³⁴⁵and you. Now we are come to another action of Christ and another Mystery.”

The Oration is thus analysed by Abbe Benoît:

“After an exordium which is full of the enthusiasm and joy which such a subject naturally inspires the Orator recommends his hearers to celebrate the Festival by a pious gladness, and by hearing the Word of God; and not as the heathen celebrated their feasts, by profane amusements and all kinds of excess. He will try to satisfy their desires by speaking to them of God. God is infinite, ineffable, eternal, the Sovereign Good. He created the Angels in the beginning out of goodness. The fall of the Angels was followed by the creation of the material world. Man too fell, and God shewed His mercy even in the punishment. He used various means to raise him again; and at length He came Himself. Then the speaker forcibly argues against those who misuse the infinite condescension of the Word to contest His Godhead; he rapidly traces the principal features of His Life—at once human and Divine; and ends with a recommendation to his hearers to imitate in all things the Life of Christ, so that they may have a share in His Kingdom in Heaven.”

It is considered one of the best of Gregory’s discourses. “By the grandeur of the plan,” says Benoît, “the elevation of the ideas, and the rich fund of doctrine, this discourse is incontestably one of S. Gregory’s most remarkable efforts.”

I. Christ is born, glorify ye Him. Christ from heaven, go ye out to meet Him. Christ on earth; be ye exalted. Sing unto the Lord all the whole earth;³⁸⁴³ and that I may join both in one word, Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad, for Him Who is of heaven and then of earth. Christ in the flesh, rejoice with trembling and with joy; with trembling because of your sins, with joy because of your hope. Christ of a Virgin; O ye Matrons live as Virgins, that ye may be Mothers of Christ. Who doth not worship Him That is from the beginning? Who doth not glorify Him That is the Last?

II. Again the darkness is past; again Light is made; again Egypt is punished with darkness; again Israel is enlightened by a pillar.³⁸⁴⁴ The people that sat in the darkness of ignorance, let it see the Great Light of full knowledge.³⁸⁴⁵ Old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.³⁸⁴⁶ The letter gives way, the Spirit comes to the front. The shadows flee away, the Truth comes in upon them. Melchisedec is concluded.³⁸⁴⁷ He that was without Mother becomes without Father (without Mother of His former state, without Father of His second). The laws of nature are upset; the world above must be filled. Christ commands it, let us not set ourselves against Him. O clap your hands together all ye people,³⁸⁴⁸ because unto us a Child is born, and a Son given unto us, Whose Government is upon His shoulder (for with the Cross it is raised up), and His Name is called The Angel of the Great Counsel of the Father.³⁸⁴⁹ Let John cry, Prepare ye the way of the Lord:³⁸⁵⁰ I too will cry the power of this Day. He Who is not carnal is Incarnate; the Son of God becomes the Son of Man, Jesus Christ the Same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.³⁸⁵¹ Let the Jews be offended, let the Greeks deride;³⁸⁵² let heretics talk till their tongues ache. Then shall they believe, when they see Him ascending up into heaven; and if not then, yet when they see Him coming out of heaven and sitting as Judge.

III. Of these on a future occasion; for the present the Festival is the Theophany or Birth-day, for it is called both, two titles being given to the one thing. For God was manifested to man by birth. On the one hand Being, and eternally Being, of the Eternal Being, above cause and word, for there was no

word before The Word; and on the other hand for our sakes also Becoming, that He Who gives us our being might also give us our Well-being, or rather might restore us by His Incarnation, when we had by wickedness fallen from wellbeing. The name Theophany is given to it in reference to the Manifestation, and that of Birthday in respect of His Birth.

IV. This is our present Festival; it is this which we are celebrating to-day, the Coming of God to Man, that we might go forth,³⁸⁵³ or 346 rather (for this is the more proper expression) that we might go back to God—that putting off the old man, we might put on the New; and that as we died in Adam, so we might live in Christ,³⁸⁵⁴ being born with Christ and crucified with Him and buried with Him and rising with Him.³⁸⁵⁵ For I must undergo the beautiful conversion, and as the painful succeeded the more blissful, so must the more blissful come out of the painful. For where sin abounded Grace did much more abound;³⁸⁵⁶ and if a taste condemned us, how much more doth the Passion of Christ justify us? Therefore let us keep the Feast, not after the manner of a heathen festival, but after a godly sort; not after the way of the world, but in a fashion above the world; not as our own but as belonging to Him Who is ours, or rather as our Master's; not as of weakness, but as of healing; not as of creation, but of re-creation.

V. And how shall this be? Let us not adorn our porches, nor arrange dances, nor decorate the streets; let us not feast the eye, nor enchant the ear with music, nor enervate the nostrils with perfume, nor prostitute the taste, nor indulge the touch, those roads that are so prone to evil and entrances for sin; let us not be effeminate in clothing soft and flowing, whose beauty consists in its uselessness, nor with the glittering of gems or the sheen of gold³⁸⁵⁷ or the tricks of colour, belying the beauty of nature, and invented to do despite unto the image of God; Not in rioting and drunkenness, with which are mingled, I know well, chambering and wantonness, since the lessons which evil teachers give are evil; or rather the harvests of worthless seeds are worthless. Let us not set up high beds of leaves, making tabernacles for the belly of what belongs to debauchery. Let us not appraise the bouquet of wines, the kickshaws of cooks, the great expense of unguents. Let not sea and land bring us as a gift their precious dung, for it is thus that I have learnt to estimate luxury; and let us not strive to outdo each other in intemperance (for to my mind every superfluity is intemperance, and all which is beyond absolute need),—and this while others are hungry and in want, who are made of the same clay and in the same manner.

VI. Let us leave all these to the Greeks and to the pomps and festivals of the Greeks, who call by the name of gods beings who rejoice in the reek of sacrifices, and who consistently worship with their belly; evil inventors and worshippers of evil demons. But we, the Object of whose adoration is the Word, if we must in some way have luxury, let us seek it in word, and in the Divine Law, and in histories; especially such as are the origin of this Feast; that our luxury may be akin to and not far removed from Him Who hath called us together. Or do you desire (for to-day I am your entertainer) that I should set before you, my good Guests, the story of these things as abundantly and as nobly as I can, that ye may know how a foreigner can feed³⁸⁵⁸ the natives of the land, and a rustic the people of the town, and one who cares not for luxury those who delight in it, and one who is poor and homeless those who are eminent for wealth?

We will begin from this point; and let me ask of you who delight in such matters to cleanse your mind and your ears and your thoughts, since our discourse is to be of God and Divine; that when you depart, you may have had the enjoyment of delights that really fade not away. And this same

discourse shall be at once both very full and very concise, that you may neither be displeased at its deficiencies, nor find it unpleasant through satiety.

VII. God always was,³⁸⁵⁹ and always is, and always will be. Or rather, God always Is. For Was and Will be are fragments of our time, and of changeable nature, but He is Eternal Being. And this is the Name that He gives to Himself when giving the Oracle to Moses in the Mount. For in Himself He sums up and contains all Being, having neither beginning in the past nor end in the future; like some great Sea of Being, limitless and unbounded, transcending all conception of time and nature, only adumbrated by the mind, and that very dimly and scantily...not by His Essentials, but by His Environment; one image being got from one source and another from another, and combined into some sort of presentation of the truth, which escapes us before we have caught it, and takes to flight before we have conceived it, blazing forth upon our Master-part, even when that is cleansed, as the lightning flash which will not stay its course, does upon our sight...in order as I conceive by that part of it which we can comprehend to draw us to itself (for that which is altogether incomprehensible is outside the bounds of hope, and not within the compass of endeavour), and by that part of It which we cannot comprehend to move our wonder, and as an object of wonder to become more an object of desire, and being desired to purify, and by purifying to make us like God;³⁸⁶⁰ so that when we have thus become like Himself, God may, to use a bold expression, hold converse with us as Gods, being united to us, and that perhaps to the same extent as He already knows those who are known to Him. The Divine Nature then is boundless and hard to understand; and all that we can comprehend of Him is His boundlessness; even though one may conceive that because He is of a simple nature He is therefore either wholly incomprehensible, or perfectly comprehensible. For let us further enquire what is implied by "is of a simple nature." For it is quite certain that this simplicity is not itself its nature, just as composition is not by itself the essence of compound beings.

VIII. And when Infinity is considered from two points of view, beginning and end (for that which is beyond these and not limited by them is Infinity), when the mind looks to the depth above, not having where to stand, and leans upon phenomena to form an idea of God, it calls the Infinite and Unapproachable which it finds there by the name of Unoriginate. And when it looks into the depths below, and at the future, it calls Him Undying and Imperishable. And when it draws a conclusion from the whole it calls Him Eternal (αἰώνιος). For Eternity (αἰών) is neither time nor part of time; for it cannot be measured. But what time, measured by the course of the sun, is to us, that Eternity is to the Everlasting, namely, a sort of time-like movement and interval co-extensive with their existence. This, however, is all I must now say about God; for the present is not a suitable time, as my present subject is not the doctrine of God, but that of the Incarnation. But when I say God, I mean Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. For Godhead is neither diffused beyond these, so as to bring in a mob of gods; nor yet is it bounded by a smaller compass than these, so as to condemn us for a poverty-stricken conception of Deity; either Judaizing to save the Monarchia, or falling into heathenism by the multitude of our gods. For the evil on either side is the same, though found in contrary directions. This then is the Holy of Holies,³⁸⁶¹ which is hidden even from the Seraphim, and is glorified with a thrice repeated Holy,³⁸⁶² meeting in one ascription of the Title Lord and God, as one of our predecessors has most beautifully and loftily pointed out.

IX. But since this movement of self-contemplation alone could not satisfy Goodness, but Good must be poured out and go forth beyond Itself to multiply the objects of Its beneficence, for this was

essential to the highest Goodness, He first conceived the Heavenly and Angelic Powers. And this conception was a work fulfilled by His Word, and perfected by His Spirit. And so the secondary Splendours came into being, as the Ministers of the Primary Splendour; whether we are to conceive of them as intelligent Spirits, or as Fire of an immaterial and incorruptible kind, or as some other nature approaching this as near as may be. I should like to say that they were incapable of movement in the direction of evil, and susceptible only of the movement of good, as being about God, and illumined with the first rays from God—for earthly beings have but the second illumination; but I am obliged to stop short of saying that, and to conceive and speak of them only as difficult to move because of him,³⁸⁶³ who for his splendour was called Lucifer, but became and is called Darkness through his pride; and the apostate hosts who are subject to him, creators of evil³⁸⁶⁴ by their revolt against good and our inciters.

X. Thus, then, and for these reasons, He gave being to the world of thought, as far as I can reason upon these matters, and estimate great things in my own poor language. Then when His first creation was in good order, He conceives a second world, material and visible; and this a system and compound of earth and sky, and all that is in the midst of them—an admirable creation indeed, when we look at the fair form of every part, but yet more worthy of admiration when we consider the harmony and the unison of the whole, and how each ³⁴⁸part fits in with every other, in fair order, and all with the whole, tending to the perfect completion of the world as a Unit. This was to shew that He could call into being, not only a Nature akin to Himself, but also one altogether alien to Himself. For akin to Deity are those natures which are intellectual, and only to be comprehended by mind; but all of which sense can take cognisance are utterly alien to It; and of these the furthest removed are all those which are entirely destitute of soul and of power of motion. But perhaps some one of those who are too festive and impetuous may say, What has all this to do with us? Spur your horse to the goal. Talk to us about the Festival, and the reasons for our being here to-day. Yes, this is what I am about to do, although I have begun at a somewhat previous point, being compelled to do so by love, and by the needs of my argument.

XI. Mind, then, and sense, thus distinguished from each other, had remained within their own boundaries, and bore in themselves the magnificence of the Creator-Word, silent praisers³⁸⁶⁵ and thrilling heralds of His mighty work. Not yet was there any mingling of both, nor any mixtures of these opposites, tokens of a greater Wisdom and Generosity in the creation of natures; nor as yet were the whole riches of Goodness made known. Now the Creator-Word, determining to exhibit this, and to produce a single living being out of both—the visible and the invisible creations, I mean—fashions Man; and taking a body from already existing matter, and placing in it a Breath taken from Himself³⁸⁶⁶ which the Word knew to be an intelligent soul and the Image of God, as a sort of second world. He placed him, great in littleness³⁸⁶⁷ on the earth; a new Angel, a mingled worshipper, fully initiated into the visible creation, but only partially into the intellectual; King of all upon earth, but subject to the King above; earthly and heavenly; temporal and yet immortal; visible and yet intellectual; half-way between greatness and lowliness; in one person combining spirit and flesh; spirit, because of the favour bestowed on him; flesh, because of the height to which he had been raised; the one that he might continue to live and praise his Benefactor, the other that he might suffer, and by suffering be put in remembrance, and corrected if he became proud of his greatness. A living creature trained here, and then moved elsewhere; and, to complete the mystery, deified by its inclination to God. For to this, I think, tends that Light of Truth which we here possess

but in measure, that we should both see and experience the Splendour of God, which is worthy of Him Who made us, and will remake us again after a loftier fashion.

XII. This being He placed in Paradise, whatever the Paradise may have been, having honoured him with the gift of Free Will (in order that God might belong to him as the result of his choice, no less than to Him who had implanted the seeds of it), to till the immortal plants, by which is meant perhaps the Divine Conceptions, both the simpler and the more perfect; naked in his simplicity and inartificial life, and without any covering or screen; for it was fitting that he who was from the beginning should be such. Also He gave him a Law, as a material for his Free Will to act upon. This Law was a Commandment as to what plants he might partake of, and which one he might not touch. This latter was the Tree of Knowledge; not, however, because it was evil from the beginning when planted; nor was it forbidden because God grudged it to us...Let not the enemies of God wag their tongues in that direction, or imitate the Serpent...But it would have been good if partaken of at the proper time, for the tree was, according to my theory, Contemplation, upon which it is only safe for those who have reached maturity of habit to enter; but which is not good for those who are still somewhat simple and greedy in their habit; just as solid food is not good for those who are yet tender, and have need of milk.³⁸⁶⁸ But when through the Devil's malice and the woman's caprice, to which she succumbed as the more tender, and which she brought to bear upon the man, as she was the more apt to persuade, alas for my weakness! (for that of my first father was mine), he forgot the Commandment which had been given to him;³⁸⁶⁹ he yielded to the baleful fruit; and for his sin he was banished, at once from the Tree of Life, and from Paradise, and from God; and put on the coats of skins...that is, perhaps, the coarser flesh, both mortal and contradictory. This was the first thing that he learnt—his own shame;³⁸⁷⁰ and he hid himself from God. Yet here too he makes a gain, namely death, and the cutting off of sin, in order that evil may not be immortal. Thus his punishment is changed into a mercy; for it is in mercy, I am persuaded, that God inflicts punishment.

XIII. And having been first chastened by 349many means (because his sins were many, whose root of evil sprang up through divers causes and at sundry times), by word, by law, by prophets, by benefits, by threats, by plagues, by waters, by fires, by wars, by victories, by defeats, by signs in heaven and signs in the air and in the earth and in the sea, by unexpected changes of men, of cities, of nations (the object of which was the destruction of wickedness), at last he needed a stronger remedy, for his diseases were growing worse; mutual slaughters, adulteries, perjuries, unnatural crimes, and that first and last of all evils, idolatry and the transfer of worship from the Creator to the Creatures. As these required a greater aid, so also they obtained a greater. And that was that the Word of God Himself—Who is before all worlds, the Invisible, the Incomprehensible, the Bodiless, Beginning of Beginning,³⁸⁷¹ the Light of Light, the Source of Life and Immortality, the Image of the Archetypal Beauty, the immovable Seal, the unchangeable Image, the Father's Definition³⁸⁷² and Word, came to His own Image, and took on Him flesh for the sake of our flesh, and mingled Himself with an intelligent soul for my soul's sake, purifying like by like; and in all points except sin was made man. Conceived by the Virgin,³⁸⁷³ who first in body and soul was purified by the Holy Ghost³⁸⁷⁴ (for it was needful both that Childbearing should be honoured, and that Virginity should receive a higher honour), He came forth then as God with that which He had assumed, One Person in two Natures, Flesh and Spirit, of which the latter deified the former.³⁸⁷⁵ O new commingling; O strange conjunction; the Self-Existent comes into being, the Uncreate is created, That which

cannot be contained is contained, by the intervention of an intellectual soul, mediating between the Deity and the corporeity of the flesh. And He Who gives riches becomes poor, for He assumes the poverty of my flesh, that I may assume the richness of His Godhead. He that is full empties Himself, for He empties Himself of His glory for a short while, that I may have a share in His Fulness. What is the riches of His Goodness? What is this mystery that is around me? I had a share in the image; I did not keep it; He partakes of my flesh that He may both save the image and make the flesh immortal. He communicates a second Communion far more marvellous than the first, inasmuch as then He imparted the better Nature, whereas now Himself partakes of the worse. This is more godlike than the former action, this is loftier in the eyes of all men of understanding.

XIV. To this what have those cavillers to say, those bitter reasoners about Godhead, those detractors of all that is praiseworthy, those darkeners of light, uncultured in respect of wisdom, for whom Christ died in vain, those unthankful creatures, the work of the Evil One? Do you turn this benefit into a reproach to God? Wilt thou deem Him little on this account, that He humbled Himself for thee; because the Good Shepherd,³⁸⁷⁶ He who lays down His life for His sheep, came to seek for that which had strayed upon the mountains and the hills, on which thou wast then sacrificing, and found the wanderer; and having found it,³⁸⁷⁷ took it upon His shoulders—on which He also took the Wood of the Cross; and having taken it, brought it back to the higher life; and having carried it back, numbered it amongst those who had never strayed. Because He lighted a candle—His own Flesh—and swept the house, cleansing the world from sin; and sought the piece of money, the Royal Image that was covered up by passions. And He calls together His Angel friends on the finding of the coin, and makes them sharers in His joy,³⁸⁷⁸ whom He had made to share also the secret of the Incarnation? Because on the candle of the Forerunner there follows the light that exceeds in brightness; and to the Voice the Word succeeds; and to the Bridegroom's friend the Bridegroom; to him that prepared for the Lord a peculiar people, cleansing them by water in preparation for the Spirit? Dost thou reproach God with all this? Dost thou on this account deem Him lessened, because He girds Himself with a towel and washes His disciples' feet, and shows that humiliation is the best road to exaltation? Because for the soul that was bent to the ground He humbles Himself, that He may raise up with Himself the soul that was tottering to a fall under a weight of sin? Why dost thou not also charge upon Him as a 350crime the fact that He eats with Publicans and at Publicans' tables,³⁸⁷⁹ and that He makes disciples of Publicans, that He too may gain somewhat...and what?...the salvation of sinners. If so, we must blame the physician for stooping over sufferings, and enduring evil odours that he may give health to the sick; or one who as the Law commands bent down into a ditch to save a beast that had fallen into it.³⁸⁸⁰

XV. He was sent, but as man, for He was of a twofold Nature; for He was wearied, and hungered, and was thirsty, and was in an agony, and shed tears, according to the nature of a corporeal being. And if the expression be also used of Him as God, the meaning is that the Father's good pleasure is to be considered a Mission, for to this He refers all that concerns Himself; both that He may honour the Eternal Principle, and because He will not be taken to be an antagonistic God. And whereas it is written both that He was betrayed, and also that He gave Himself up³⁸⁸¹ and that He was raised up by the Father, and taken up into heaven; and on the other hand, that He raised Himself and *went* up; the former statement of each pair refers to the good pleasure of the Father, the latter to His own Power. Are you then to be allowed to dwell upon all that humiliates Him, while

passing over all that exalts Him, and to count on your side the fact that He suffered, but to leave out of the account the fact that it was of His own will? See what even now the Word has to suffer. By one set He is honoured as God, but is confused with the Father,³⁸⁸² by another He is dishonoured as mere flesh³⁸⁸³ and severed from the Godhead. With which of them will He be most angry, or rather, which shall He forgive, those who injuriously confound Him or those who divide Him? For the former ought to have distinguished, and the latter to have united Him; the one in number, the other in Godhead. Stumblest Thou at His flesh? So did the Jews. Or dost thou call Him a Samaritan, and...I will not say the rest. Dost thou disbelieve in His Godhead? This did not even the demons, O thou who art less believing than demons and more stupid than Jews. Those did perceive that the name of Son implies equality of rank; these did know that He who drove them out was God, for they were convinced of it by their own experience. But you will admit neither the equality nor the Godhead. It would have been better for you to have been either a Jew or a demoniac (if I may utter an absurdity), than in uncircumcision and in sound health to be so wicked and ungodly in your attitude of mind.

XVI. A little later on you will see Jesus submitting to be purified in the River Jordan for my Purification, or rather, sanctifying the waters by His Purification (for indeed He had no need of purification Who taketh away the sin of the world) and the heavens cleft 351asunder, and witness borne to him by the Spirit That is of one nature with Him;³⁸⁸⁴ you shall see Him tempted and conquering and served by Angels,³⁸⁸⁵ and healing every sickness³⁸⁸⁶ and every disease,³⁸⁸⁷ and giving life to the dead (O that He would give life to you who are dead because of your heresy), and driving out demons,³⁸⁸⁸ sometimes Himself, sometimes by his disciples; and feeding vast multitudes with a few loaves;³⁸⁸⁹ and walking dryshod upon seas;³⁸⁹⁰ and being betrayed and crucified, and crucifying with Himself my sin; offered as a Lamb, and offering as a Priest; as a Man buried in the grave, and as God rising again; and then ascending, and to come again in His own glory. Why what a multitude of high festivals there are in each of the mysteries of the Christ; all of which have one completion, namely, my perfection and return to the first condition of Adam.

XVII. Now then I pray you accept His Conception, and leap before Him; if not like John from the womb,³⁸⁹¹ yet like David, because of the resting of the Ark.³⁸⁹² Revere the enrolment on account of which thou wast written in heaven, and adore the Birth by which thou wast loosed from the chains of thy birth,³⁸⁹³ and honour little Bethlehem, which hath led thee back to Paradise; and worship the manger through which thou, being without sense, wast fed by the Word. Know as Isaiah bids thee, thine Owner, like the ox, and like the ass thy Master's crib;³⁸⁹⁴ if thou be one of those who are pure and lawful food, and who chew the cud of the word and are fit for sacrifice. Or if thou art one of those who are as yet unclean and uneatable and unfit for sacrifice, and of the gentile portion, run with the Star, and bear thy Gifts with the Magi, gold and frankincense and myrrh,³⁸⁹⁵ as to a King, and to God, and to One Who is dead for thee. With Shepherds glorify Him;³⁸⁹⁶ with Angels join in chorus; with Archangels sing hymns. Let this Festival be common to the powers in heaven and to the powers upon earth.³⁸⁹⁷ For I am persuaded that the Heavenly Hosts join in our exultation and keep high Festival with us to-day³⁸⁹⁸...because they love men, and they love God just like those whom David introduces after the Passion ascending with Christ³⁸⁹⁹ and coming to meet Him, and bidding one another to lift up the gates.

XVIII. One thing connected with the Birth of Christ I would have you hate...the murder of the infants by Herod.³⁹⁰⁰ Or rather you must venerate this too, the Sacrifice of the same age as Christ, slain

before the Offering of the New Victim. If He flees into Egypt,³⁹⁰¹ joyfully become a companion of His exile. It is a grand thing to share the exile of the persecuted Christ. If He tarry long in Egypt, call Him out of Egypt by a reverent worship of Him there. Travel without fault through every stage and faculty of the Life of Christ. Be purified; be circumcised; strip off the veil which has covered thee from thy birth. After this teach in the Temple, and drive out the sacrilegious traders.³⁹⁰² Submit to be stoned if need be, for well I wot thou shalt be hidden from those who cast the stones; thou shalt escape even through the midst of them, like God.³⁹⁰³ If thou be brought before Herod, answer not for the most part.³⁹⁰⁴ He will respect thy silence more than most people's long speeches. If thou be scourged,³⁹⁰⁵ ask for what they leave out. Taste gall for the taste's sake;³⁹⁰⁶ drink vinegar;³⁹⁰⁷ seek for spittings; accept blows, be crowned with thorns,³⁹⁰⁸ that is, with the hardness of the godly life; put on the purple robe, take the reed in hand, and receive mock worship from those who mock at the truth; lastly, be crucified with Him, and share His Death and Burial gladly, that thou mayest rise with Him, and be glorified with Him and reign with Him. Look at and be looked at by the Great God, Who in Trinity is worshipped and glorified, and Whom we declare to be now set forth as clearly before you as the chains of our flesh allow, in Jesus Christ our Lord, to Whom be the glory for ever. Amen.

³⁸⁴² H. E., Nic. Per., p. 399.

³⁸⁴³ Ps. xcvi. 1, 11.

³⁸⁴⁴ Exod. xiv. 20.

³⁸⁴⁵ Isa. ix. 6.

³⁸⁴⁶ 1 Cor. v. 17.

³⁸⁴⁷ The meaning clearly is that the type presented by Melchisedec (Heb. vii. 3) is fulfilled in Christ. The explanation here given by S. Gregory is the ordinary one found in the Fathers. Thus, e.g., Theodoret says, "Christ our Lord is without Mother as God, for He was begotten of the Father alone; and without Father as Man, for He was born of a pure Virgin." Œcumenius has almost the exact words of Gregory. So also S. Augustine (Tract in Joann, 8), "Christ was singularly born of a Father without a Mother, of a Mother without a Father; without Mother as God, without Father as Man."

³⁸⁴⁸ Ps. xlvii. 1.

³⁸⁴⁹ Isa. ix. 6.

³⁸⁵⁰ Matt. iii. 3.

³⁸⁵¹ Heb. xiii. 8.

³⁸⁵² 1 Cor. i. 23.

³⁸⁵³ Ephes. iv. 22, 24.

³⁸⁵⁴ 1 Cor. xv. 22.

³⁸⁵⁵ Col. ii. 11.

³⁸⁵⁶ Rom. v. 20.

³⁸⁵⁷ Rom. xiii. 13.

³⁸⁵⁸ Alluding to his own recent arrival at Constantinople, after a life spent in the distant country of Cappadocia, and in ministering in small and insignificant places like Nazianzus.

³⁸⁵⁹ The whole of this passage occurs again verbatim in the second Oration for Easter Day, cc. iii.–ix.

³⁸⁶⁰ John x. 15.

³⁸⁶¹ The Holy of Holies here means the Holy Trinity.

³⁸⁶² The reference is to the Ter Sanctus or Triumphal Hymn, which is found in every Liturgy. The previous writer referred to is thought by some to be S. Athanasius, but by others S. Dionysius the Areopagite, who has some words on this point in his treatise *De Cœlest. Hier.*, c. 7. But the most competent scholars deny the authenticity of the works attributed to S. Dionysius, and place them from one hundred to one hundred and fifty years later than S. Gregory's time.

³⁸⁶³ S. Thomas Aquinas (*Summa I.*, qu. 63, art. 7) gives reasons for thinking that Satan was originally the highest of all the angelic hosts. This, however, is an opinion in which many high authorities differ from him. At any rate, Satan as Lucifer must have held a very high place.

³⁸⁶⁴ Evil, says Nicetas here, has no positive existence, but is the negation of good. "The faculties of mind and body which are used in a sinful action are indeed things, and are the creatures of God; but the sin itself is not a thing, and consequently not a creature. God is indeed the Author of all that is, of every substance; but sin is not a substance, and is not. It is a declination from substance and from being, and not a part of it." (Mozley, *Treatise on the Augustinian doctrine of predestination.*)

³⁸⁶⁵ Ps. xix. 1, 3.

³⁸⁶⁶ Gen. ii. 7.

³⁸⁶⁷ Sc. a microcosm.

³⁸⁶⁸ Heb. v. 12.

³⁸⁶⁹ Gen. iii. 5.

³⁸⁷⁰ Rom. i. 22–31.

³⁸⁷¹ Cf. *Light of Light* begotten. Christ our Lord is called "The Beginning of the Creation of God, because by Him all things were made; and He is of the Beginning, inasmuch as God the Father is the Unoriginate Principle of all, and the Origin and Fount of Godhead. The Scholiast here refers to Ps. cx. 3, which in the Vulgate and LXX. runs "With Thee is the Beginning in the day of Thy Power."

³⁸⁷² Cf. *Theol.*: IV. xx., where S. Gregory says "Perhaps this Relation might be compared to that between the Definition and the thing defined." Nicetas remarks that, just as the definition declares the nature of the defined, so the Personal Word shows forth the Nature of the Father. Suidas (in

voce ὁπος) says that the phrase is used to show the Unity of Nature between the Father and the Son. It is not, however, of frequent occurrence.

³⁸⁷³ Luke i. 35.

³⁸⁷⁴ S. Gregory does not seem to have been aware of the doctrine of the "Immaculate Conception."

³⁸⁷⁵ See note on *In Sancta Lumina*, c. xiv.

³⁸⁷⁶ John x. 11.

³⁸⁷⁷ Luke xv. 4, sq.

³⁸⁷⁸ Ib. xv. 8, 10.

³⁸⁷⁹ Luke v. 29.

³⁸⁸⁰ S. Gregory is referring to the provision of the Law, which orders a man, if he see his friend's or his enemy's ox or ass fallen under a burden or going astray, to lend assistance; but the terms of his reference are rather to the reasoning of our Lord with the Pharisees about the Sabbath. Luke xiii. 15 and xiv. 5.

³⁸⁸¹ Cf. ἐν τῇ νυκτὶ ἐν ᾗ παρεδίδοτο, μᾶλλον δὲ ἑαυτὸν παρεδίδου. Canon of Liturgy of S. Mark (Swainson p. 517). Ea nocte qua tradidit seipsum. Lit. Copt. S. Basil (Ib.). Cum statuisset se tradere. Coptic S. Basil (Hammond, p. 209) Rot. Vatic. and Cod. Ross. of S. Mark, has only τ. v. ἡ ἑαυτ, παρεδ. (Swainson, 50); so too S. Basil (Ib., 81) in Cod. B. M., 22749 and Barberini of S. Chrys. (Ib., 91); but the whole expression is in Chrys. (cent. xi., ib., 129) and Greek S. James (78. 272–3), but Syriac S. James has "in qua nocte tradendus erat." (Canon Univ., Æthiop. Hammond, 258). *Pridie quam pateretur* is the form in the Canon of the Roman, Ambrosian, and Sarum Missals; but the Mozarabic, which is largely of an Eastern character, has *in qua nocte tradebatur*. (Hammond, 333).

³⁸⁸² The Sabellian heresy may be briefly described as the doctrine of One God exercising three offices, as opposed to the Catholic Faith of One God in three Persons. Sabellius himself was a Priest of the Libyan Pentapolis, who at Rome in the time of Pope Zephyrinus embraced the heresy of Notus, which maintained that God the Father suffered for us on the cross in the form of Christ. His followers, who openly declared themselves first about a.d. 357, thought that God, to Whom as the Source of all things the name of Father is given, is called the Son when He united Himself to the humanity of Jesus for the work of our redemption; and in like manner He is the Holy Spirit when manifested for the work of sanctification. Sabellius was condemned by a Council held at Rome, probably in 258; again at Nicæa, and again at Constantinople, where Sabellian Baptism was pronounced invalid.

³⁸⁸³ Arianism was the result of a strong opposition to Sabellianism, coupled with a misunderstanding of the argument against it. There was, no doubt, a danger of falling into the opposite error of Tritheism, to avoid which Arianism "divided the Substance" and virtually—and in the end explicitly—denied the Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ. Arius was a Priest of Alexandria, and it was there that he began to publish his opinions, in the early years of the Fourth Century (318); but Newman traces the origin of the heresy to Antioch and its Judaizing tendency. At a meeting of

the clergy in Alexandria the Bishop, S. Alexander, gave an address on the coeternity, and coequality of the Father and the Son, and used the expression τὴν αὐτὴν οὐσίαν ἔχειν, that They had the same Substance. Arius protested against this as a Sabellian statement, and used the words κτίσμα (creature) and νοῖημα (a thing made) of the Son, adding the sentence which became so famous, ἦν ὅτε οὐκ ἦν,—there was a time when the Son did not exist. Having ineffectually tried private remonstrance, S. Alexander brought the matter in 321 before his Provincial Synod, in which were present about 100 Egyptian and Pentapolitan Bishops, who after giving the matter a patient hearing, excommunicated Arius and his principal adherents. But it was too late to undo the mischief. The heresy spread widely, and the whole Eastern Church was stirred by the controversy. At last a great Council of the whole Church met at Nicæa in 325, summoned by the Emperor; and there the heresy was unequivocally condemned, and the great Creed propounded with its watchword, the Homoeousion. The false teaching had however struck its roots deep and wide; and though now banned by the anathema of the Church, it was long in dying; and indeed at one time, it seemed as if—humanly speaking—it must swamp the whole Catholic Church. Under various forms the Semi-Arians who claimed to differ from the faith of Nicæa only by a single letter, the Aetians and Eunomians, who went to the furthest extreme of the Falsehood (Anomœans), and many others, the heresy spread far and wide: and when S. Gregory came to Constantinople there was not one Catholic Church or Priest to be found in the place, and only a few scattered folk who still held to the Faith of the Consubstantial. Gregory's wonderful discourses however came to their aid, and partly under his presidency was held the Second Œcumenical Synod, which condemned the heresy of Macedonius, a still further development of Arianism, which denied also the Deity of the Holy Ghost. Arianism survived for another two centuries among the Goths and Vandals, the Burgundians and Lombards; but it never rose again as a power in the Church.

The Hymn of the Archangels

O Christ! thou the Holy Angels' glory, the Creator and Redeemer of mankind! grant that we ascend to the happy thrones of the heavenly citizens.

May Michael, the Angel of peace, come from heaven into this our temple, and, bringing us sweet peace, drive dismal war back again to hell.

May Gabriel, the Angel of strength, come and rout our old enemies; may he often visit the heaven-loved temples, which the triumphant Jesus has placed throughout the world.

May Raphael, our heavenly Physician, descend and visit us, that he may heal all that are infirm, and direct our steps that falter in the path of life.

May the Virgin Queen of Peace, the Mother of Light; may the holy choir of Angels: may all the inhabitants of bright heaven, ever assist and protect us.

May the Godhead ever blessed of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Whose glory is proclaimed through the whole world, grant us this our prayer. Amen.

The Ethiopian Song of Redemption

"Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation: He is my God, and I will prepare Him an habitation;¹ my father's God, and I will exalt Him. The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is His name. Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath He cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea. The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone. Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: Thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. And in the greatness of Thine excellency Thou hast overthrown them that rose up against Thee: Thou sentest forth Thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble. And with the blast of Thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea. The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them. Thou didst blow with Thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters. Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Thou stretchedst out Thy right hand, the earth swallowed them. Thou in Thy mercy hast led forth the people which Thou hast redeemed: Thou hast guided them in Thy strength unto Thy holy habitation. The people shall hear, and be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina. Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away. Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of Thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till Thy people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over, which Thou hast purchased. Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established. The Lord shall reign forever and ever. For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the Lord brought again the waters of the sea upon them; but the children of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea" (vss. 1-19).

The first thing to be remarked upon this outburst of joy is, that we have no singing mentioned in Scripture, except in connection with redemption. Angels even are never said to sing. At the birth of our blessed Lord *"there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men"* (Luke 2:13-14). So in the Revelation John says, "I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing" (Rev. 5:11-12). It is only therefore redeemed ones who can sing, and we learn therefrom the true character of Christian song. It should express the joy of salvation, the accents of praise and gladness produced in the soul by the knowledge of redemption. "Is any merry?" says James, *"let him sing psalms"* (James 5:13). That is, if any one is overflowing with true joy—joy consequent upon known redemption, joy in the Lord as

the Redeemer, it should be expressed in psalms—psalms of praise to God. “Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord” (vs. 1). It was then, when they knew for the first time what redemption was, that they poured forth the gladness of their hearts in song. And there should be no other, indeed there is no other, song for the Christian. To take another into his lips is to forget his true character as well as the only source of his joy.

The song itself may be considered in two aspects—its general subject, and the truths it contains. As to its general subject, it is simply the Lord Himself, and what He has done. But this embraces a great deal. It is the Lord Himself as apprehended and known in redemption. “The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation” (vs. 2). For it is only in redemption that He can be known. Thus, until the cross of Christ He was not, could not be, fully revealed. He was revealed to the children of Israel in the character of the relationship into which they were brought, but it was not until the redemption was accomplished, of which this recorded here was but the type, that He made Himself fully known in all the attributes of His character. But whatever the measure of His manifestation in each succeeding dispensation, He could not be apprehended, even so far, except through redemption, typical or otherwise, and the consequent relationship into which the redeemed were brought. The children of Israel knew Him as Jehovah; we, by grace, know Him as our God and Father, because the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; but whatever the dispensation, He Himself, as so revealed, is ever the subject of song, for it is in Him alone that His people in every age rejoice. As, however, we have remarked, there is another thing, and that is, what He has done, and this is fully brought out in the song of Moses and the children of Israel. There are necessarily two aspects of this—the salvation of His people, and the destruction of their enemies. This is expressed in every variety of phrase, and with all the sublimity of expression which becomed the majesty of Him who had thus wrought on their behalf. It is not what they had accomplished, but what the Lord has done. It was not their, but His triumph that they celebrated.

They have lost sight of themselves in the presence of such an astounding display of redemptive power. “I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea” (vs. 1). They thus magnify the Lord, for they perceive, as divinely inspired, that the work which He had achieved redounded to His own exaltation and glory. “Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power;” (vs. 6) and again, “Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?” (vs. 11).. Surely believers of this dispensation might learn from this primal redemptive song, what should be the character of their praise when gathered for worship in the power of the Holy Spirit. As it is the first song of redemption, it contains the principles of praise for all future generations. It deserves, on this account, the prayerful consideration of every believer.

It is, however, when we consider the truths it contains, that we learn its fullness and variety. The first is that they were now *redeemed*—*redemption* being, as pointed out, the burden of their song. “The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation,” (vs. 2) And again, Thou hast led forth the people which Thou hast redeemed. Until now they were not redeemed, they did not know salvation. They had been perfectly sheltered from the destroyer in Egypt, but they could not be said to be saved until they were brought out of Egypt, and delivered from Pharaoh—from Satan’s power. There is the same difference observable now in the experience of souls. There are many who know the forgiveness of their sins through the blood of Christ; but afterward not knowing themselves—the nature of the flesh still in them—or the power of Satan to harass and disturb—they not only lose

their joy consequent upon pardon, but sometimes fall, through the difficulties which surround them on every hand, into a state of despondency and alarm. Brought into the consciousness of their utter inability to do anything, or to resist the enemy, they are made to cry, as in Romans 7, "O wretched man that I am I who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (vs. 24). It is then they are taught that the Lord Jesus has not only provided cleansing for their sins through His precious blood, but that also, through His death and resurrection, He has brought them out of their old condition, and put them in a new place *in Him* on the other side of death and judgment. Their eyes are now opened to see that in Him they have been completely delivered from all that was against them, and therefore that Satan has lost his rights over, and consequently has no further claim upon, them. They are thus set free; their evil nature has already been judged, and Satan's power has been vanquished, in the death of Christ, and hence, delivered, their hearts are filled with thanksgiving and praise. That many stop short of this full blessing is only too true, but it is, nevertheless, the portion of every believer. And there never can be full assurance of salvation—firm and solid peace—until this complete deliverance is known. No doubt it must be learned experimentally, but it depends entirely and alone upon what Christ is and has done; and accordingly the whole of this blessing is presented to sinners in the gospel of God's grace. It may be that the soul learns forgiveness of sins first; but it is no less the fact that a full redemption is provided for, and preached to, every one who will receive the message of the gospel. It is of the first importance that this truth should be known; for through ignorance of it, there are thousands who are a prey to doubts and fears, instead of rejoicing in the Lord as the God of their salvation. Souls in such a state have little freedom in prayer, or worship, or service; but when once the truth of redemption dawns upon them, like the children of Israel in the scene before us, they are constrained to give vent to their newfound joy in songs of praise.

But there is more. Their position is changed. "Thou hast guided them in Thy strength unto Thy holy habitation" (vs. 13). They were brought to God as to the new standing they occupied. In the desert, just indeed entering upon it—this marked their character as pilgrims—they were yet brought unto God's holy habitation. This corresponds with our position as believers in the Lord Jesus. He once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God. This is our place as His redeemed. That is, we are brought to God according to all that He is; His whole moral nature, having been completely satisfied in the death of Christ, can now rest in us in perfect complacency. The hymn therefore does but express a scriptural thought, which says—

"So near, so very near to God,

I cannot nearer be,

For in the person of His Son

I am as near as He."

The place indeed is accorded to us in grace, but none the less in righteousness; so that not only are all the attributes of God's character concerned in bringing us there, but He Himself is also glorified by it. It is an immense thought, and one which, when held in power, imparts both strength and energy to our souls—that we are even now brought to God. The whole distance—measured by the death of Christ on the cross, when He was made sin for us—has been bridged over, and our position of nearness is marked by the place He now occupies as glorified at the right hand of God.

In heaven itself we shall not be nearer—as to our position, because it is in *Christ*. It will not be forgotten that our enjoyment of this truth, indeed even our apprehension of it, will depend upon our practical condition. God looks for a state corresponding with our standing—that is, our responsibility is measured by our privilege. But until we know our place there cannot be an answering condition. We must first learn that we are brought to God, if we would in any measure walk in accordance with the position. State and walk must ever flow from a known relationship. Unless therefore we are taught the truth of our standing before God, we shall never answer to it in our souls, or in our walk and conversation.

The third thing to be observed is, that their present position was the pledge of the fulfillment of all the rest. “Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in; in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established. The Lord shall reign forever and ever” (vss. 17-18). The power God had displayed at the Red Sea was the guarantee; first, that He would accomplish all His purposes respecting Israel; and, secondly, that that power would finally be exhibited in His everlasting reign. Faith, begotten through the knowledge of redemption, lays hold of this—embracing the whole scope of the purposes of God, and looking upon them as if already accomplished. It is so in the epistle to the Romans. *“Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified” (Rom. 8:30)*. If indeed the purposes of God could be frustrated, He were not God. There may be enemies in the way—and they may set themselves against the execution of His declared will. But faith says, *“If God be for us, who can be against us?” (Rom. 8:31)*. Thus Israel could sing, “The people shall hear, and be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina. Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away. Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of Thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till Thy people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over, which Thou hast purchased” (vss. 14-16). In like manner, the apostle cries, *“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?” (Rom. 8:35)*. No—nothing, for he is *“persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:38-39)*. The efficacy of the blood secures the completion of all God’s counsels, brings in all that He is—His majesty, His truth, His mercy, His love, His almighty power—on behalf of His people. It is therefore not presumption, but simplicity of faith, to anticipate the consummation of our redemption. It is not to overlook the character and might of our foes; but, measuring these by what God is, the soul is immediately certified of being more than a conqueror through Him that loved us. It is to derive the full and blessed consolation of the truth, that God is acting by His own power outside of us, and for His own glory. The legions of Satan—the dukes of Edom, the mighty men of Moab, and the inhabitants of Canaan, may seek to bar the way to the inheritance, but when God arises in His strength on behalf of His blood-besprinkled host, they will be scattered as chaff before the wind. Thus the end is sure from the beginning, and hence our triumphant song of victory may be raised before a single step has been taken in the wilderness path. And the issue will be to the glory of the One who has redeemed us. The Lord shall reign forever and ever. So we read in the epistle to the Philippians, that it is according to God’s purpose and decree, *“that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every*

tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:10-11). What joy it should be to the heart of the believer to contemplate that while we are brought into unspeakable blessing, yet that the result of redemption will be the exaltation of the Redeemer. In this Scripture the reign spoken of has undoubtedly primary application to the earth. It is the everlasting kingdom of Jehovah—the millennial sway of the Messiah, who must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet. But in principle it goes further—for He shall reign forever and ever; and this too will be the fruit of the cross. There He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, and as a consequence He is now, and will be forever, exalted.

There is another thing demanding our notice. So far, everything that has been considered is connected with the purposes of God. But in the second verse there is an exception. No sooner can they say, "The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation," (vs. 2) than they add, "He is my God, and I will prepare Him an habitation;² my father's God, and I will exalt Him." This is different from "The sanctuary which Thy hands have established" (vs. 17), in the seventeenth verse. That looks on to the accomplishment of the purposes of God in the establishment of the kingdom and the temple at Jerusalem. But this was to be a present thing: "I will prepare Him an habitation" (vs. 2). It is in fact the tabernacle. This will come more properly before us in subsequent chapters; but it may be noted here that this is the first time mention is made of a habitation for the Lord with His people. He had saints before this, but not a people; and until redemption was accomplished He never dwelt on earth. He visited His saints, and appeared to them in many ways, but He never had His dwelling place in their midst. But as soon as expiation for sin has been made by the blood of the Lamb, and His people have been brought forth out of Egypt, saved through death and resurrection, then He inspires their hearts to build Him a habitation.³ He led them by the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, as soon as they commenced their exodus; but He could not have a dwelling place in Egypt, in the territory of the enemy. But when they are brought on to new ground, He can identify Himself with them, dwell in their midst, and be their God, and they His people. It is so also in Christianity. Not until atonement had been made, and Christ had risen from the dead and ascended up on high, did God form His present habitation on earth through the Spirit (Acts 2; Eph. 2). It is so with the individual believer. It is not until he is cleansed by the blood of Christ that his body is made a temple of the Holy Spirit. The truth therefore is, that God's dwelling upon earth is founded upon a completed redemption. And what an immense privilege. Although the wilderness was no part of the purpose of God, yet, in His ways with His people, they wandered there forty years. How blessed, then, for these weary pilgrims, looking onward to the inheritance, to have the habitation of God in their midst; a place where they could approach Him, through the appointed priests, with sacrifices and incense; the center, too, of their encampment. How it would inspire the hearts of the godly with courage to behold that tabernacle, with the cloud resting upon it, the symbol of the divine presence. Hence the agonizing cry of Moses, after the people's failure, "If Thy presence go not, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and Thy people have found grace in Thy sight? Is it not in that Thou goest with us?" (Ex. 33:15-16). Nor should it be forgotten that God has also now His dwelling place on earth. This truth is, amid the confusions of Christendom, in danger of being ignored. But, spite of our failure, God does dwell in the house which He has formed, and will dwell in it until the return of the Lord. This truth should inspire us also with strength and consolation; for it is no mean privilege to be brought out of the sphere, and from under the power, of Satan into the scene of the presence and the power of God. It

is the only place of blessing on earth, and happy are they who have been made sharers of it through the grace of God in the power of the Holy Spirit.

This was no common joy which found expression in this song of jubilant praise. It evidently pervaded the whole host; for "Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances" (vs. 20). And Miriam cried, as she led the chorus of their song, "Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea" (vs. 21). It is the first mention of Miriam by name, and it is exceedingly interesting to notice that she was a prophetess. It was she, most probably, who watched over the ark of bulrushes in which her infant brother Moses was laid, and who was the means of his restoration to his mother. Thus she also becomes prominent in Israel, not only from her connection with Moses, but also from her own distinct gift. It is the way of the Lord to bless all connected with the man of His counsels; and at the same time it reveals to us how sacred is the family tie in His sight, But in the scene before us it was her honor and privilege to be the leader and mouthpiece of the joy of the women of Israel. The hearts of all were filled with gladness, and found their utterance in music, dancing, and song. They were redeemed and they knew it on this happy morn; and laden with the joy of their salvation, they tell it out in these accents of gratitude and praise.

The Prayer of the Saints

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen.

The Ethiopian Liturgical Psalms

Fast's Liturgy

Throughout the periods of fasting, the deeds we perform are the indications of our Christian endeavors. Alongside keeping the seven period of fast, it is of the essence to attend the Church for

prayer, be part of the Divine Liturgy and Holy Communion. Though these deeds are what we shall perform in our daily routine, during the fasting season, they help us to for the deliverance of our prayer, fasting and deeds. It is better to be diligent in bowing and alms giving.

Fasting that is done with prayer and bowing is delivered and accepted before God. Thus, it does not only grant us mercy and salvation, but blessing. Accord, our work, service and Marriage will also be blessed.

The Liturgy of Alms Giving

Alms giving is "Anything given gratuitously to relieve the poor, as money, food, or clothing, otherwise called charity." (King James Bible) Wise King Solomon explains, "He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord, And He will pay back what he has given." (Psalm 19:17)

These words of wise Solomon, teach us the value of alms giving to the poor where is necessary to have mercy and sympathy. Prophet Isiah explains how God loves alms giving more than scarification. He said, "On a high and lofty mountain You have made your bed. You also went up there to offer sacrifice." (Isiah 57:7)

Saint John the Baptist also said, "He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise." (Luke 3:11) It is a Christian deed to share what we have with others. We shall give one bread for a hunger man if we have two. Share our food and drinks with others so that they would not starve to death. We shall dress those who are bare and help those in need.

The Liturgy of Prostration to God

Prostration to God is the act of bending, curving, being inflected; in tokening of reverence, respect or civility; often with down. (King James Bible)

Prostration or Bowing before God is showing our respect, love and honor we have for Him. as Lord Jesus Christ said, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve" we shall bow for God. (Luke 4:8)

Holy Church teaches her children to worship God and bow for Him saying "we bow once for The Holy Father, Holy Son and Holy Spirit." People in exemplary to angels, we bow with fear and honor.

The Worshipping or Prostration of God

Prostration of God shall be done in a clean place or Holy Church in front of Holy Icon of God. Our mind and heart shall be clean from any evil thought and with fear of God bending totally till our four head touches the ground. When we bow we shall say, "I bow for Holy Father, Holy Son and Holy Spirit. Parise to Holy Father, Holy Son and Holy Spirit. We praise you for grating us, blessing, power, save guarding us till this time by His mercy and leading us with His light. "

Furthermore, we praise saying "Hallelujah to Holy Father, Hallelujah Holy Son and Hallelujah Spirit.; Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Alpha and Omega."

The Apocalypse of Zephaniah

This Jewish pseudepigraphical book is known through references to it by Clement of Alexandria, c. a.d. 190 (*Stromata*, V.11.77) and Nicephorus, c. a.d. 820. Clement describes Zephaniah's journey into the fifth heaven escorted by the Spirit. He saw angels in glory on thrones, singing the praises of the most high God. This work is quite similar to Ascension of Isaiah, 7-9 (*see article*).

There is a Christian *Apocalypse of Sophoniah* preserved in two pages of early 5th-cent. a.d. Sahidic Coptic MS. Sophoniah saw a soul being flogged in the nether world for its unrepented sins. Transported to a new locality, Sophoniah saw a multitude of angels of horrifying appearance. The text then becomes illegible. Its relation to Clement's Apocalypse is uncertain, although the flogging scene resembles a similar scene in Apocalypse of Paul (*see article*) from Nag Hammadi Codex V, which has passages in common with Clement's Apocalypse.

An Achmimic Coptic MS of the 4th cent. has a part of an apocalypse (eighteen pages) believed by some to be part of the work mentioned above. Its title is not preserved, so it is sometimes called the Anonymous Apocalypse. It describes the punishment in hell of the wicked as in the 2nd-cent. Apocalypse of Peter. All three works are prob. of Christian origin.

The Testament of Zebulun

Chapter 1

1:1 "A copy of the testament of Zebulun, which he decreed for his sons in the one hundred fourteenth year of his life, thirty-two years after the death of Joseph."

1:2 "And he said to them, Listen to me, sons of Zebulun; heed the words of your father."

1:3 "I am Zebulun, a good gift to my parents, for when I was born my father prospered exceedingly, in flocks and herds, when he got his share of them by means of spotted rods."

1:4 "I am not aware, my children, that I have sinned in all my days, except in my mind."

1:5 "Nor do I recall having committed a transgression, except what I did to Joseph in ignorance, because in a compact with my brothers I kept from telling my father what had been done, although I wept much in secret."

1:6 "I was afraid of my brothers because they had all agreed that, if any one disclosed the secret, he should be killed by a sword."

1:7 "Even when they wanted to kill him, I exhorted them with tears not to commit this lawless act."

Chapter 2

2:1 "Simeon and Gad came upon Joseph to kill him. Falling on his face, Joseph began to say to them,"

2:2 "Have mercy on me, my brothers; pity the deep feelings of Jacob, our father. Do not put your hands on me to pour out innocent blood, because I have not sinned against you."

2:3 "If I have sinned, discipline me as one trains a child, but do not lay your hand on me for the sake of our father, Jacob."

2:4 "As he was saying these words, I was moved to pity and began to weep; my courage grew weak and all the substance of my inner being became faint within my soul"

2:5 "Joseph wept, and I with him; my heart pounded, the joints of my body shook and I could not stand."

2:6 "And when he saw me crying with him, while the others were coming to kill him, he rushed behind me beseeching them."

2:7 "Reuben stood up and said, My brothers, let us not kill him, but let us throw him into one of those dry cisterns which our fathers dug and in which there is to be found no water."

2:8 "Accordingly, the Lord prohibited any water from rising up in them so that Joseph's preservation might be accomplished."

2:9 "And the Lord did this until the time when they sold him to the Ishmaelites."

Chapter 3

3:1 "I had no share in the price received for Joseph, my children."

3:2 "But Simeon, Gad, and our other brothers accepted the money, bought shoes for themselves, their wives, and their children." (Amos 2:6)

3:3 "We will not use the money for eating, which is the price of our brother's blood, but we will trample it underfoot in response to his having said he would rule over us. Let us see what comes of his dreams." (Matt 27:6-10)

3:4 "Accordingly, it is written in the book of the Law of Moses that anyone who is unwilling to raise up posterity for his brother, his shoe should be removed and one should spit in his face."

3:5 "Joseph's brothers did not want their brother to live, and the Lord removed Joseph's shoe from them."

3:6 "For when they arrived in Egypt their shoes were removed by Joseph's servants before the gate, and thus they did obeisance to Joseph in the manner of the Pharaoh."

3:7 "Not only did they do obeisance, but they were spit upon, prostrating themselves forthwith before him. And thus they were humiliated before the Egyptians."

3:8 "After that the Egyptians heard all the wicked things that we had done to Joseph."

Chapter 4

4:1 "After they had thrown him into the pit, they sat down and began to eat;"

4:2 "As for me, I tasted nothing for two days and two nights, being moved with compassion for Joseph. And Judah joined me in abstaining from food; he stayed near the cistern, because he was afraid that Simeon and Gad might go out and kill Joseph."

4:3 "When they observed that I was not eating, they assigned me to guard him until he might be sold."

4:4 "He remained in the cistern three days and three nights, so that when he was sold he was starving."

4:5 "When Reuben heard that Joseph had been sold while he was away, he tore his clothing in mourning, saying, How can I look my father in the face?"

4:6 "He took money and ran after the merchants, but found no one, since they had left the highway and had traveled by a shortcut through the region of the Troglodytes."

4:7 "And Reuben ate no food that day. Then Dan came to him and said,"

4:8 "Do not weep; do not mourn, for I have found what we should say to our father, Jacob."

4:9 "Let us kill a goat's kid and dip Joseph's coat in its blood. Then we shall say, Do you recognize whether this is your son's garment?"

4:10“(For they had taken off from Joseph his father’s coat when they were about to sell him and put on him an old garment of a slave.).”

4:11 “Simeon had the garment and was unwilling to give it to him, preferring to cut it up with his sword, since he was burning with anger that he had not killed him.”

4:12 “But we all rose in opposition to him and said, If you don’t give it up we shall say you alone did this evil deed in Israel.”

4:13 “So he gave it up and they did as Dan had stated.”

Chapter 5

5:1 “Now, my children, I tell you to keep the Lord’s commands; show mercy to your neighbor, have compassion on all, not only human beings but to dumb animals.”

5:2 “For these reasons the Lord blessed me, and when all my brothers were ill, I alone passed without sickness, for the Lord knows the purpose of each man.”

5:3 “Have mercy in your inner being, my children, because whatever anyone does to his neighbor, the Lord will do to him.”

5:4 “For the sons of my brothers were sickly and died on account of Joseph, because they did not act in mercy out of their inner compassion.”

5:5 “But you, my sons, were preserved free from illness, as you know. When I was in Canaan catching fish by the sea for our father, Jacob, many were drowned in the sea, but I survived unharmed.”

Chapter 6

6:1 “I was the first to make a boat to sail on the sea, because the Lord gave me understanding and wisdom concerning it.”

6:2 “I positioned a rudder behind it, put up a sail on a straight piece of wood in the middle.”

6:3 “In it I sailed along the shores, catching fish for my father’s household until we went to Egypt.”

6:4 “Being compassionate, I gave some of my catch to every stranger.”

6:5 “If anyone were a traveler, or sick, or aged, I cooked the fish, prepared it well, and offered to each person according to his need, being either convivial or consoling.”

6:6 “Therefore the Lord made my catch to be an abundance of fish; for whoever shares with his neighbor receives multifold from the Lord.”

6:7 “I fished for five years, sharing with every person whom I saw, and sufficing for my father’s household.”

6:8 “Summers, I fished; winters, I tended the flock of my brothers.”

Chapter 7

7:1 “Now I will tell you what I did. I saw a man suffering from nakedness in the wintertime and I had compassion on him: I stole a garment secretly from my own household and gave it to the man in difficulty.”

7:2 “You, therefore, my children, on the basis of God’s caring for you, without discrimination be compassionate and merciful to all. Provide for every person with a kind heart.”

7:3 “If at any time you do not have anything to give to the one who is in need, be compassionate and merciful in your inner self.”

7:4 "For when my hand could not find the means for contributing to a needy person, I walked with him for seven stades, weeping; my inner being was in torment with sympathy for him."

Chapter 8

8:1 "You also, my children, have compassion toward every person with mercy, in order that the Lord may be compassionate and merciful to you."

8:2 "In the last days God will send his compassion on the earth, and whenever he finds compassionate mercy, in that person he will dwell."

8:3 "To the extent that a man has compassion on his neighbor, to that extent the Lord has mercy on him."

8:4 "For when we went down into Egypt, Joseph did not hold a grudge against us. When he saw me, he was moved with compassion."

8:5 "Whomever you see, do not harbor resentment, my children; love one another, and do not calculate the wrong done by each to his brothers."

8:6 "This shatters unity, and scatters all kinship, and stirs up the soul. He who recalls evil receives neither compassion nor mercy."

Chapter G

9:1 "Pay heed to the streams; when they flow in the same channel they carry along stones, wood, and sand,"

9:2 "But if they are divided into many channels, the earth swallows them and they become unproductive."

9:3 "And you shall be thus if you are divided."

9:4 "Do not be divided into two heads, because everything the Lord has made has a single head. He provides two shoulders, two hands, two feet, but all members obey one head."

9:5 "In the writing of the fathers I came to know that in the last days you shall defect from the Lord, and you shall be divided in Israel, and you shall follow after two kings; you shall commit every abomination and worship every idol."

9:6 "Your enemies will take you captive and you shall reside among the gentiles/nations with all sorts of sickness and tribulation and oppression of soul."

9:7 "And thereafter you will remember the Lord and repent, and he will turn you around because he is merciful and compassionate; he does not bring a charge at wickedness against the sons of men, since they are flesh and the spirits of deceit lead them astray in all their actions." (Eph 6:12)

9:8 "And thereafter the Lord himself will arise upon you, the light of righteousness with healing and compassion in his wings. He will liberate every captive of the sons of men from Beliar/Satan, and every spirit of error will be trampled down. He will turn all nations to being zealous for him. And you shall see [God in a human form], he whom the Lord will choose: Jerusalem is his name."

9:9 "You will provoke him to wrath by the wickedness of your works, and you will be rejected until the time of the end."

Chapter 10

10:1 "And now, my children, do not grieve because I am dying, nor be depressed because I am leaving you."

10:2 "I shall rise again in your midst as a leader among your sons, and I shall be glad in the midst of

my tribe – as many as keep the Law of the Lord and the commandments of Zebulon, their father.”
10:3 “But the Lord shall bring down fire on the impious and will destroy them to all generations,”
10:4 “I am now hurrying to my rest, like my fathers.”
10:5 “But you fear/reverence the Lord your God with all your strength all the days of your life.”
10:6 “When he had said this, he fell into a beautiful sleep, and his sons placed him in a coffin. Later they carried him up to Hebron and buried him with his fathers.”

The Testament of Dan

Chapter 1

1:1 “A copy of the words of Dan, which he spoke to his sons at the last of his days, in the one hundred twenty-fifth year of his life.”
1:2 “Assembling his clan, he said, Sons of Dan, hear my words; give heed to what is uttered by the mouth of your father.”
1:3 “I have made proof in my heart and in my life that truth with honest dealings is good and well-pleasing to God, while falsehood and anger are evil because they instruct mankind thoroughly in every evil.”
1:4 “My children, I confess to you today that in my heart I rejoiced over the death of Joseph, a man who was true and good.”
1:5 “I was glad about the sale of Joseph, because Father loved him more than the rest of us.”
1:6 “For the spirit of jealousy and pretentiousness kept saying to me, You too are his son.”
1:7 “And one of the spirits of Beliar/Satan was at work within me, saying, Take this sword, and with it kill Joseph; once he is dead, your father will love you.”
1:8 “This is the spirit of anger that persuaded me that as a leopard sucks the blood of a kid, so I should suck the blood of Joseph.”
1:9 “But the God of Jacob, our father, did not allow him to fall into my hands so that I might find him alone, nor did he permit me to accomplish this lawless act, lest two tribes be lost from Israel.”

Chapter 2

2:1 “And now, my children, I am dying, and I say to you in truth that if you do not guard yourselves against the spirit of falsehood and anger, and love truth and forbearance, you will perish.”
2:2 “There is blindness in anger, my children, and there is no angry person who can perceive the face of truth.”
2:3 “For even if one is his father or mother, he treats them as enemies; if it is a brother, he does not recognize him; if it is a prophet of the Lord, he misunderstands; if it is a just man, he is unaware of him; if a friend, he ignores him.”
2:4 “For the spirit of anger ensnares him in the nets of deceit, blinds his eyes literally, darkens his understanding by means of a lie, and provides him with its own peculiar perspective.”
2:5 “By what means does it ensnare the vision? By hatred in the heart, it gives him a peculiar disposition to envy his brother.”

Chapter 3

3:1 "Anger is evil, my children, for it becomes the motivation force of the soul itself."
3:2 "That force has strange effects on the body of the angry man; it dominates his soul, and provides the body with a peculiar power so that it can accomplish every lawless act."
3:3 "When the soul acts, it justifies whatever is done since it lacks discernment."
3:4 "So then whoever is angry, if he is a powerful person, has triple strength by reason of his anger: First through the power and support of his subordinates; second through his wealth, by which he can win by persuasive acts and triumph in injustice; third, he has the natural force of his own body, and through it he accomplishes evil."
3:5 "But if the angry one is a weak person, his strength is twice that of nature, for anger always supports such a person in their transgression."
3:6 "This spirit always moves with falsehood at the right hand of Satan, in order that such deeds may be done through savagery and deception."

Chapter 4

4:1 "Understand, then, the power of anger, that it is senseless."
4:2 "First, it arouses by spoken word; then by actions it gives strength to the one who is aroused, by sharp losses it perturbs his mind, and thus arouses his soul with great anger."
4:3 "When anyone speaks against you, do not be moved to anger; and if anyone praises you as being kind, do not be elated, nor be carried away, neither by pleasure nor by shame."
4:4 "First it is pleasant to hear and thus it sharpens the mind to be sensitive to some provocation; and then when anyone is aroused by anger, it makes him suppose his self-esteem is justified."
4:5 "If you suffer a loss, if you undergo the destruction of anything, do not become alarmed, my children, because this spirit makes one desire what is transitory in order that he might be made angry over what he is missing."
4:6 "If you lose something, by your own action or otherwise, do not be sorrowful, for grief arouses anger as well as deceit."
4:7 "Anger and falsehood together are a double-edged evil, and work together to perturb the reason. And when the soul is continually perturbed, the Lord withdraws from it and Beliar/Satan rules it."

Chapter 5

5:1 "Observe the Lord's commandments, then, my children, and keep his Law. Avoid wrath, and hate lying, in order that the Lord may dwell among you, and Beliar/Satan may flee from you."
5:2 "Each of you speak truth clearly to his neighbor, and do not fall into pleasure and troublemaking, but be at peace, holding to the God of peace. Thus no conflict will overwhelm you."
5:3 "Throughout all your life love the Lord, and one another with a true heart."
5:4 "For I know that in the last days you will defect from the Lord, you will be offended at Levi, and revolt against Judah; but you will not prevail over them. An angel of the Lord guides them both, because by them Israel shall stand."
5:5 "To the extent that you abandon the Lord, you will live by every evil deed, committing the revolting acts of the gentiles/nations, chasing after wives of lawless men, and you are motivated to all wickedness by the spirits of deceit among you."
5:6 "For I read in the Book of Enoch the Righteous that your prince is Satan and that all the spirits of sexual promiscuity and of arrogance devote attention to the sons of Levi in the attempt to observe them closely and cause them to commit sin before the Lord."

5:7 "My sons will draw close to Levi, will participate with them in all manner of sins; and with the sons of Judah they will share in greed, like lions snatching what belongs to others."

5:8 "Accordingly you will be led off with them into captivity; there you will receive all the plagues of Egypt, and all the evils of the gentiles/nations."

5:9 "Therefore when you turn back to the Lord, you will receive mercy, and he will lead you into his holy place, proclaiming peace to you."

5:10 "And there shall arise for you from the tribe of Judah and the tribe of Levi the Lord's salvation. He will make war against Beliar/Satan; he will grant the vengeance of victory as our goal."

5:11 "And he shall take from Beliar/Satan the captives, the souls of the saints/elect; and he shall turn the hearts of the disobedient ones to the Lord, and grant eternal peace to those who call upon him."

5:12 "And the saints/elect shall refresh themselves in Eden; the righteous shall rejoice in the New Jerusalem, which shall be eternally for the glorification of God."

5:13 "And Jerusalem shall no longer undergo desolation, nor shall Israel be led into captivity, because the Lord will be in her midst [living among human beings]. The Holy One of Israel will rule over them in humility and poverty, and he who trusts in him shall reign in truth in the heavens."

Chapter 6

6:1 "And now fear/reverence the Lord, my children, be on guard against Satan and his spirits."

6:2 "Draw near to God and to the angel who intercedes for you, because he is the mediator between God and men for the peace of Israel. He shall stand in opposition to the kingdom of the enemy."

6:3 "Therefore the enemy is eager to trip up all who call on the Lord,"

6:4 "Because he knows that on the day in which Israel trusts, the enemy's kingdom will be brought to an end."

6:5 "This angel of peace will strengthen Israel so that it will not succumb to an evil destiny."

6:6 "But in Israel's period of lawlessness it will be the Lord who will not depart from her and therefore she will seek to do his will, for none of the angels is like him."

6:7 "His name shall be everywhere throughout Israel; [and the Savior will be known among the nations]."

6:8 "Keep love, truth, and patience."

6:9 "What you have heard from your father pass on to your children, so that the father of nations may accept you. For he is true and patient, lowly and humble, exemplifying by his actions the Law of God."

6:10 "Forsake all unrighteousness and cling to the righteousness of the Law of God."

6:11 "And bury me near my fathers."

Chapter 7

7:1 "When he had said this, he kissed them and slept an eternal sleep."

7:2 "And his sons buried him and later they carried his bones to be near Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

7:3 "Dan prophesied to them, however, that they would go astray from God's law, that they would be estranged from their inheritance, from the race of Israel, and from the patrimony; and that is what occurred."

The Book of the Wars of the Lord

WARS OF THE LORD, BOOK OF (סֵפֶר מִלְחָמֹת יְהוָה). One of the several books no longer extant which are mentioned in the OT and which played an important, if somewhat obscure, part in Israel's literary history. It is cited by name and quoted in Numbers 21:14f. to substantiate the narrator's statement concerning the boundary cut by the deep ravines of the Arnon between Moab and Ammon. The quotation as it stands is obscure (the syntax is apparently incomplete and nothing is known of the names Waheb and Suphah) and sheds little light on the character of the book itself. It is a plausible conjecture, however, that vv. 17f. and 27-30 are drawn from the same source, not only because of their proximity to the first quotation, but in the case of 27-30 because of the occurrence of a number of identical place names as well as the suitability of the taunt itself for the content of the book as suggested by its title.

Evidently the book consisted of a number of victory songs written to be sung in celebration of the triumphs of Yahweh in the conquest of Canaan by Israel. That Yahweh was "a man of war" (Exod 15:3) who brought Israel victory in battle was a fact the nation loved to commemorate in song.

What is apparently another book of this type is the Book of Jashar (or "the Upright") mentioned and quoted in Joshua 10:12f. and 2 Samuel 1:18ff. What relationship may exist between these two books (or are they the same book?) and certain other unidentified poetical quotations in the OT (e.g., Exod 15:1-18; Judg 5; LXX 3 Kings 8:53) can no longer be determined.

Questions of the date and authorship of this book remain shrouded in obscurity but it would seem naturally to derive from the heroic age, and thus to be among the most ancient of Israel's lit.

The Vision of Joshua

"And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by."—Zech. 3:1-5.

THE original intention of this vision was to foretell the revival of the Jewish state after its long depression through the Babylonish captivity. Joshua, the high-priest, with his tattered garments, must be looked upon as the type of the Jewish people in their deep distress. He was ministering before the Lord in worn and filthy garments, to show at once the sin of Israel and the poverty into which they had fallen; for so poor were they, that the service of God could not be conducted in suitable apparel, but the high-priest himself appeared before the altar in robes unfitted for his sacred work. The set time to favour Zion is according to the visions most near at hand; and Satan, the old adversary of the chosen race, bestirs himself to resist them, and turn away the favour of God

from them; but that same angel of the covenant who led the people through the wilderness, and carried them all the days of old, stands before the throne as their advocate, and at his request, Jehovah rebukes Satan, and begins to bless the people. Joshua, their representative, receives a change of raiment, in testimony that the people's sin is forgiven, and that God accepts their worship. The vision then sweeps on to the day of the Lord Jesus, and the heart of the prophet Zechariah is cheered by a sight of the whole land restored to its former peace and happiness, under the reign of the glorious one who is called "My servant, THE BRANCH."

While we have been interpreting the other visions of Zechariah, we have tried to derive present comfort and profit from them. We will endeavour to do so on this occasion. We may very properly take Joshua as a type of all the people of God, as they stand in their sense of sin and natural faultiness, subject to the accusations of Satan, but delivered by their ever gracious Lord; and the change of raiment as setting forth the forgiveness of sin and the imputation of the Saviour's righteousness, which is the joy of all believers. Let us take each particular separately, and may God the Holy Spirit shed a sacred light upon the vision, and may we see in it more than Zechariah himself discovered; may we see Jehovah Jesus in all the glory of his love, manifesting himself to his chosen as he doth not unto the world.

I. To begin, then, where the vision begins, with THE BELIEVER HIMSELF REPRESENTED BY JOSHUA.

The believer himself is described as a priest standing before the angel of the Lord. Let us mark this. He is a priest. Who are the priests? Certain sons of Korah, who take too much upon them, say, "We are the priests, we are the legitimate descendants of the apostles, and a mysterious power distills from our priestly hands." We reply to them, it is impossible that you should be descendants of the apostles and yet claim to possess priestly power, for the apostles never claimed any peculiar priesthood for themselves above other believers, but they spoke of their brethren, the Christians of their age, as being on a par with themselves in the matter of priesthood. "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (1 Peter ii. 5.) If then these pretenders to priesthood be priests in any special sense, they certainly are not descendants of the Apostles, for the Apostles claimed no priority of priesthood beyond the rest of their brethren, but said of all the saints, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood." The fact is they are neither one nor the other—they are not descendants of the Apostles, for they preach not the Apostles' gospel, and know not their spirit; nor have they any priestly office, unless it be that the old Babylonian harlot accepts them as her foster-children, and gives them a name and a place among those who partake in her abominations. Who are the priests? Why, every humble man and woman that knows the power of Jesus Christ in his own soul, to purge and cleanse him from dead works, is appointed to serve as a priest unto God. I say every humble man and every humble woman too, for in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female, but we are all one in him. We offer prayer unto God, knowing that it ascends to heaven like sweet odours before the throne; we offer praise, believing that "whoso offereth praise, glorifieth God." "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Jesus hath made us priests and kings unto God, and even here upon earth we exercise the priesthood of consecrated living and hallowed service, and hope to exercise it till the Lord shall come. When I see then Joshua the high priest, I do but see a picture of each and every child of God,

who has been made nigh by the blood of Christ, and has been taught to minister in holy things, and enter into that which is within the veil.

But observe where this High Priest is, he is said to be "standing before the angel of the Lord," that is, standing to minister. This should be the perpetual position of every true believer. I have no business on the bed of sloth; I have no right to be wandering abroad after private business; I can claim no time which I may set apart to my own follies, or to my own aggrandisement. My true position as a Christian is to be always ministering to God, always standing before his altar. Do I hear you ask how this can be, with your farms and with your merchandise? Know ye not, brethren, that whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, ye may do it all to the glory of God. Understand ye not that every place is now God's temple, and that everywhere is God's altar, and that ye can as truly serve him in your daily callings as in the assemblies of the place of worship. You know not the true position of a Christian if you fancy that you are only priests on the Lord's-day, and only to minister before God when you stand in the congregation of the faithful. You are appointed priests like your Lord, for ever, and you are for ever to be offering the sacrifice. By day and by night should your hearts be going up to him. You should fall asleep with your Master's name upon your tongue, and when you awake you should say with the Psalmist, "I am still with thee." Happy Joshua! Notwithstanding the filthiness of his garments, he is to be commended because he keeps in the position to which he is called, and like the servant whose ear was bored, he does not leave his master's house. Come you that profess to be God's people, if you have been negligent in the duties of your high calling, and if your hearts at this moment are going after vanity, pray God the Holy Spirit to put you into a proper state to perform the functions of your holy office, and now in the courts of the Lord's house, stand like Joshua, with your hearts prepared by the Lord of Hosts to minister before the Lord.

Yet, notice where it is that Joshua stands to minister; it is before the angel of Jehovah. You and I can never stand to minister before Moses, the mediator, under the law; much less before Jehovah himself, for even our God is a consuming fire. It is only through a mediator that we poor defiled ones can ever become priests unto God. Peradventure some of God's people here may have forgotten this. You have been searching yourselves and trying your hearts as in the sight of God's law, and you feel very deeply that you are far behind what the glory of the God in the law would ask of you; and therefore you begin foolishly to mistrust your Father's love, and to think that your service before him will not speed. Beloved, it is ill serving God in the light of the law: but oh! how blessed is it to stand and minister before Christ and in Christ! Then, if I can bring him nothing but my tears, he will put them in his bottle, for he once wept; if I can bring him nothing but my groans and sighs, he will accept these as an acceptable sacrifice, for he once was broken in heart, and sighed heavily in spirit. Gracious God, I bless thee that I have not to present my sacrifice directly to thyself, else thou wouldst consume my sacrifice and me with the flames of thy wrath; but I present what I have before thy messenger, the angel of the covenant, the Lord Jesus, and through him my prayers find acceptance wrapped up in his prayers; my praises become sweet as they are bound up with bundles of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, from Christ's own garden; then I myself, standing in him, am accepted in the Beloved; and all my poor, defiled, polluted works, though in themselves only objects of divine abhorrence, are so accepted and received, that God smelleth a sweet savour. He is content and I am blessed. See, then, the position of the Christian as a priest: he is to stand before the angel of the Lord.

Now read the next word in the light of your own experience—"Clothed," it is said, "with filthy garments." Did you ever feel this when you have come to serve God? Perhaps it is at evening prayer—there has been something amiss in the family during the day, and you know it—perhaps, as the head of the household, you have to conduct prayer, and you feel, "O God, I cannot pray, I cannot pray as I would; I am thy priest in this house, I know, but how can I minister before thee, for I have filthy garments on?" Possibly your business kept you up very late last night; things are not going on as well as you wish in matters of trade, and you have come here distracted; and while sitting in the pew listening to God's people as they praise the Lord, you have thought, "Ah! I have my filthy garments on; I cannot pray to him, I cannot praise him as I would." I know what it is to come and preach to you sometimes, and to feel such an overwhelming sense of my own unworthiness, that, were it not Woe unto me if I do not preach the gospel, I would not come on this platform again, for it is hard to feel that your garments are defiled even while endeavouring to be God's mouth to men. Perhaps this afternoon, when you are going into your Sunday-school class, you will feel much warmth of heart towards God, you will confess that you are not your own, but bought with a price, you will desire to live unto Him and honour him; but, oh, that dread impediment of conscious guilt, it will make you cry out, "How can I stand before Him who charged his angels with folly, and declares that the heavens are not pure in his sight? How can I hope to have a blessing on anything that I do, when I feel a heart of unbelief departing from the living God? How can I give a blessing to his saints, when I want a blessing myself? How shall I break the bread of Christ with unholy fingers, and pour out the wine into his cup with a sinful hand?" But stop, Christian, do not think of renouncing your priesthood; do not let a sense of unfitness keep you from your service. Stand where you are; for remember, you are standing in the only place where pollution can be washed away, you are standing before the angel of the covenant. It is before Christ that sin is to be confessed. Confess it anywhere else, your sorrow is not repentance but remorse. "What is remorse?" says one. Remorse is repentance made out of sight of Jesus; true repentance is sorrow of sin in the presence of Christ. Foul and filthy as you are, there is but one voice which can speak you clean. Go not away from that voice. There is but one hand which can touch you and make you pure; stand where that hand is close to you, and still, filthy as your garments are, shun not the face of your best, your only friend, but breathe out this prayer, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. Purge me, oh, purge me now, for thy love's sake."

Satan stood before the angel to resist Joshua. Does not his opposition seem superfluous? Poor Joshua feels enough the filth upon his garments, without needing to have the devil to withstand him. And I, poor I, do often feel so much my own sinfulness, that it seems a work of supererogation on the devil's part, to lay accusations—conscience accuses enough without him. But, yet, so cruel is he, that he avails himself of the times of the weakness of God's people, there and then to resist them. Observe what he is called. He is called Satan, which signifies an adversary. He is an adversary, and that by nature. His nature is now so vile that he cannot help being the adversary of everything that is good. From the day on which he was expelled from heaven, and dragged with him a third part of the stars of glory, he has been God's bitterest foe; and as to man, from the hour in which it was said, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," he discovered in that humble creature man, his great destroyer, and he has never ceased to nibble at the heel of the seed of the woman, foreknowing how terribly his head is to be bruised. There is something, however, very comforting in the thought that he is an adversary: I would sooner have him for an adversary than for a friend. O my soul, it were dread work with thee if Satan were a friend of thine, for then with him

thou must for ever dwell in darkness and in the deeps, shut out from the friendship – ship of God; but to have Satan for an adversary is a comfortable omen, for it looks as if God were our friend, and so far let us be comforted in this matter. Yet, remember, Satan is an adversary not to be despised. Of keen intellect, ripened by years of experience, with a fulness of cunning and craft which made even the serpent, when possessed by him, more subtle than any other beast of the field, he is an antagonist worthy of angelic might. Gabriel might quail in such a conflict if he did not stand clad in the golden armour of perfect innocence. We, so apt to sin, carrying about with us so much tinder, had need to fear the fiery sparks which he scatters. It is a dreadful thing to stand foot to foot with Apollyon. Read Bunyan's description of Christian's fight in the Valley of Humiliation, and you have there a shadow picture of what the true conflict is. Better to endure all kinds of temporal pains and trials, than to be beset by Satan. He who wins gains nothing, and he who fails will find his weight full heavy when the dragon sets his foot upon his neck. Thou hast a stern adversary here, and one who will never cease to vex thee till thou shalt be out of gunshot of him, in having crossed the river of death.

Now you will perceive, if you look at the passage, that this adversary selected a most fitting place in which to do Joshua damage. He came to accuse him before the angel—before God's own Son. Oh! if he could once make the Lord loose his hold of us, then we should soon be his prey. You perceive he does not attack Joshua first, but he comes before the angel to prevent Joshua's being accepted. If Satan can once persuade you or me to think we are not God's children and not accepted, he knows that he has done us serious injury. In the arsenals of hell there are great stores of "ifs:" "ifs" are Satan's bomb-shells—"If thou be the Son of God." If he can make you doubt, then he makes a breach in your wall. If you be strong enough to say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him," you will then come off more than conqueror. But the drift of Satan is to touch you just there, in that place where your strength lieth. He is like Delilah; he feels that if he can cut off the locks of your faith, where your strength dwells, then he may put out your eyes and sell you to the Philistines for ever. Take care, take care, when Satan comes to accuse you before the angel and to make you doubt your interest in the Lord Jesus, that you at once leave the case in the angel's hands, for your advocate can plead better against the accuser than you can, and it is best for you to hold your peace, and to let that great Advocate stand up, and to say, "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee."

You will agree with me that the adversary not only selected a very fit place by coming at once to the throne to lay the accusation, but a very fit opportunity. Joshua had his filthy garments on. Satan is a great coward: he will generally, meddle with God's people when they are down. I find that when I am in good physical health, I am not often tempted of Satan to despondency or doubt; but whenever I get depressed in spirit, or the liver is out of order, or the head aches, then comes the hissing serpent, "God has forsaken you, you are no child of God, you are unfaithful to your Master, you have no part in the blood of sprinkling," and such-like things. You old rascal! if you say as much as that to me in my days of health, when my blood is leaping in my veins, I shall be more than a match for you; but to meet me just then, when you understand that I am weak, ay! this is like you, Satan. What a thorough devil our enemy is! I can call him by no worse name than his own; but if worse there were, richly would he deserve it. You must expect, Christian, when you have lost your sense of justification, when you are conscious of sin, when you feel unfit to minister before God,

you must expect that just then he will come to accuse you. If Joshua's garment had been perfectly clean that morning when he went to minister as a priest, Satan would have let him alone; but see Joshua depressed in spirit, and heavy in mind, weeping over his sins, then comes Satan, and he says, "Now, I shall speed with him, God will hate Joshua, for he cannot bear filth; he will be sure to cast away the filthy priest. And Joshua is hating himself too, and so I shall plunge him in despair, and make an end of the man." Surely, so it would have been if the angel had not been there; but the angel of the Lord, by his presence, is ever a wall of fire round about his people, and a glory in the midst. If the lion of hell comes prowling forth to seize the very weakest lamb, the great Shepherd will deliver the lamb out of his teeth; nor shall the infernal lion rend the meanest of his sheep.

Commentators have puzzled themselves to know what Satan would have to say against Joshua. As I read their conjectures, I thought that it would never have puzzled me, for my question would be in my own case, which out of fifty thousand things the devil would choose to bring? Not what he could bring, but I say, which out of fifty thousand things he would choose to bring? Truly, dear friend, if Satan wants to accuse us, any page of our history, any hour of any day will furnish him material for his charges. Yesterday you were impatient, the day before you were proud, another day you were slothful, on another, angry. Oh, what a den of unclean birds the human heart is! I would God we could wring their necks, but they are too many for any power less than divine to destroy them all; one chirps at one time and one at another, and between them they maintain a dolorous discord. Talk of perfection in the flesh! the man who dreams of it is either a fool or a knave, one of the two; he is either a fool and does not know his own heart, or else he is a knave before God, and is dishonest honest, and does not call that sin which is sin. Perfection in the flesh! why, those believers who live nearest to God and have the deepest experience of divine things will tell you they have given up that dream long ago, they never expect to be perfect except in Christ Jesus, and never to be complete in themselves but only to be complete in him. If the old accuser wants reasons for accusation he may indeed find as many as he wills, and continue to accuse as long as ever he pleases, for we are altogether as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. I have heard of a certain divine that he used always to carry about with him a little book. This little book had only three leaves in it, and truth to tell there was not a single word in the book. The first was a sheet of black paper, black as jet; the next was a sheet of red—scarlet; and the next was a sheet of white without spot. Day by day he used to take out this little book, and at last he told some one the secret of what it meant. He said, "There is the black leaf—that is ray sin, and the wrath of God which my sin deserves; I look, and look, and think it is not black enough, though it is black as black can be. Then the next, that is the leaf of the atoning sacrifice, the precious blood—the red leaf—how I do delight to look at that, and look, and look again. Then there is the white leaf, that is my soul, as it is washed in Jesus' blood, made white as snow, through the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and washing in the fountain which Christ has filled from his own veins." Ah, that first black leaf! That black leaf! Surely, if Satan looks over it, it will be no puzzle to him to find somewhat against you, for he may continue to plead against you till doomsday, and always find ground in your shortcoming for accusing you before the angel of God.

And what was it that Satan was after, after all, with Joshua? Was it that he hated Joshua's sins? Did he bring these before the angel because he really was vexed that such a sinner as Joshua should defile the courts of God's house? Ah, not a bit of it. It is an edifying spectacle, certainly, to see Satan pleading against sin. It is sometimes good to turn the tables on Satan, as Martin Luther

does, and tell him, "Supposing I am all thou sayest I am, yet what are you that you should bring accusations against me? I am no servant of thine, Satan. If my Master does not find fault with me, who am I that I should be afraid, because you assail and accuse me? What are you, after all? You do but look round my castle wall, and smile at every rift, and so tell me where it wants mending! What are you, but a fierce dog, keeping me awake by your howling? Better that I have you than be without you, lest I fall into a deadly slumber, and so sleep myself into carnal security and spiritual death. What art thou after all, arch fiend, but one who, like a terrible tempest, drives me nearer to my Saviour, compels me to find a harbour in his bosom." Satan aims at our destruction; that is the point at which he drives. He does not care for our pleasure, it is our total and eternal ruin. Let us know this, and never be beguiled by him. In whatever way he puts sin, let us understand it to be sin still, and therefore keep out of his clutches. When at the council of Basle, a certain cardinal had spoken very fairly about Protestants, the Emperor Sigismund rose and said, "Yes, he talks very prettily, but remember he is a Roman, he is a Roman still." So when the adversary advances with his blandishments and temptations, remember he is a devil still, though drest in his best robes, and detect him always under any of his various subterfuges; for his desire is at all times and all seasons, your total destruction.

The Lament of the Prophets

The concept of "The Prophet's Lament" is a recurring theme in the Bible, where prophets express deep sorrow and grief over the spiritual and moral decay of the people of Israel and Judah. This lamentation is often directed towards God, reflecting the prophet's anguish over the people's disobedience and the impending judgment that such disobedience invites. The lament serves as both a personal expression of the prophet's heartache and a public declaration meant to call the people to repentance.

Jeremiah's Lamentations

One of the most poignant examples of a prophet's lament is found in the Book of Lamentations, traditionally attributed to the prophet Jeremiah. This collection of poetic laments mourns the destruction of Jerusalem and the subsequent exile of the Jewish people. Jeremiah's sorrow is palpable as he writes, "How lonely lies the city, once so full of people! She who was great among the nations has become like a widow" (Lamentations 1:1). The prophet's grief is not only for the physical destruction but also for the spiritual desolation that has befallen the people.

Ezekiel's Lamentations

Ezekiel, another major prophet, also expresses lamentation over the fate of Israel. In Ezekiel 19, he presents a lament for the princes of Israel, using the metaphor of a lioness and her cubs to describe the downfall of the nation's leaders. "What a lioness was your mother among the lions! She lay down among the young lions; she reared her cubs" (Ezekiel 19:2). The lamentation underscores the loss of leadership and the resulting chaos and suffering.

Isaiah's Lament

Isaiah, known for his prophecies of both judgment and hope, also voices lamentation. In Isaiah 22, he describes a vision of the Valley of Vision, where the people are celebrating despite the looming threat of destruction. Isaiah's lament is a cry against the people's blindness to their spiritual peril: "Therefore I said, 'Turn away from me; let me weep bitterly. Do not try to console me over the destruction of the daughter of my people'" (Isaiah 22:4). His lament highlights the disconnect between the people's perception and the reality of their situation.

Habakkuk's Dialogue with God

The prophet Habakkuk offers a unique form of lament through his dialogue with God. Troubled by the rampant injustice and violence in Judah, Habakkuk questions God's tolerance of such evil: "How long, O LORD, must I call for help, but You do not listen, or cry out to You, 'Violence!' but You do not save?" (Habakkuk 1:2). This lament is characterized by a deep wrestling with the problem of evil and the seeming silence of God, yet it ultimately leads to a profound expression of faith and trust in God's sovereignty.

The Role of Lament in Prophetic Ministry

The prophet's lament serves several purposes within the biblical narrative. It is a vehicle for expressing the deep emotional and spiritual burden carried by the prophets as they confront the sinfulness of their people. It also functions as a call to repentance, urging the people to recognize their waywardness and return to God. Furthermore, the lamentations of the prophets often foreshadow the hope of restoration and redemption, pointing to God's enduring faithfulness and mercy despite the people's unfaithfulness.

In the broader context of Scripture, the prophet's lament is a reminder of the seriousness of sin and the profound impact it has on the relationship between God and His people. It underscores the role of the prophet as both a messenger of God's judgment and a herald of His grace, calling the people to repentance and renewal.

The Martyrdom of Eleazar

¹⁸ Elea'zar, one of the scribes in high position, a man now advanced in age and of noble presence, was being forced to open his mouth to eat swine's flesh. ¹⁹ But he, welcoming death with honor rather than life with pollution, went up to the rack of his own accord, spitting out the flesh, ²⁰ as men ought to go who have the courage to refuse things that it is not right to taste, even for the natural love of life.

²¹ Those who were in charge of that unlawful sacrifice took the man aside, because of their long acquaintance with him, and privately urged him to bring meat of his own providing, proper for him to use, and pretend that he was eating the flesh of the sacrificial meal which had been commanded by the king, ²² so that by doing this he might be saved from death, and be treated kindly on account of

his old friendship with them. ²³ But making a high resolve, worthy of his years and the dignity of his old age and the gray hairs which he had reached with distinction and his excellent life even from childhood, and moreover according to the holy God-given law, he declared himself quickly, telling them to send him to Hades.

²⁴ "Such pretense is not worthy of our time of life," he said, "lest many of the young should suppose that Elea'zar in his ninetieth year has gone over to an alien religion, ²⁵ and through my pretense, for the sake of living a brief moment longer, they should be led astray because of me, while I defile and disgrace my old age. ²⁶ For even if for the present I should avoid the punishment of men, yet whether I live or die I shall not escape the hands of the Almighty. ²⁷ Therefore, by manfully giving up my life now, I will show myself worthy of my old age ²⁸ and leave to the young a noble example of how to die a good death willingly and nobly for the revered and holy laws."

When he had said this, he went^[a] at once to the rack. ²⁹ And those who a little before had acted toward him with good will now changed to ill will, because the words he had uttered were in their opinion sheer madness. ^[b] ³⁰ When he was about to die under the blows, he groaned aloud and said: "It is clear to the Lord in his holy knowledge that, though I might have been saved from death, I am enduring terrible sufferings in my body under this beating, but in my soul I am glad to suffer these things because I fear him."

³¹ So in this way he died, leaving in his death an example of nobility and a memorial of courage, not only to the young but to the great body of his nation.

The Parables of Solomon

The parables of Solomon. A wise son maketh glad his father; but a fond son is the sorrow of his mother. (*The proverbs of Solomon.* A wise son maketh his father happy; but a foolish son is the sorrow of his mother.)

² Treasures of wickedness shall not profit; but righteousness shall deliver from death. (Treasures gotten by wickedness shall not profit thee; but uprightness shall deliver thee from death.)

³ The Lord shall not torment the soul of a just man with hunger; and he shall destroy the treasuries of ungodly men. (The Lord shall not torment the righteous with hunger; but he shall destroy the desires of the wicked.)

⁴ A slow hand hath wrought neediness; but the hand of strong men maketh ready riches. Forsooth he that enforceth *to get anything* by leasings, feedeth the winds; soothly the same man followeth birds flying. (Lazy hands create neediness; but strong hands create riches. He who endeavoureth *to get anything* by lying, feedeth the wind; yea, that person runneth after birds in flight.)

⁵ He that gathereth together in harvest, is a wise son; *but* he that sleepeth in summer, is a son of confusion. (He who gathereth together at harvest time, is wise; *but* he who sleepeth in summer, is a disgrace.)

⁶ The blessing of God *is* over the head of a just man; but wickedness covereth the mouth of wicked men. (The blessing of God *is* upon the heads of the righteous; but wickedness covereth the mouths of the wicked.)

⁷ The mind of a just man *shall be* with praisings; and the name of wicked men shall wax rotten. (The righteous *shall be* remembered with praise/The memory of the righteous *is* blessed; but the names of the wicked shall grow rotten.)

⁸ A wise man shall receive commandments with heart (A wise person shall take commandments to heart); a fool is beaten with (his own) lips.

⁹ He that goeth simply, goeth trustily; *but* he that maketh shrewd his ways, shall be [made] open. (He who goeth with honesty, *or with integrity*, goeth with security; *but* he who maketh his ways depraved, shall be exposed.)

¹⁰ He that beckoneth with the eye, shall give sorrow; a fool shall be beaten with (his own) lips.

¹¹ The vein of life *is* the mouth of a just man; but the mouth of wicked men covereth wickedness. (The words of the righteous *be* a fountain of life; but wickedness covereth the mouths of the wicked.)

¹² Hatred raiseth up chidings; and charity covereth all sins. (Hatred raiseth up arguments, *or strife*; but love covereth all sins.)

¹³ Wisdom is found in the lips of a wise man; and a rod in the back of him that is needy of heart. (Wisdom is found on the lips of the wise; and a rod on the back of him who is foolish.)

¹⁴ Wise men hide knowing (The wise store up knowledge); but the mouth of a fool is next to confusion.

¹⁵ The chattel of a rich man *is* the city of his strength; the dread of poor men *is* the neediness of them. (The substance of a rich man *is* his strong city; the fear of the poor *is* their own neediness.)

¹⁶ The work of a just man *is* to life; but the fruit of a wicked man *is* to sin. (The work of a good person *serveth* unto life; but the fruit of the wicked *is* sin.)

¹⁷ The way of life *is* to him that keepeth chastising; but he that forsaketh blamings, erreth. (The way of life *is* for him who receiveth discipline; but he who forsaketh rebukes, erreth.)

¹⁸ False lips hide hatred; he that bringeth forth despising is unwise.

¹⁹ Sin shall not fail in much speaking; but he that measureth his lips, is most prudent. (Sin shall abound with much speaking; but he who ruleth his lips, is most prudent.)

²⁰ Chosen silver *is* the tongue of a just man; the heart of wicked men *is* for nought. (Like chosen silver *is* the tongue of a righteous person; but the hearts of the wicked *be* worth nothing.)

²¹ The lips of a just man teach full many men; but they that be unlearned shall die in neediness of heart. (The lips of the righteous teach a great many people; but they who be ignorant, shall die without any understanding.)

²² The blessing of the Lord maketh rich men (The blessing of the Lord maketh people rich); and torment shall not be fellowshipped to them.

²³ A fool worketh wickedness as by laughing; but wisdom is prudence to a man/but prudence is to a wise man. (A fool worketh wickedness with laughter; but wisdom is a delight to those with understanding.)

²⁴ That that a wicked man dreadeth, shall come [up]on him; the desire of just men shall be given to them. (That which the wicked fear, shall come upon them; and the desire of the righteous shall be given to them.)

²⁵ As a tempest passing, a wicked man shall not be; but a just man *shall be* as an everlasting fundament. (Like a tempest passing by, a wicked person shall soon not be; but the foundations of the righteous *be* everlasting.)

²⁶ As vinegar *harmeth* the teeth, and smoke *harmeth* the eyes; so a slow man *harmeth* them that sent him in the way. (Like vinegar *harmeth* the teeth, and smoke *harmeth* the eyes; so a lazy man *harmeth* those who sent him on the way.)

²⁷ The dread of the Lord increaseth days; and the years of wicked men shall be made short. (The fear of the Lord/Reverence for the Lord increaseth days; and the years of the wicked shall be made short.)

²⁸ Abiding of just men *is* gladness; but the hope of wicked men shall perish. (Hopeful waiting by the righteous *shall lead to* gladness; but all the hopes of the wicked shall perish.)

²⁹ The strength of a simple man *is* the way of the Lord; and dread to them that work evil. (The way of the Lord *giveth* strength to an honest person; but fear to those who work evil.)

³⁰ A just man shall not be moved [into] without end; but wicked men shall not dwell on the earth. (The righteous shall not be moved forever; but the wicked shall not remain on the earth, *or in the land*.)

³¹ The mouth of a just man shall bring forth wisdom; the tongue of shrews shall perish. (The mouths of the righteous shall bring forth wisdom; and the tongues of the depraved shall be stopped.)

³² The lips of a just man behold pleasant things; and the mouth of wicked men *beholdeth* wayward things. (The lips of the righteous always know what is kind, *or pleasant*, to say; but the mouths of the wicked *speak forth* only hurtful things.)

The Ethiopian Book of Jubilation (The Book of Jubilee-see the attached Ebook)

The Miracles of Saint Michael

When Emperor Constantine the Great (r. 306-337) was building Constantinople, it came to pass that he constructed a church dedicated to the Archangel Michael in the surrounding suburb, known as Sosthenion. The account of how this church came to be built is curious indeed. In the outlying suburb, there was a statue of a man with wings. The great Constantine marvelled at the work and wondered what it could mean. He asked his nobles, [t no one knew to whom it was dedicated. He then besought God, "Reveal to me after whom the statue was fashioned. " At night, the Archangel Michael appeared to him and said, "I am the Archangel Michael, the helper of the Christians, even as I have assisted thee in thy victories over thine enemies. For this cause, do thou build a church in my name, and I shall preserve thee from all thine enemies until the end of thy life." When the emperor awoke, he immediately set about fulfilling the command of the archangel. The church he erected was huge, for which he apportioned considerable revenues. On the feast day of the archangel, Christians from the suburbs were assembling at the new church from the outlying areas. One of the faithful had a child who was deaf and dumb from his mother's womb. The father brought the lad into the church and besought the archangel to heal him. After much supplicating, the archangel hearkened to the prayer of that poor father. During the divine Liturgy, the child was brought before the icon of the Chief-commander Michael. When the deacon was about to say, "Let us attend," followed by the priest, "The Holies for the holy," the child, instead, spoke up and said, "Let us attend." From that hour, he was healed. The father returned every year to commemorate and thank the commander of the bodiless host.

The Deliverance of Constantinople from the Perils of the Avars, Persians, and Arabs

The Avars, mounted warriors, came to capture Constantinople. They used their sabers, long lances, and reflex bows that they might gain the advantage. The hierarch at that time gathered the faithful of the city, and they went to the Church of the Chief-commander Michael, where they entreated God to be delivered from captivity to the barbarians. Then, when the Avars were about to enter the city, the Archangel Michael, as a flash of lightning, appeared in their midst. Out of their intense fear, many of the Avars fell prostrate on their faces, while others took to their heels and retreated. That same night, the archangel appeared to the khan of the Avars and said, "Leave quickly with all thy host, otherwise tomorrow thou shalt die and thy soldiers with thee. " The khan, terrified, that same night, departed with his entire army and returned to his own place.

At another time, the Persian armies assembled and besieged Constantinople. They encamped outside the walls and prevented food and supplies from being brought into the city. The populace was in danger of dying from starvation. Having their hopes only in God, they also brought to mind the previous miracle performed by the Archangel Michael. The people went to his church and supplicated him that he might work a miracle as before. Then on the day that the Persians decided to enter the city, as they laid their ladders against the walls, the Archangel Michael appeared to the invaders. Once again, he appeared as lightning, throwing the Persians into a panic. In the commotion created by this visitation, the Persians, in their confusion, began fighting with one another, thinking they were battling the citizens of the city. The Constantinopolitans, beholding the confounded Persians, exited the city, slaying as many as they were able.

At another time, by sea, a multitude of Arab Moslems attacked the city the strongest citadel in the world. This occurred during the reign of Emperor Constantine IV (669-685) grandson of Herakleios.⁵ The Arabs had already ravaged the countryside in Asia Minor, dragging off inhabitants to slavery. They already held Cyprus, Rhodes, and Kos. The peninsula of Kyzikos was also seized, which was in the neighborhood of the capital, thus providing the Moslems with a base for attack. News was then heard that part of the Arab fleet had captured Smyrna and other sections. The Arabs tried again and again to take the city. Once more, the faithful flocked to the Church of the Chief-commander Michael, imploring God and His archangel for help. The archangel hearkened to their cries. He pierced and bore through the Arab ships, causing most of the marauders to die of drowning. After a five-year siege, only three ships out of the entire fleet remained, and they turned and sailed back home in 678.

The Preservation of the City of Akolia



On the Black Sea, the city of Akolia was under attack by the Saracens. They tarried long with their forces outside the city. Not being able to take the city, they decided to depart. There was, however, a certain traitor inside the city who informed against the Christians to the Saracen chief, saying, "The Christians have a church dedicated to the Chief-commander Michael. It lies by the citadel wall. It is there that they supplicate God for His help, and for this reason you cannot launch an attack." The Saracens, receiving this piece of intelligence, set about making war machines to breach the citadel wall. After they had prepared their ropes, rolling battering rams, and catapults, they readied one large boulder to thrust against the narrow church. As soon as it was catapulted, the faces of the emir and his officers, who were responsible for flinging that boulder, turned backwards. Those wretched men wasted no time loading down the camels with plenty of incense, lamps, and oil. They also took silver from the bridles of their horses and went together to the Church of the Archangel Michael. They swore among themselves that they would never come again to Akolia for many years,

and that the city would come to no harm. After they had sworn this vow, their faces returned to their proper places.

The Archangel Michael at Colossae and Gernia

The Archangel Michael is remembered also for the miracle he performed at Chonae, near Colossae in Phrygia. He parched the waters of the river which the infidels released against his holy shrine and Saint Hermippos. The archangel's large basilica in Chonae, decorated with mosaics, was a center of pilgrimage and great trade fairs.⁶

Now also in Germia, a city in western Galatia, below Mount Dindymon, the Archangel Michael wrought numberless cures. In 454, the consul of Constantinople, one Stoudios, was sick and near death. No physician could offer him a cure or any treatment. At that time, a certain man, named Goulío, who was from Germia, came to the capital. He visited the sick consul and began recounting how many miracles were taking place in Germio at the archangel's healing spring. Even the little fish, with the aid of the Archangel Michael, were effecting cures. As Stoudios listened to the accounts, he believed that God would help him.

In the company of other ill folk, Stoudios traveled to Germia. Straghtway, as he entered that holy spring, he was cured. Not only Stoudios received healing, but also his entire traveling party. One of the members was suffering from glaucoma, and he too received a swift cure for his eyes. Studios, beholding the number of miracles taking place, then resolved to most of his fortune building a great church to the archangel.

The five-aisled basilica of ashlar masonry with much sculptured decoration still survives in Galatia. He endowed the church also with revenues for its maintenance. The consul also built homes for the sick and aged. All the while, sick people kept flocking to the site of the archangel's healing waters. Having come with faith, they were leaving healed, including many blind folk who recovered their sight, and the lame who were enabled to walk.

The Cure of the Monk Markianos and the Physician

At the time of the restoration of the icons, during the reigns of Empress Theodora (842-856) and her son Emperor Michael III (842-867), there was a certain monk, named Markianos, who was living at the Monastery of the Archangel Michael inside Constantinople. Whenever Father Markianos became ill, he did not take refuge in physicians and medicines. His only recourse was to fall before the icon of the Archangel Michael, who always cured him of whatever ailed him. It happened one time that the monk became gravely ill. According to his custom, he hastened to the icon of the Archangel Michael seeking help. This time, however, the archangel wished to test him, and did not render a cure. The relatives and friends of Markianos came and reproved him for not seeking medical treatment, but he would not listen to their counsel. Unbeknownst to Markianos, they contrived among themselves that they would seek out a physician on his behalf. They found one and learned from him the proper course of treatment and received medicines appropriate to Markianos' condition. They were to administer them while Markianos was asleep. They, therefore, took the drugs and hid them in his head cushion, and waited until sleep should overtake him.

That night, instead of Father Markianos finding rest, those waiting to administer the drugs fell asleep. Father Markianos, not being able to sleep, remained wide awake. It then appeared to him

that he saw the Archangel Michael exiting the holy sanctuary of the church, being escorted by two beautiful and wondrous youths. He walked over to Father Markianos, as he lay on his pillow. Seeing the drugs, he said to the monk, "What are these?" The monk answered, "I do not know, O archangel." The chief-commander then said to the youths, "Take these medicines and put them under the pillow of the physician who concocted them." Markianos then observed the youths walking out of the church. The archangel then took oil from the oil lamp before his icon. He proceeded to anoint Father Markianos, who was instantly cured. Father Markianos, sensible of the healing, kept giving thanks to God.

At midnight, the priest went to the church that he might chant the Orthros Service. He found Markianos healthy and restored as before. That same morning, the priest was called to the house of the physician, who had become gravely ill during the night. The priest then recounted all that he had heard from Markianos. The physician, therefore, came to understand the cause of his sudden illness. He rose up, being supported by others, and went to the Church of the Archangel Michael. He remained there all day, lying before the icon. By evening, he was cured, but he did not return to his house or profession. He decided to remain at that church and become a monk, bequeathing all he had to that church.

This and many other miracles were wrought by the commander of the bodiless host, Michael. Now let us recount selected miracles wrought by both Archangels Michael and Gabriel, that we may bring our account to a close.

The Archangels Help the Fathers at Docheiariou Monastery



The Docheiariou Monastery is located on the southwest tip of the Athonite promontory, northwest of Xenophontos. Though the origins of the monastery are somewhat obscure, it was first established by Efthymios Docheiarios (the cellarer) in the tenth century.⁸

The saint had a nephew, the patrician Nicholas, whose father had been a duke during the reigns of Emperor Nikephoros II Phokas (963-969) and John Tzimiskes (969-976). Since Nicholas' uncle was abbot of an Anthonite monastery, he loved to visit the elder and lavish gifts upon the monastery. At length, Nicholas forsook the world and the things of the world, and joined the brotherhood headed by his venerable uncle. In the holy tonsure, Nicholas was given the name Neophytos by Saint Efthymios. In time, the saint entrusted the holy Neophytos, as one superior in virtue, with the governance and concerns of the monastery. The holy Neophytos renovated, expanded, and improved the monastery. However, his fortune from the world had not sufficed to cover the expenses of iconography for the new and larger church. Nonetheless, our Savior hearkened to his prayer for this God-pleasing endeavor, in the following marvellous manner, during the reign of Emperor Nikephoros III Botaneiates (r. 1078-1081).

The Chalkidike peninsula of Longos is approximately sixty miles opposite the Holy Mountain. This is where Docheiariou Monastery had its metochion, that is, a monastery holding. Near the monastery's holding there atop an ancient pillar the following inscription: "Whoever will strike my head will find much gold!" Needless to say, many cast stones at the top of the column, but no treasure was to be had. Yet the riddle meant the top of the shadow that was cast by the pillar—that is where the treasure was hidden. However, God, in His economy, desired to unravel this mystery at the proper time.

At the metochion, there was a lad of about twenty years of age, named Basil, who was paid a wage as a laborer. He, too, with many others, visited the column and wondered at its promise of gold. One day, as the sun was descending, the youth went to the column. He noted where the pillar cast its shadow and began to dig at that spot. Thereupon, he came upon a marble slab. Below the slab, he uncovered a copper vessel filled with gold coins. Upon beholding this enormous find, the youth was completely overcome; but he quickly covered up the spot and hastened to Abbot Neophytos.

Approaching the abbot, he declared, "Holy master, a tremendous amount of gold is buried at our metochion! Send me back with some of the monks that we might transport it here to the monastery." Saint Neophytos then dispatched three monks, who were seemingly pious, with the monastery boat. Thereupon, they went to the spot and took up the gold, its vessel, and the slab which concealed it. They proceeded to the shore and departed.

However, the monks were ill-intentioned. They were enticed by the treasure and plotted to keep it themselves. Therefore, they took up the slab and bound that honest young man to it from his neck. Then—alas!—they cast him into the depths of the sea.



Evening was drawing nigh. Upon being cast overboard, the lad invoked the aid of the holy archangels. Straightway, the bodiless host, Archangels Michael and Gabriel, appeared before him and, as eagles with golden wings, they caught him and took him from the depths of the sea. Then, in a moment, the young man found himself inside the monastery church at Docheiariou! Terror-stricken, he lay motionless in the church.

In the meantime, the three wayward monks divided the treasure among themselves. They hid their portions outside the monastery and then stayed by the dock till morning.

When the hour for Orthros approached, the caretaker of the lights and candles went about his obedience, so they might commence chanting the service. He found the youth in the church, but he thought he beheld a phantom. Therefore, he began to draw back, but then changed his mind and decided to approach, to take a better look at this spectacle. Not quite sure what he was gazing upon, he took to his heels, seeking the abbot. Going up to Saint Neophytos, he cried aloud, "My elder, there is a phantom in the church, and I cannot go inside!"

The abbot answered, "What dost thou fear? Make thy Cross and proceed courageously!" Meanwhile, the other brethren had assembled for the service. They, too, beheld the youth and hastened to Father Neophytos. The abbot then got up and went into the church with the ecclesiarch. As they entered the church, they clearly espied the youth. He was bound and asleep upon the marble slab that was tied to his neck. The abbot then tapped him with his staff to rouse him. The youth awoke, and said, "Tell me, O brothers, where am I? I thought I was in the sea where the monks had cast me overboard." Abbot Neophytos then questioned him, saying, "Dost thou not know where thou art? Behold, the monastery; behold, the Church of Docheiariou. Behold, I am Abbot Neophytos. Yet, tell us: How camest thou here?" The youth replied, "Leave me a space to come to myself."

After a short time, he related to the brethren all he had suffered at the hands of the three monks. Abbot Neophytos then said, "Tarry here till the morning We will chant the service until the three criminals come up from the dock to the monastery. Let them behold the miracle!"



Morning came, and the abbot ordered that the three monks ascend from the dock. As they stood before him, he addressed them, saying, "How goes your discovery, O fathers?" Then, in unison, they replied, "O elder of ours, the inscription played us false. The lad fooled us, and then, when we threatened him, he fled!" Abbot Neophytos then uttered, "Glory be to Thee, O God! Let us go into the church and thank God!"

Upon entering the church, when those three malefactors caught sight of the youth bound with the marble slab about his neck, from their astonishment, they stood speechless. The abbot then threatened them. Thereupon, the three men brought the treasure into the monastery. Straightway, Abbot Neophytos expelled them from the brotherhood.

The youth Basil who desired to become a monk, was then tonsured and renamed Barnabas. At length, he succeeded the Elder Neophytos as abbot. Thus, the church was decorated with sacred icons and named in honor of the holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel.⁹

The Finding of Water at Docheiariou

Docheiariou Monastery also has a holy fountain named after the Archangels Michael and Gabriel. A miracle brought into existence this well. In the fourteenth century, during the reign of Emperor Andronikos Palaiologos, the monks of the monastery were compelled to fetch water from a distance of three miles. This caused many hardships and even sickness for the brethren. Monk Theodoulos, a builder at the monastery, planned to lay large underground pipes to convey water. Then, on the eve before the work would commence, the two archangels, Michael and Gabriel, appeared to Theodoulos and said, "O man, why dost thou labor and exhaust the monastery in vain? Know this: Water is inside the monastery. " As Theodoulos listened, it seemed to him that he rose

up and said to them, "I beseech you, show me where it is." Thereupon, they answered, "Come, and we will show thee." Then, the two archangels took him by the hands and brought him to a spot where, today, a well is located.

Arriving at the indicated site, they took up digging tools and began to work. Not much time passed before the archangels offered water to the monk. Theodoulos partook and found the water very sweet. Straightway, he awakened from sleep and called the brethren, saying, "In my sleep, this night, I beheld a vision wherein the two archangels came and showed me where water is located on the monastery grounds. Therefore, let us dig in that place they showed me!"

The brethren rallied and began digging. Forthwith, a vein of water sprung forth. The monks dug deeper, and drinkable water gushed forth. They glorified God and His archangels. The well exists to this day. The water is well-reputed to be sanctified; and those who drink with faith find healing from sickness.

These miracles, brethren, which we have recounted are but a few of the countless wonders performed by the archangels. We have recounted these few which sufficiently glorify God and His archangels. O angelic hosts who stand before the throne of God and ever hold chorus, O archangels, and angels, principalities, thrones, and dominions, six-winged seraphim, and divine and many-eyed cherubim, vessels of wisdom, authorities and powers most divine, pray to Christ that He grant our souls peace, great mercy, and His kingdom.

Through the intercessions of Thine Archangels and all of the Celestial Host,
O Christ God, have mercy on us. Amen.

The Ethiopian Book of the Covenant

The Book of the Covenant The Covenant at Mount Sinai Exodus 19:5-6 "Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." The Covenant Details: The Ten Commandments Exodus 20:2-17 "You shall have no other gods before Me." "You shall not make for yourself a carved image..." "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain..." "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." "Honor your father and your mother." "You shall not murder." "You shall not commit adultery." "You shall not steal." "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor." "You shall not covet....anything that is your neighbor's." The Altar Exodus 20:22-26 No man-made idols Make an altar, in the place I will show you, from earth or natural stone, with no steps. Human Relationships Exodus 21:1-11 A male Hebrew servant is to be released in the 7th year He leaves with the family he came in with He may choose to be a bond servant to his master A female Hebrew servant does not go out as a man would If she does not please her master: She shall be redeemed She cannot be sold to a foreigner If she is betrothed to his son: If not obeyed, she shall be set free She shall be treated as a daughter If he takes another wife: She shall still be treated as a wife Violence to Other People Exodus 21:12-27 The pre-meditated murderer shall be put to death But God will provide a refuge for the unintentional killer He who strikes his father or his mother shall be put to death. He who curses his father or his mother shall be put to death. A kidnapper shall be put to death. He who is injured in a fight is to be

compensated for his lost time and medical expenses A man shall be punished if he injures his servant to death.... But no punishment if the servant lives 1-2 days – considered to be property. If the injury causes permanent disability, the servant is set free. The punishment of one who injures a pregnant woman so she delivers prematurely shall be determined by her husband. If she or the baby dies, the punishment is "life for life". Violence Concerning Animals Exodus 21:28-36 An animal that kills a person shall be put to death and the owner is not responsible.... Unless the owner knew beforehand, then he shall also be put to death. The owner of an animal that injures a person shall pay restitution and the animal put to death. If a servant is injured, the owner shall pay the master 30 shekels of silver If an animal falls into an open pit, the pit's owner shall reimburse the animal's owner ...but the animal shall be the property of the pit's owner If a man's animal kills another's animal, then the live animal shall be sold and proceeds split ...unless it was known beforehand, then the dead animal's owner receives 100% Responsibility for Property Exodus 22:1-15 Restitution for stolen ox (5X); for stolen sheep (4X) If a man kills a thief in his home at night, he is not guilty of bloodshed. ...but if it is daylight, then he is guilty of bloodshed The thief shall restore to the owner double. If a man allows his animals to graze in his neighbor's field, he shall make restitution of the best of his fields. If a man accidentally burns his neighbor's field, he shall make restitution. If a thief steals something borrowed from your neighbor and he is caught, he must restore double. If not caught, then the judge must decide if he stole it himself. In any property dispute (animals and things) brought to the judge, the guilty must restore double. If a man borrows an animal and it dies in his possession (swearing an oath to the LORD), then the owner must accept it. ...but if it was stolen, the guilty must make restitution. ...or if it was killed by another animal, he shows the evidence and is free of responsibility. ...or if the owner was present at time of death, he is free of responsibility. Moral C Ceremonial Principles Exodus 22:16-31 If a man commits fornication with a virgin, he shall pay her father the bride price and marry her. ...if her father refuses, he shall pay him the bride price of a virgin. "You shall not permit a sorceress to live." "Whoever lies with an animal shall surely be put to death." Anyone who sacrifices to any god other than the LORD shall be put to death. Do not mistreat a stranger, for you were once strangers in Egypt. Anyone who mistreats widows or orphans will be put to death; his wife will become a widow and his children orphans. You shall charge no interest when you lend money to your brother. If you require his garment as a pledge, return it to him before sundown (do not humiliate him). "You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people." Do not delay offering the Firstfruits of your fields nor from your herds and flocks. The firstborn shall be with its mother 7 days, then shall it be offered on the 8th day. "The firstborn of you sons you shall give to Me." You shall be holy to Me: eat no meat torn by beasts in the field. Equal Justice Exodus 23:1-9 Do not circulate a false report. Do not be a false witness. Do not follow a crowd to do evil. Do not testify falsely so as to pervert justice. Do not show partiality to a poor man in a dispute. Show kindness to your enemies' animals. Do not pervert the judgment of the poor in his dispute. "Keep yourself far from a false matter." "Do not kill the innocent and righteous." Do not take a bribe. Do not oppress a stranger, because you were strangers in the land of Egypt. Shabbats C Shmitahs Exodus 23:10-13 Neither sow nor reap the produce of the land in the 7th year; let it rest. ...that which sprouts may feed the poor among you and the animals. Likewise, six days you shall work and on the 7th day you shall rest... ...that you, your animals, your servants and the stranger among you may be refreshed. Guard what you speak: make no mention of the name of any other gods. The Mo'edim Exodus 23:14-19a Passover – fully described in Exodus 12 The Feast of Unleavened Bread Included the Feast of Firstfruits All Shall Offer the First of the The Feast of Harvest

(Shavuot) Firstfruits of their Harvest The Feast of Ingathering (Sukkot) Excluded are: Trumpets C Through God's Covenant, our names are already Atonements written in the Book of Life. No judgment here!! The blood of the sacrifice shall not be offered with leavened bread The fat of the sacrifice shall not remain until morning Dietary Laws "You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk." (Do not offer sacrifices that were improperly killed – note the context!) Exodus 23:19b Initially, Vegetarian "God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face Genesis 1:29 of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. " And Confirmed after the Fall: "And you shall eat the fruit of the field." Genesis 3:18 Meat Added after the Flood: "Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. Genesis 9:3-4 I have given you all things, even as the green herbs. But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood." So, the connection is made in verse 3: from Eden, it had always been permissible to eat "green herbs"; then God ordained the eating of animals...but only those animals that would eat the "green herbs". There was then one degree of separation added to the dietary laws: green herbs and only those animals that ate green herbs. God expected Noah to know clean from unclean God's Protection C Provision Exodus 23:20-33 His Son Yeshua: "Behold, I send an Angel before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. Obey His Voice...for My Name is in Him" If you indeed obey His voice and do all that I speak, then I will: Be an enemy to your enemies Be an adversary to your adversaries When you serve God, He will: Bless your bread and your water Take sickness away from you Cause no one to suffer miscarriage or be barren Fulfill the number of your days Send His fear before you Cause confusion among your enemies Make all your enemies turn their backs to you He will drive them out little by little so you may subdue the land. Give you The Land: from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean to the Euphrates Pagans will not dwell in it The Covenant Ratified 1. Reading the Covenant: "Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people." Exodus 24:7a 2. The Agreement: "All the words which the Lord has said we will do." Exodus 24:7b 3. The Shedding of Blood: "Then he sent young men of the children of Exodus 24:5-6 Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the Lord. And Moses took half the blood and put it in basins, and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar." 4. Covenant-Confirming Meal: "So they saw God, and they ate and drank." Exodus 24:11b The Book of the Covenant is God's Perfect Will – the Book of the Law is God's Permissive Will Established Patterns (Genesis 1:1 – Exodus 24:11) Creation: All of God's Creation reproduced "after his kind" The seed of the Earth Genesis 1:11 C 12 The seed of animals Genesis 1:24 C 25; 6:20; 7:14 Creation: Yes!! Evolution: No Heterosexual Marriages: All Biblical marriages were between a man and a woman "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." Genesis 2:24 Sacrifice Offerings: Firstfruits (Thanksgiving) Offerings of Cain C Abel Genesis 4 Ascension (Burnt) Offerings of Noah (Dedication) Genesis 8 Ascension Offering at Yitro's covenant meal Exodus 18 Ascension C Peace (Fellowship) Offerings at Sinai Exodus 20 Ascension C Peace Offerings at BoC ratification Exodus 24:5 Note: No Sin nor Trespass Offerings Rav Shaul's interpretation: "present your bodies a living sacrifice... your reasonable service" Rom 12:1 Circumcision: Male circumcision is a sign of the Covenant.... Genesis 17:9 which was broken by Israel Circumcision of the heart (in the Spirit) is the sign of the New Covenant Romans 2:25-29 Homosexuality: God judged Sodom because they condoned homosexuality Genesis 19:5

The Ethiopian Story of the Resurrection

The One Created in the Image of the Holy Trinity, Adam

After creating the different creations for five consecutive days, the Holy Trinity said this in the early morning of the sixth day (Friday): "Let Us make man according to Our image and likeness" (Genesis 1:26). If one may ask how the Holy Trinity would say in Our image and likeness, the Holy Trinity are ingenious, do speak, and are eternal. Adam is also created to be ingenious, to speak, and to have eternal life. As the Holy Trinity have a definitive image, so does Adam. The Holy Trinity is personified with the heart, the spoken word, and breath; likewise, man has a heart, speaks, and has breath. The Holy Trinity, who rule over Adam because of the essence (nature) of Their Deity, have granted Adam the right to rule over creations by grace.

Adam, bestowed with such grace and created in the image of the Holy Trinity, became the subject by whom the one who previously lost his place due to his pride Sataniel (Satan) has been shamed and on whom God's perfect Divine wisdom was revealed. The unquestionable wisdom of God was reflected through man because He has created him as sparkly as a drinking glass, as marvelous as flowers, moreover, because He has created him wise. God gave Adam the mandate over all creations in the four corners. "He created Eve from his body so that she helps him. He placed them in the endeared eastward, in the Garden of

Eden. (It is said eastward for the Garden of Eden has four corners.) He gave them everything without restriction so that they would find pleasure in all that can be received from God." After all this, He gave them an order regarding only one plant. This plant was the tree of knowledge of good and evil. If one were not to eat from it, one would know good; if one were to eat from it, one would know evil. It was given as a symbol of the ruler and the ruled. Those who would eat from it would die; hence, they were ordered not to eat from it.

Transgressing God's Laws

After living in the Garden of Eden for seven years, Adam and Eve broke the order they were given by eating from the tree that they were told not to and brought death upon themselves. Our father Adam was condemned to die because of his transgression. Since he listened to Satan's advice and severed his relationship with his Creator, he fell under Satan's rule. He lived in melancholy and sorrow in this world. He cried deeply for having fallen under adversity. He did not cry because he lost his honorable place, comfort, and joy in the Garden of Eden, but because of his unworthy deed which saddened his Creator. That is why it is said that Adam had no reason to make him cry other than his sin.

Because he was convicted to die, the body of Adam the one who was formed from the dust of the earth and came alive with God's breath was laid in a grave; his soul suffered in Hades (Sheol). In death of the flesh, death of the soul found him, and in being lowered into the grave, he was lowered into hell; he was given to death. While animals were created to look down as they walk, there was a reason Adam was created to walk upright (made able to look up to the skies).

It is to indicate that animals are always led by instinct, and that they decompose and rot once they die whereas he has eternal life and will eternally live in heaven which God has prepared for him. However, man, who was honored and created righteous was defeated by the grave. He was

defeated by death. Death went on for years by decomposing and rotting Adam's body in the grave and by torturing his soul in Hades.

Descendants of Adam were also entrapped by this trap of death. Snatching and keeping their souls in Hades and their bodies in the grave, death left them in a total darkness where there is no glimmer of hope. The scholar Saint Athanasius asks his father Adam through the Holy Spirit as follows about the death that was inflicted on us because of the tree of knowledge: "Dear Adam, how have we wronged you for you to bring the judgment of death on us? What have we done to you, dear Adam, for you not to let us stay and be merry in the Garden of Eden, with our Lord, where there is joy? What have we done to you, dear Eve? Our bodies have blackened from too much sin when we should have had a heavenly life." (Saint Athanasius' Divine Liturgy, numbers 28 C 29). As the scholar said, death entered the world through the one Adam; we, his children, were all doomed to die.

Redeemer of the World

No one could annul this power of death among creations. Since everyone was indebted and no one, except for our Lady, Holy Virgin Mary, was found unaffected by the debt from Adam's sin, people could not pay a restitution. Nor did animals and angels have the capability to pay reparation for Adam's sin of the flesh and soul. It is for this very reason that God wanted to send His Only-Begotten Son into the world. It was the will of God that death which entered the world through the first Adam would be annulled through the second Adam, Christ. Hence, for the love of mankind, He sent His Only-Begotten Son into the world. This is why the Apostle Saint John wrote that God went to the extent of giving his Only-Begotten Son to be the redeemer of all; He sent Him into the world for He so loved the world that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life. God did not send His Son into the world so that His Son would convict the world. He says that the world was already in condemnation and thus it was not to condemn it but rather to save it from its condemnation. (John 3:15-17).

One of the three Persons, God the Son, came down to the world and became flesh to redeem mankind. He became Man. He manifested Himself as the second Adam in order to erase the first Adam's wrongdoing. Apart from sin, He had all of man's traits.

After His conception and before His birth, when He was in the womb for nine months and five days, He never left His throne; after He was born, for thirty three years and three months He never left His throne and was Man at the same time. Saint Jared (a hymnist and scholar who invented the Ethiopian Orthodox Incarnation Church chants) says this in one of his writings Anketse Biriha (one of many descriptions of the Holy Virgin Mary meaning Bearer of the Light), "When they saw their Lord, who holds all creation in His hand and feeds all creation, tucked under your arm and feeding on your breast, they found Him with His Father and the Holy Spirit in this world as it was from the beginning." Being worshipped by the angels in heaven, He was incarnated to be one and inseparable with our flesh through His profound wisdom and became fully Man while being fully God. We found the Word Incarnate, Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of Mary among us. After having manifested Himself and becoming inseparably one with our flesh, He drew mankind closer to Him through His teachings and miracles.

Calvary

In the end, He was crucified on a cross at Calvary and in His own will died in the flesh that He wore for Adam's sin. The flesh that He took from our Lady, Holy of Holies, Virgin Mary without a man and without pain was crucified. Joseph and Nicodemus wrapped His body and buried Him in a new tomb. Afraid that what was prophesied about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ would come true, Jews had the tomb guarded by Roman soldiers. The soldiers guarded the tomb with diligence to prevent the words "He rose on the third day" from being heard. Although they were being accomplices of the devil so that the power of death would live on pervasively, since there is not anyone who would not be conquered by the Creator and anyone whom God's authority would not defeat, the Word Incarnate Jesus Christ won victory over death and resurrected on the third day. The mystery that the flesh will be raised after death and that it will live eternally, the hope of resurrection, became apparent through Christ's resurrection. Being the first to be risen from the dead, He granted resurrection to all of us. (1 Corinthians 15:20). What cannot be done by man was done by the One Who was manifested in the flesh. The power of death is abrogated forever by His Divine power. Saint Cyril says this in *Haimanote Abew* (a book whose title translates to Faith of the Fathers), "He abolished death's victory. Because He is Life and the Creator, the flesh is also His and that He died in the flesh, rose after He died and destroyed death; we should know that He gave us quality and the essence of His Deity. This deed, meaning, victory over death and annulling its power is not the deed of the weak like ourselves. It is far beyond man's ability." (Faith of the Fathers 79:13).

The Resurrection of Christ

Even though Adam's body was decomposing and rotting in the grave with its power revoked for a while, he was able to gain power and conquer death because it inseparably became one with the nature of the Deity afterwards. Christ suffered in the flesh and went to the grave, He beat death with His Deity and Divine authority and made the flesh with which He inseparably united victorious. By wearing man's flesh which was humiliated, scorned, and crushed, He took man back to his place of dignity and honored him.

Therefore, Resurrection reminds us that death once had a power. Resurrection reminds us the Creator's immense kindness. Resurrection reminds us that following Christ's example we will rise in the end instead of remaining decomposed and rotten. This is why we celebrate His Resurrection as one of the major holidays. We have read stories about plenty of people who rose from the dead in the Old Testament (2 Kings 13:20-21). All these people, nonetheless, did not abrogate our death; they did not get rid of death's power. When they were raised from the dead with the prophets' and apostles' prayers and God's kindness, it was to live for themselves. In fact, they have returned to death's bondage from which they escaped. However, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, through His Deity and Divine authority, defeated death for eternity and rose. He made us cross over from death to life.

Christ Our Passover Lamb

The Israelites (also known as Israelites in the flesh) used to observe Passover ever since their exodus from Egypt to reminisce the bitterness of their slavery. On this holiday, they used to remember the bitter life in Egypt, their forefathers' torment and adversity. When God used to speak to them through His prophets in different eras, He used to say to them, I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt. (Exodus 20:2) He used to remind them how He freed them. In relation to this, we celebrate Easter (Fasika) in the New Testament for having found the

main freedom of the soul. We Christians (known as Israelites in the soul) celebrate the holiday in spiritual enjoyment for being free from slavery in Hades which was symbolized by Egypt. In remembering Adam's and his descendants' life of torment and adversity in the Holy Week (Semune Himamat), we celebrate Easter on the Christian Sabbath Sunday. Christ is our Passover Lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7). We believe and affirm that we are set free through the suffering and death of the Word Incarnate, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The Ethiopian Psalter

The Illuminated Manuscript and Genuine Devotion by Joshua Christopher Jones Honorable Mention, Dunham Bible Museum

The way a people describes and preserves an object can reveal a sense of how that people viewed the object. If an object is preserved in many instances, it can be inferred that it was important enough to be preserved. On the other hand, the way in which a thing is preserved reveals how the object is to be used. For example, a wedding invitation's textured paper and delicate calligraphy indicates a particular reverence for the event. On the other hand, an invitation to a toddler's birthday party would employ a heavy laminated card stock with block letters and bright colors. This perspective on the way objects are made and preserved can give us greater understanding of textual artifacts, particularly Biblical manuscripts. The Bible, as a document that has remained through nearly two full millennia continuing as one of the most widely read texts in history, certainly has changed the way man perceives the world. However, man's perceptions of the world have often influenced the way he perceives the Bible. The way communities have preserved the texts of the Scriptures has not gone unstudied, not without cause. The Nag Hammadi libraries serve as a perfect example of the extent to which modern scholarship sees fit to study the textual artifacts as well the texts contained within them. In many cases, the way a text is made and preserved can reveal a useful image of the life of the community that produced it. In the Dunham Bible Museum, above a sprawling scroll of Esther, sits an Ethiopian Psalter, or liturgical book of the Psalms of David. A close inspection of the text reveals pages made of velum, animal skin, and a hard wood cover wrapped in a coarse fur. Its slightly uneven lines were clearly taken down by hand and have within them markings used, as in contemporary psalters, to divide the parallelisms to help in chanting or singing the text. On the right is the text of Psalm 51, a penitential psalm of David used often in the East and West during Lenten services. Facing this famous psalm is an icon of the crucifixion of Christ; the blessed virgin Mary and John the beloved disciple attend on Christ and look on with horror and veneration. The style of icon is distinctly Ethiopian, not at all resembling the Western Medieval placidness, Renaissance realism, or distinctive Eastern decadence. Rather, the faces of all are long and drawn, with wrinkles etched into their grey faces. There are no centurions or Pharisees or crowd of mockers to distract the eye. The viewer is faced with Jesus and the two people who were closest to Him in His earthly life, His mother and His friend. One quickly jumps to the question of why the crucifixion is represented next to a psalm of penitence from the Old Testament. A more modern edition of the Bible might depict a sacrifice in the temple, or a picture of David in his kingly regalia kneeling, or either of these things with minute labels and detailed explanations of each aspect of the picture. This illuminator¹ has chosen rather to depict a far off event that seems to have little if any relation to the circumstances of the text itself. The illuminator concerns himself not so much with information about the psalm or accurate depiction of the crucifixion in something like the Gospels. Rather, he concerns himself with the state of the

worshiper. When reading the psalm of penitence, what greater spur to repentance can there be than the image of the crucified Lord? Mary and John invite the observer to follow their examples and look on Christ. Horror of the crucifixion is a comfort to the Christian who approaches with repentance. As the reader prays that God "Take not thy holy spirit from me" he remembers Christ's words from the cross "my god my god why hadst thou forsaken me!" The picture in this sense is truly an icon, a window to heaven, rather than a source of information or knowledge. The image of the crucifixion adds no 1 What I will call the writer of the icon. new information to the mind of the worshiper; he who approaches without knowledge will only be puzzled by the mystery contained in the juxtaposition of the image and the psalm. In returning to the original issue of what the psalter reveals about the community or illuminator that produced it, it is helpful to contrast it with more contemporary editions of the Bible. The industry of Bible making is no small endeavor. If one wishes to buy a Bible, he is confronted with a host of translations and editions ranging from study Bibles to literary Bibles to profession specific Bibles. Each manufactured to precise standards in set types with stylized covers designed to appeal to individual markets. These Bibles are filled with notes and glosses cross-referencing other passages of Scripture and explaining the passages in ways the demographic to which it is marketed would approve. Often there will be appendices of topical information regarding various historical information that the editors find relevant to the type of Bible they have made. While these characteristics of the newer ways of printing Bibles may not be wrong in themselves, they do reveal an important diversion from previous traditions of biblical preservation. Another Bible in the museum nestled among the copies of Renaissance era Bibles by Luther and Erasmus is a Bible with Koberger's commentary in it. This is the first Bible to have been printed with commentary; there are other copies of the Scriptures with scribal glosses, but Koberger's is the first critical apparatus to be printed alongside the text during its production. This shift, along with the monumental change that occurred as a result of the printing press, altered the way the Bible was made and perceived. No longer were there made large editions of vellum tomes with flourishing script labored over by hand for years by a single scribe. Illuminations and icons within the text slowly dwindled and were ultimately replaced by critical apparatuses. While examining and providing commentary for the Bible should be applauded for its intellectual goals, it should be looked upon with suspicion. Critical apparatuses in Bibles imply the importance of the historical knowledge gained from the texts themselves and not the faith, hope, and charity one seeks to achieve as a result of reading the texts themselves. This is an essentially gnostic view of the Scripture that asserts the importance of knowledge over faith. The Ethiopian psalter makes no pretensions to granting the reader knowledge; in fact it presumes a basic historical knowledge of the gospel in order for its goal to be achieved. Rather, the psalter serves as a prod to true piety rooted in a genuine experience with the text instead of mere historical knowledge. This more experiential view of printing the Bible is not without its modern inheritors. The contemporary publishers of the Orthodox Study Bible continue to make Bibles filled with icons, and often new editions of coffee table illuminated Bibles are produced each year. But these are often watered down editions that appeal to a limited audience. A true revival of the illuminated manuscript, perhaps encouraged by the New Monasticism, could bring new life to the contemporary understanding of Scripture and allow for a more genuine meditative practice in the church.

The Martyrdom of Saint Tekle Haimanot

When Saint Takla's days came to an end, and his body turned like a burned piece of wood, God appeared to him and told him that he would die of plague, and he would go to heaven with three of his followers.

When it was time for him to die, he got sick of the plague as well as three other monks. He saw God, Virgin Mary and many angels headed by the Archangel Michael.. And his cave was lighted with heavenly light, and it was full of a nice scent and his soul was carried to heaven. This was on 24th of Mesra, at the age of 99 years and 8 months.

His followers took his body and mummified it and he was buried in his cave. He remained there outside the monastery for 56 years. In the 57th year, Saint Takla Hemanoat appeared to Pope "Hezkial" (who was "Elishah", his follower) and told him to move his body to the monastery, and he did.

There was a great celebration and the saint told them of a sign that after they carry his body around the alter three times, the lamp would light by its own, and when that happened, everybody was happy. While the people were touring with the body of the saint, a man was tripped over by the people because it was crowded. His leg was broken; but once he touched the body of the saint, he was cured and went walking as if nothing happened. Saint Takla's body was buried under the alter in the church that bears his name in the monastery of "Libanous" in "Shawa".

The Apocalypse of Baruch (Additional Fragments)

In addition to the Book of Baruch, a translation of which is contained in the Apocrypha of our English Bibles, there had from old time been known to exist a certain document in the Syrian language, called "The Epistle of Baruch the scribe to the nine-and-a-half tribes beyond the Euphrates."¹⁶⁹ This had been published in 131 the London and Paris Polyglots in Syriac and Latin, in Latin alone by Fabricius in his *Codex Pseudepigr. Vet. Test.*, and in English by G. Whiston in his *Authentic Records*. Later, a French rendering was given by Migne in the *Dictionnaire des Apocryphes*, and Lagarde put forth again the Syriac version in his Syriac edition of the Old Testament Apocrypha. Many questions resulted from the publication of this document. Was it a complete work or a fragment of some larger treatise? What was its connection, if any, with the usually-received apocryphal work of Baruch? What was its original language? Who and of what country was its author? Jew or Christian? And when was the letter written? These inquiries greatly exercised the minds of scholars abroad, and the theories evoked by the discussion show a wide divergence of opinion.¹⁷⁰ But many of these questions were answered by the discovery in 1866 of a Syriac version of the Apocalypse of Baruch, of which this Epistle formed the concluding portion. This interesting work was brought to light by the industry of A. N. Ceriani, the learned librarian at Milan, to whom we are indebted for the disinterment of that long-lost book, the Assumption of Moses. In a MS. of the sixth century, Ceriani found a complete copy of the Apocalypse, which he

published first in a Latin translation, and then in the original Syriac, both in ordinary type, and later (1883) in a photo-lithographed facsimile. This Latin version has been reprinted by Fritzsche, with a few emendations, and is commonly regarded as equivalent to the genuine copy.¹⁷¹

Before discussing the contents of the book, a few words must be prefixed on the subject of the author and matters connected therewith.

The earliest quotation of the book occurs in a lost work of Papias, the disciple of St. John, cited by Irenaeus (*Adv. Hæres.* v. 33. 3). Herein it is asserted that in Messiah's days the vine shall have a thousand branches, and each branch shall produce a thousand bunches, and each bunch shall have a thousand grapes, and each grape shall make a cor of wine. Before it was known whence this legend was derived, neologian critics, assuming it to have Christ as its author, found in it a subject of ridicule and offence. It is now shown to occur in the Apocalypse of Baruch, chap. xxix. That the saying was attributed to Christ is easily accounted for. Papias wrote his lost work between 120 and 130 A.D., by which time our book must have become well known among Christians. The mention of Messiah occurs just before the legend; and doubtless persons remembered the story of the vine in connection with the Messiah, and at last quoted it as spoken by Christ Himself.¹⁷² Whether the Apocalypse is referred to in any of the catalogues of sacred books may reasonably be doubted. The term "Baruch," in Pseudo-Athanasius' *Synopsis*, and in the *Stichometria* of Nicephorus, belongs probably to the book so called in the Septuagint version. There are also other apocryphal books bearing this name, some of Gnostic, some of Christian origin, and it is possible that they were known to the writers of the catalogues. But a portion of the work from early times formed an integral part of the Syriac Bible, and to this day is used among the Jacobites in their funeral service.¹⁷³ Its real date, however, can only approximately be determined. Of course, the writer merely assumes the person of Baruch, the son of Neriah, for literary purposes, not with any idea of imposing upon the credulity of his hearers. He announces at the commencement that the word of the Lord came to him in the twenty-fifth year of Jechoniah, king of Judah. This at once places the revelation in an unhistorical region; for Jechoniah lived eleven years before the destruction of Jerusalem, reigned only three months, and then was carried captive to Babylon. And the departure from historical fact is continued in chap. vi., where it is said that on the next day after this revelation was made the city was taken by the Chaldeans. The clue to this apparent mistake is to be found in the nature of the treatise. It is an Apocalypse, and in it real events are introduced with the special purpose of foreshadowing or delineating other circumstances. Now this first destruction of Jerusalem adumbrated its final destruction under Titus, and we cannot doubt that the seer is referring to this latter calamity under the figure of the first. If he means that the vision came to him twenty-five years after the Chaldean invasion, he intends to affirm that he received the revelation so long after the ruin of the holy city, that is, about 95 A.D. Or the twenty-five years may be dated from the captivity of Jechoniah, which was some eleven years earlier, a mode of reckoning used by Ezekiel (e.g. chap. xxix. 17, xxx. 20, xxxi. 1) and the exiles in Chaldea. This would make the date of our book to be about 84 A.D. That it was composed in early Christian times may be gathered from certain passages which bear evident marks of being no late interpolations, but portions of the original work. Omitting for the present those which contain Messianic teaching, we will quote a few which betray a Christian spirit or some acquaintance with the literature of the New Testament.¹⁷⁴ Chap. x. 13, 14: "Ye bridegrooms, enter not into your chambers; ye women, pray not that ye array bear children; for the barren shall rejoice, and they that

have not sons shall be glad, and they that have sons shall be sorrowful" (comp. Matt. xxiv. 19; Luke xxiii. 29). Chap. xxi. 13: "If this were the only life which men have, nothing could be more miserable" (1 Cor. xv. 19). Chap. xxiv. 1: "Lo the days come, and the books shall be opened, in which are written the sins of those who have sinned, and the treasure-houses shall be disclosed in which is gathered the righteousness of those who were justified on earth" (Rev. xx. 12). Chap. xlviii. 34: "There shall be rumours many and messengers not a few; and mighty works shall be shown, and promises made of which some shall be vain and some shall be confirmed" (Matt. xxiv. 24–26). Chap. xx. 1, 2: "The days shall come when the times shall hasten more than 135 of old, and the hours shall speed on quicker than before, and the years shall pass away more rapidly than now. For this I have sustained Zion, that I might rather hasten and visit the world in her time" ("For the elect's sake those days shall be shortened," Matt. xxiv. 22). Chap. liv. 10: "Blessed is my mother among them that bear children, praised shall she be among women" (Luke i. 42, xi. 27). "For what gain have men lost their life, and what have they who were once on earth given in exchange for their soul" (chap. 1.). This is remarkably similar to Matt. xvi. 25, 26, especially as in both passages the pleasures of this life are contrasted with the joys of heaven. The many parallelisms between our book and the Revelation of St. John make it almost a certainty that the seer was acquainted with the latter work.¹⁷⁵ Thus it is said, chaps. xx., xlviii., that the end of the times draws near (Rev. i. 1, 3, xxii. 7); chaps. xxi., lix., that spirits stand before the throne of God like burning lamps (Rev. i. 4, iv. 5); chaps. ii., xiv., that the righteous intercede for sinners before God (Rev. v. 8, viii. 3); chap. xlviii., evil spirits and those who are inspired by them shall work miracles (Rev. xiii. 13, xvi. 14); chap. xxix., the hidden manna shall be given as a reward to the righteous (Rev. ii. 17). Chaps. lxxvii., lxxxvii., an eagle is sent to make a solemn announcement (Rev. viii. 13 ἀετοῦ); chap. xxviii., the number three and a half is used in mystic computation of time (Rev. iii. 9, etc.); chap. iv., the sacred city Jerusalem is taken up to heaven, which St. John sees descending (Rev. iii. 12, xxi. 2). Then there are many expressions which have a Christian sound, as Faith, Faithful, Those who believe, The written law, Future judgment, Promise of the life to come, The new world, The mouth of hell, The place of hope, Saved in his works (Jas. ii. 14). These and suchlike terms do not necessarily imply that the writer was a Christian, which notion his views concerning the Messiah decidedly nullify; but they show that he was conversant with Christian ideas, and had some acquaintance with the new literature which had sprung up under the gospel. It is supposed that the book was written before the Second Book of Esdras (as it is called in our Bibles). That in many points the two works have a remarkable affinity cannot be disputed. The only doubt is, which of the two is prior to the other. Many critics have decided that Baruch borrowed from Ezra; but their arguments are very weak, and Schiirer has given reasons for deciding the other way, and assigning priority, of composition to our book. According to him, Esdras is of a much more finished character, and shows greater maturity of thought and more lucidity of style—points which intimate a later origin. But the point must be left undecided.

Why the writer has assumed the name of Baruch is not difficult to imagine. The fame of one so well known, and associated with the great prophet Jeremiah, would add an authority to a work which no other personality would have offered. Since, too, as must be allowed, the book has a close and remarkable analogy with what we call the Second Book of Esdras,¹⁷⁶ another reason may be found for the appropriation of the name Baruch. We 137 need not, with Ewald, hold that the two works are the production of the same author (as indeed there are some facts which militate against this view); or that the Book of Baruch was intended to correct some erroneous opinions of Esdras concerning original sin; but let us suppose that the Second Esdras was well known to our writer. Not wishing to

repeat the personification of his predecessor, and yet desirous of giving his composition an authorization not inferior, he fixed on the follower of Jeremiah as the recipient of the Revelation which he purposed to publish. Whether in this he was consciously treading in the steps of the composer of the apocryphal Book of Baruch is a matter of doubt. Kneucker identifies the two. His view is, that, whereas in chap. lxxvii. the seer was to write two letters, one to the nine-and-a-half tribes to be conveyed by an eagle, and one to the brethren in Babylon to be taken thither by three men, and only the former of these is forthcoming in the Apocalypse, the other is the "Baruch" of the Septuagint. This is described in the Syriac MS. as "the Second Epistle of Baruch the Scribe," the first being that to the nine-and-a-half tribes. Opposed to this conjecture is the fact, that the Book or Epistle of Baruch, according to the Received text, is sent from Babylon to Jerusalem, not from Jerusalem to Babylon, and is generally allowed to be of a much earlier date than the Apocalypse, and of Hebrew origin. The Syriac inscription is probably an unauthorised interpolation intended to show a connection between the two treatises, but warranted neither by internal nor external evidence. That the work was written originally in Greek is evident from an examination of the Syriac version, wherein are found actual Greek words transliterated, as well as what were evidently paronomasias in the original, but which have lost their force in translation.¹⁷⁷ Besides this, the superscription in the Syriac MS. expressly notifies that the work is a translation from the Greek; and there is some evidence of the use of the Septuagint in the references to the Old Testament, as where Baruch is said to have received a revelation under the oak near Hebron (chaps. vi., xlvii.; lxxvii.), which idea is probably derived from Gen. xiii. 18: παρὰ τὴν δρῦν τὴν Μαμβρῆ, ἣ ἦν ἐν Χεβρώμ. It is certain, too, that the author's locality is Jerusalem. "Your brethren," he says, chap. lxxx., "are carried captive to Babylon, we, a poor remnant, are left here." Only in Palestine or Alexandria could such a book have been composed in the Greek language. But there is no trace of Judo-Alexandrian philosophy (such as meets us in Philo's writings and the Book of Wisdom) to be found in the Apocalypse. Like Ecclesiasticus, it takes its stand on the plain dogmatic teaching of the Scriptures and the traditions concerning Messiah then extant. To none but Palestinian Jews, who had seen their holy city destroyed, could this prophecy, which promised restoration and prosperity to their ruined capital, have been addressed. This point being settled, we may fix the date at about A.D. 90. We have noticed above an argument for this date from the author's own statement concerning the time that the revelation was made unto him. Another may be drawn from Papias' reference to the book. The lost work of this Father was written about A.D. 120–130. Now he quotes this Apocalypse as well known to his readers. Such an acquaintance could hardly have been obtained under thirty years or more. This lands us again at the same period. So does the inference (if legitimate) that it was written after St. Matthew's Gospel and the Revelation of St. John. Nor could it have been composed after the total overthrow of Jerusalem by Adrian (A.D. 135). The destruction of the city by Nebuchadnezzar and by Titus is mentioned, but no hint of a third and more effectual demolition is given. On the contrary, restoration is promised after the second ruin, and the people, groaning under this calamity, are comforted with the thought of speedy and most complete re-establishment. This will place the writing between A.D. 70 and A.D. 135, and help to confirm our previous conclusion.

The book is divided into two unequal parts, the first (chaps. i.–lxxvii.) containing the historical points and the revelation of past and future, the second being the letter to the nine-and-a-half tribes. The former is sent to Babylon, which we must consider to mean Rome; the latter, to the Jews dispersed in the Parthian kingdom; "across the river," as it is expressed, the Euphrates being the boundary line

dividing the Eastern empire of the Parthians from the Western empire of the Romans. This distinction between the two great members of the dispersion is found in many other documents of this time, most of which, however, were written with reference to Rome.¹⁷⁸ The entire demolition of ancient Jerusalem, 140 with all its calamitous consequences, under Adrian led to the loss of much of the literature of the period, the preservation of any portion being probably due to the care of Christians. These carried with them in their wanderings the books which have come down to us or were known to the early Fathers. The letter at the end of the Apocalypse, as being addressed to the Eastern Jews, was soon separated from the other part, and translated into Syriac and widely circulated; while the other section, comprising three-fourths of the whole, was so completely lost that it soon existed only in a Syriac version, which, as has been mentioned, itself remained unknown until quite recently.

In these and such like apocalyptic writings there is a certain similarity which greatly conduces to their correct interpretation. Under the general design of comforting his countrymen in times of trouble and defeat with the hope of the speedy appearance of the Messiah, the seer composes a prophecy which shall embrace the past, the present, and the future. He represents himself as receiving direct communication from God, and enjoined to make known the revelation to men. Placing himself in the distant past, he gives a summary of the history of his people up to the present time, touches lightly on the events that pass before his own eyes, and then in figure and type shadows forth a glorious future which shall abundantly compensate the distress and humiliation now prevalent. This is very nearly an outline of the Apocalypse of Baruch. The first portion, comprising chaps. i.–lxxvii., is divided into seven sections, the close of each section being usually marked by a fast of seven 141 days.¹⁷⁹ First Section: In the twenty–fifth year of Jechoniah, king of Judah, it was revealed to Baruch that Jerusalem and her people should be destroyed, and the inhabitants of the land should be carried away captive. Upon his asking whether the end of the world should come then, he is told that the prophecies which spoke of the everlasting covenant referred to a new world and a new Jerusalem which should be eternal. On the next day the Chaldaeans took the city; but first, that the enemy might not be able to vaunt their power, the angels destroy the walls, and hide in the earth the precious things of the temple. Zedekiah, the king, is taken captive to Babylon, while Baruch and Jeremiah are left in Jerusalem, and weep and fast seven days (i.–ix.). Then Jeremiah, by Divine command, is sent to Babylon; but Baruch stays amid the ruins of the city to receive a revelation, which comes to him after another seven days' fast (x.–xii.).¹⁸⁰ Second Section: As he stands on Mount Zion, a voice falls from heaven, telling him that his people are chastised in mercy in order to lead them to repentance: he complains that good men are no better off than sinners and the heathen, though this world was made for God's people;¹⁸¹ and the Lord answers, that this 142 life is short and full of trouble, but the life to come shall set right all present anomalies. And he bids Baruch prepare himself for a new revelation (xiii.–xx.). *Third Section:* At the end of seven days the seer comes to the appointed place, and asks impatiently to know the meaning and the issue of God's dealings with men. He is told that he is ignorant, but is comforted with the hope that the end is near, when good and evil shall meet their reward; and the signs that shall precede this final time are enumerated under twelve divisions, concluding with the days of Messiah and His two advents—the first to establish an earthly kingdom; the second to manifest His eternal reign, when He shall raise up those who have slept in hope, and reward them with heavenly glory. To the question as to the extent of the tribulation which shall precede this time, the seer is told that it will affect the whole earth. Then Baruch summons a meeting of the elders,

and announces to them that Zion shall be destroyed, but shall be rebuilt again; yet again it shall be ruined, and for the last time restored gloriously so as to last for ever (xxi.–xxxiv.). *Fourth Section:* Then the prophet, as he sleeps amid the ruins of the Holy Place, sees in a vision on one side a mighty forest girt by mountains, and on the other a vine, from whose roots issued a placid streamlet. Anon this streamlet became a great river, and it overthrew the mountain, and tore up the forest, leaving of it nothing but one cedar, which also at length it destroyed. And the vine and the stream exulted over the fallen cedar, and the vine grew more and more, and all the plain was filled with flowers that fade not. The seer is told that hereby 143 is signified the fate of four kingdoms which have afflicted Zion, the last of which, the most powerful and most evil of them all, is to perish before the arms of Messiah. "Then shall be revealed the chieftainship of my Messiah, who is like a spring and a vine, and He on His appearing will annihilate that congregation. And that cedar which thou sawest is the last prince (*dux ultimus*) who is left alive. He shall be brought in chains before Messiah on Mount Zion, and there be put to death" (xxxv.–xlvi.). *Fifth Section:* After another seven days' fast Baruch tells the people of his approaching departure, and urges them to continue faithful to the law, explaining to them the retribution of the world to come. Another seven days' fast intervenes, and then Baruch, in answer to his prayer, is told of the tribulations that are to come upon the earth, and of the manner of the resurrection both of the evil and the good, and their punishment and reward (xlvi.–lii.). *Sixth Section:* After this, he sees a vision of alternate dark and bright waters, which is explained as a record of Israel's history from Adam to Messiah (lxiii.–lxxi.). The glories of Messiah's eternal kingdom are then unfolded. Baruch is informed that shortly he will be taken from earth, though not by death (lxxii.–lxxvi.).¹⁸² *Seventh Section:* He again announces his departure to his friends, prays for their welfare, and on the twenty-first day of the eighth month writes two letters, one to the exiles in Babylon, which he sends by the hands of men, and one to the nine-and-a-half tribes beyond the river, which he entrusts to an eagle. The latter Epistle is given in full, and concludes the book. 144 In it he comforts his distant brethren under their trials with the remembrance that God has not cast off His love for them, but is only temporarily chastening them for their disobedience. Nebuchadnezzar indeed has been permitted to afflict them grievously, but it was the Lord who destroyed the forts and walls; and He also hid the sacred vessels that the heathen should not rejoice over them. All shall be changed ere long; the day is soon coming when the Gentiles shall be punished for their iniquity, and Israel shall be rewarded; only let them prepare for the life to come by virtue and obedience, and all shall be well with them (lxxvii.–lxxxvii.). The other Epistle is not given, and some, as I mentioned above, have considered the Septuagintal "Baruch" to be the missing document. But as this theory is inadmissible; we must deem either that the writing is wholly lost, or that the two Epistles were identical. There is nothing improbable in the latter supposition. Their tenor would naturally be similar, and it is difficult to see what more the seer could have said than he had already expressed in the extant letter. The conclusion of the book may have told how Baruch was taken from the earth, after he had seen in a vision all the regions of the world, as it had been promised him.

Such being a general view of the contents of the Apocalypse, we can now enter more particularly into some of the matters contained in it. And first, there are some puzzles connected with numbers which must be mentioned. Two such riddles confront us, a shorter and a longer.¹⁸³ The former concerns the end of the 145 present world. This is to happen at the conclusion of "two parts weeks of seven weeks."¹⁸⁴ The seven weeks, which are probably derived from Dan. ix. 25, imply an interval of 49 years, which must be reckoned from the destruction of Jerusalem, A.D. 70. The expression

“two parts” means two-thirds, as in Hebrew and Latin. Two-thirds of this period, say 33 years, would land us in the reign of Trajan (A.D. 98–117). In the chapter preceding this prophecy the seer foretells a course of twelve calamities, each more crushing than its predecessor, which should happen before the end. These may be well understood of events up to the death of Domitian (A.D. 96). But all this is pure speculation, and calculations founded hereon cannot be trusted. The longer riddle is on safer ground, being a history of past events in the form of prophecy (chaps. liii.–lxxiv.). The seer beholds a vast cloud rising from the sea, and discharging black and clear water alternately twelve times in succession. Under this image of dark and bright waters following each other in succession, the writer represents the history of man from Adam to the first destruction of Jerusalem. The alternation of light and shade, prosperity and adversity, reward and punishment, in human records, is compressed into twelve great periods, the character of which is marked by the changed appearance of the waters in the vision. “And it came to pass,” says the 146seer, “that the cloud began to rain down upon the earth the waters with which it was charged. And I saw that the aspect of the waters was not one; for first they were black for a time, and then they became bright, but these were scanty; and afterwards I saw black waters a second time and then again bright; and this was done twelve times; but the black were always more abundant than the bright. Last of all, the cloud poured forth waters blacker than ever, and fire mingled with them. This fire was lightning, which gave shine to the whole earth, and healed the regions on which the dark waters had fallen. Then twelve streams arose from the sea, and subjected themselves to this lightning.” Upon the seer praying for the interpretation of this mystery; the angel Ramiel is sent to explain it thus: “Whereas thou sawest first black waters descend upon the earth, this is the sin which Adam, the first man, sinned. For since by his transgression came into the world death, which was not in his time, and sorrow and pain, and labour, what could there be blacker than these things? Adam endangered his own soul and the souls of other men, so that all who lived on earth perished in the Flood. These are the first black waters. And whereas after these thou didst see bright waters, this denotes the advent of Abraham and his son and his sons’ sons and those who are like unto them; because at that time, though there was no written law among them, yet the commandments were duly observed, and faith in the judgment to come arose, and the hope of a new world was then built up, and the promise of the life hereafter was planted in men’s hearts. These are the first bright waters which thou sawest.” And thus the 147angel expounds the signification of the vision unto the first destruction of Jerusalem and onwards to Messiah’s time. Then we have the doings of subsequent sinful generations, especially the Egyptians, contrasted with Moses, Joshua, and the Sinaitic revelations; the works of the Amorites and magicians contrasted with the times of David and Solomon; the revolt of Jeroboam and the sins and punishments of his successors set against the piety of Hezekiah and his defeat of Sennacherib; the ungodliness of Manasseh against the integrity of Josiah. The eleventh downpour represents the tribulation in Baruch’s own time; and the twelfth bright water adumbrates the restoration of Israel. The last dark water represents the tumult and tribulation which will come upon the earth before the final advent of Messiah. In this interpretation some points are noteworthy. There is a strange opinion about Manasses, king of Judah (chap. lxxiv.). It is said that his impiety was so heinous that he was condemned to the penal fire. Ignoring the old tradition of his repentance and consequent acceptance with God (2 Chron. xxxiii. 12, 13, 19), of a belief in which the apocryphal “Prayer of Manasses” is an evidence, Pseudo-Baruch testifies that though his prayer was heard, he himself was lost. “When he was placed in the brazen horse,” probably an image connected with the worship of Moloch, “the figure was melted with the ardent

heat, and he perished therein, a sign of the end that awaited him. For he had not lived a perfect life, nor was he worthy; but by this sign he learned by whom he was to be tormented hereafter. For He who can reward is also able to punish." The legend found in the *Apostolica* 148 *Constitutions* and elsewhere¹⁸⁵ gives a very different result. According to these authorities, at his prayer, the image fell to pieces, and he escaped unharmed, returned to Jerusalem, and lived afterwards piously and prosperously. The opinion of Manasses' damnation in spite of his prayer is, as far as we know, peculiar to Pseudo-Baruch. Concerning the angels who "kept not their first estate," our seer holds the notion that they fell by their commerce with the daughters of men. "Adam," he says, "imperilled not only his own soul but the angels also. For at the time when he was created they had full liberty, and some of them descended and had intercourse with women; and then they who thus offended were tormented in chains. But the rest of the host of angels, an innumerable company, kept themselves pure." This interpretation of Gen. vi. 4 is, in the main, one that is common enough in Jewish, and indeed in Christian, commentaries. But it has a special feature which differentiates it from other glosses. The writer seems to teach that, as the tree of knowledge was the trial of Adam's faith and constancy, so the beauty of mortal women was appointed to be the probation of angels; and that the difference between good and bad angels consisted in the continence of the one and the unchastity of the other. The "tormenting in chains" reminds us of 2 Pet. ii. 4 and Jude 6, and is confirmed by many expressions in the Book of Enoch.¹⁸⁶

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There are some other peculiarities in this book which are interesting. The seer claims to have revelations made to him in two ways, by an angel, and by the voice of God. The angel he names Ramiel, "who presides over the visions of truth" (chap. lv.), and who tells him (chap. lxiii.) that he was the agent in the destruction of the host of Sennacherib in Hezekiah's reign. The name of this angel is not found elsewhere except in the Syriac version of 4 Esdr. iv. 36, v. 20, where the Latin has Jeremiel in most MSS., but in one (Turicensis) Huriel. Probably the name Ramiel is a corruption of Jeremiel, which word was formed from Jeremiah, who might well be called the prophet of truth, and give his name to the angel of the vision. The close connection between Baruch and Jeremiah makes this supposition very probable. In other passages of Esdras (iv. 1, v. 20; x. 28), Uriel is the heavenly messenger, which is in accordance with statements in the Book of Enoch (e.g. chaps. ix., xx., lxxiv.), where an angel of this name is often introduced. But it is very possible that the three names refer to the same heavenly being. Revelation by the direct voice of God seems to be an unusual claim on the part of Jewish apocalyptic writers. Inspiration by Bathkol, the daughter of the voice, indeed is asserted by the Rabbis up to the time of the composition of the Mishna; but this was never considered to be the voice of God Himself, but that of an angel, His agent or minister. Thus when the voice from heaven came to our Lord (John xii. 28), some of the people supposed that an angel spoke to Him; when God called to Moses from the bush, it was an angel who addressed him; and 150 when the Law was uttered from Sinai, it was given "by the disposition of angels."¹⁸⁷ But Pseudo-Baruch especially distinguishes the heavenly voice from the revelation by the angel. "It came to pass after this," he says (chap. xxii.), "the heavens were opened, and I saw, and power was given unto me, and a voice from the highest was heard, and He said unto me." It is not till some time afterwards that Ramiel is said to interpret the vision of the waters. Langen supposes that the seer, being acquainted with St. Matthew's Gospel, took the hint of the narrative in chap. iii., and thus made the voice come immediately from God. I should think rather that the writer used the

ambiguity of expression in the Old Testament to enhance the dignity of the revelation he was making. To do this he had no need to imitate St. Matthew's account.

On the subject of original sin our seer is thought to oppose the more orthodox doctrine enunciated by Esdras. Both writers speak of the evil introduced into the world by Adam's sin, but they diverge when treating of its effects on his descendants. While Esdras teaches that Adam communicated an infected nature to his posterity,¹⁸⁸ 151Pseudo-Baruch sometimes affirms that the sin of Adam is transferred to others by imitation alone. "If," he says (chap. liv.), "Adam first sinned, and brought untimely death upon all men; yet also they who are born from him, each one of them hath prepared future torment for his own soul; and again, each one hath chosen future glory for himself. Adam was the cause of guilt to his own soul only; but we, each of us, are the Adam to our own souls." It is curious to trace here indications of that doctrine which, developed into Pelagianism, became the cause of serious controversy in the Christian Church. The received maxim among the Jews was that the whole world was comprised in Adam and sinned in his sin. The expression in Job xiv. 4 ("Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one"), whether we take it interrogatively or optatively, comes to the same thing, and intimates that the old belief obtained: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Ps. li. 5).

Let us turn now to the doctrine of the Messiah contained in our book. As we know that the apostles and early believers expected the second coming of Christ to happen shortly, so Pseudo-Baruch looks for the appearance of Messiah in the course of a few years. In their utter dejection and distress, seated amid the ruins of their beloved Jerusalem, the sorrowing Jews could find comfort in nothing but the hope of a speedy restoration under the leadership of Messiah. The actual time of this Parousia is concealed under a veil of symbolical words; but it is to be preceded by exceeding heavy calamities, confirming the saying "that man's extremity 152is God's opportunity." In his vision the seer beholds a kingdom (Rome), the power of which shall be greater and more evil than any before it; and it shall rule supreme for many ages and be highly exalted; in it truth shall not dwell, but all who are stained with crime shall find refuge therein, as evil beasts hide themselves in the forest. "And it shall come to pass when the time of its fall shall approach, then the dominion of Messiah shall be revealed, and He shall root up the multitude of that kingdom" (chap. xxxix.). But before that event, "the harvest of the good seed and the bad shall come, and the Almighty will bring upon the earth and its inhabitants and upon its rulers confusion of spirit and stupor of heart. And they shall hate one another and provoke one another to battle, and the base-born shall lord over those of high degree, and the mean shall be exalted above men of renown, and the many shall be delivered to the few, and those who were nothing shall rule the mighty, and the poor shall be more than the rich, and the wicked shall be raised above the heroic, and wise men shall hold their peace and fools shall speak: the thought of men shall then not be confirmed, nor the counsel of the Almighty, nor the hope of those that hope. And when what has been foretold shall come to pass, on all men shall come confusion, and some of them shall fall by the sword in battle, and some shall perish in great tribulation, and some shall be ensnared by their own friends. But the Most High shall reveal it to those nations whom He prepared before, and they shall come and fight with the leaders who shall then remain. And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall escape 153from the war shall die in the earthquake, and whosoever shall escape from the earthquake shall be consumed in the fire, and whosoever shall escape from the fire shall perish in the famine. And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall escape from all these evils, of the conquerors and of the conquered,

shall be delivered into the hands of my servant Messiah. For the earth shall devour the inhabitants thereof" (chap. lxx.). Other signs are mentioned (chap. xlvi.), some of which, as we have seen above, have a striking similarity to those which our Lord foretold should usher in the last day. No safety shall anywhere be found except in the Holy Land, which "shall have pity on its own children and protect them in that day" (chap. lxxi.). And then shall Messiah begin to be revealed.

In his idea of the reign of Messiah, Pseudo-Baruch takes a different line from Esdras and other apocalyptic writers. The common notion of a great Leader, who by a course of uninterrupted triumph should restore and enhance the glory of the depressed Israelites, does not satisfy his hopes. This is only one and a partial view of the effects of this Divine interference. The Messiah has a twofold kingdom, an earthly one which passes away; and a heavenly one which is everlasting. Such a question as that of the apostles (Acts i. 6): "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" spoke only of temporal restitution and sovereignty, and would not have intimated the full hope that we see to have been conceived by our seer. Of a suffering Messiah he has no notion; nor does he give any trace of the later belief in two Messiahs, a Messiah ben David of whom 154 were predicted glory and triumph, and a Messiah ben Joseph to whose lot fell all the foretold sufferings and woe. His Messiah is one only person viewed at different times and under a different aspect. First He comes as the great earthly conqueror, who was to emancipate the people from the dominion of Rome, punish their enemies, and restore the Jews to more than pristine glory. In this earthly kingdom all the Israelites who are then alive shall have their part; and while those who have oppressed them shall perish, they who have never known them or had connection with them, and they who have joined themselves unto their God as proselytes, shall be saved, being in subjection to the ancient people. This dominion shall be established in the Holy Land, when the last leader of the enemy is brought in chains to Zion, and is there condemned and executed by Messiah. The glories of this kingdom, in accordance more or less with ancient prophecy, are thus described (chap. lxxiii.): "It shall come to pass when He shall have humbled whatsoever is in the world, and sat down in peace for ever upon the throne of His kingdom, then shall He be revealed in happiness, and a great calm shall ensue. Health shall descend like dew, and sickness shall pass away, and care and distress and groaning shall no more be found among men; and joy shall pace through all the earth. No one shall die before he hath filled his days, no sudden calamity shall happen to any. Trials, accusations, contentions, revenge, bloodshed, avarice, envy, hatred, and all such things shall be utterly abolished. For these are the things which have filled this world with evil and vexed the life of men. Then the wild beasts shall come 155 forth from the forests and minister unto men; and asps and snakes shall issue from their holes to become a little one's plaything. Women shall be delivered without pain. The reaper shall not be wearied, the builder shall feel no fatigue, for all works shall co-operate with the labourers in that time of peace." Like other apocalyptic writers, Pseudo-Baruch represents the happiness of Messiah's kingdom under the figure of a splendid banquet, in which mighty animals shall be served up as the food of the righteous guests. The Lord says to him, chap. xxix.: "Behemoth shall be brought to light from his place, and Leviathan shall ascend from the sea, two great creatures which I made on the fifth day of the creation, and have reserved unto this time;¹⁸⁹ and then they shall be for food for them that are left. The earth also shall give her fruits, ten thousand for one." Then comes the passage about the vine (quoted by Papias) given above. He proceeds: "Those who have hungered shall be gladdened, and they shall again see prodigies daily. For spirits¹⁹⁰ shall go forth from my presence every morning to bring the odour of aromatic fruits, and at the close of day clouds dropping the dew of health. And

then shall fall a second time the treasure of manna, and they shall eat thereof in those years, since these are they which have come to the end of the time."

Such is our seer's description of the earthly reign of Messiah. But we may note that in two points he differs from many of the writers of Apocalypses. First he takes a more liberal view of the Gentile world than his contemporaries. While others were content to believe that salvation was of the Jews, and belonged to them exclusively, Pseudo-Baruch admits certain of the Gentiles to share the glories of Messiah's kingdom. Proselytes from the heathen, and any that had taken no active part in oppressing Israel, or from their remoteness of position knew nothing of God's people, would be allowed to participate in the blessings of the Messianic reign, provided that they came in humbly as subjects of the heavenly Prince. It is interesting to observe an abatement of that jealousy which so frequently meets us in the Gospels, where an extension of God's favour to the Gentiles is reprobated by the Jews as an opinion profane and detestable. Our seer has lighted upon a great truth, though he knew not its full import, how that the Christ should be not only the glory of Israel, but, as the aged Simeon believed, a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.¹⁹¹

The other point in which our seer differs from many Hebrew writers is this: he allows a participation in Messiah's earthly kingdom to those Jews only who are alive at His appearing. The common opinion among the Jews was that the righteous dead should rise from the brave to inherit His glory: this was to be their privilege; they were to obtain part in the first resurrection which was quite distinct from the general resurrection at the day of judgment. Of this opinion Pseudo-Baruch makes no mention. "Messiah," he says, 157"shall protect the people who are found in the appointed place," *i.e.* Zion.¹⁹²

How long this earthly kingdom is supposed to last is nowhere distinctly stated. The seer speaks of the time of Messiah's appearance being fulfilled (chap. xxx.), before He returns again in glory, but he does not assign any definite period to His earthly sojourn. The notion of a reign of a thousand years, which is generally supposed to have originated in Judaism and to have passed from thence to Christianity, does not appear in our book. There is a passage in Esdras¹⁹³ which reckons the duration at four hundred years. This, is probably derived from the consideration that the period of affliction in Egypt was to be compensated by a similar period of refreshment and rest. But Pseudo-Baruch gives no confirmation to this opinion. Nor does he assert with Esdras¹⁹⁴ that Messiah shall die. He passes over this event in silence, and proceeds to picture His return in glory in the fulness of time. At His coming all men shall arise again, not Jews only, but all men; and not the righteous only, but sinners also. "To the dust it shall be said, Restore that which is not thine, and place thou here all that thou hast kept safe till now" (chap. xlii.). "And the storehouses¹⁹⁵ shall be opened wherein have been kept the souls of the righteous, and they shall 158come forth, and the multitude of souls shall appear in one concordant assembly, and the first shall rejoice and the last shall not be sad, for they shall know that the end of all the times has come. But the souls of sinners, when they shall see all things, shall pine away the more; for they know that their punishment has come and the hour of their damnation" (chap. xxx.). "The earth shall restore the dead which it had to keep, changing nothing in their form; but as it received them so it shall restore them, and as I [the Lord] have committed them unto it, thus shall it place them before me. And they shall recognise each other" (chap. 1.). Here again Pseudo-Baruch is not in agreement with the usual opinion of his contemporaries. Josephus¹⁹⁶ asserts that the Pharisees believed that the souls of the righteous

alone would rise again, while the wicked would remain in prison everlastingly, suffering there eternal punishment. This dogma probably could not be truly predicated of all Pharisees,¹⁹⁷ but it was undoubtedly held by a large majority of Jews. The Book of Enoch,¹⁹⁸ which represents the current belief, teaches that the souls of sinners shall suffer vengeance without being united again to their bodies, but the righteous shall be raised, body and soul, to participate in the blessings of Messiah's reign. And such, with certain modifications, was the opinion that generally obtained in these and later times; while Pseudo-Baruch teaches that synchronally with 159Messiah's return shall be the general resurrection, the judgment, and the eternal reign. Whether the period between the first and second advent of Messiah corresponds with the millennium of St. John in Rev. xx. is a question which we cannot now discuss. That no mention of the first resurrection is made in our book is a fact which separates it from Jewish and Christian speculations. One thing is plain, that what others call the second or general resurrection is the great event which Pseudo-Baruch foresees as appertaining to Messiah's second appearance in glory.

In presenting the details of this resurrection, the seer says, as St. Paul, that all will be changed, the aspect of the evil becoming more horrible, and that of the righteous more glorious; the one being transformed to the splendour of the angels, the other terror-stricken by fearful sights and visions; the one made bright and beautiful to receive the blessings of the eternal world, the other tantalised with the sight of the blessed and sent away to punishment.¹⁹⁹ On the subject of the happiness of the saved he enlarges in many passages. "They shall see the world which is now invisible to them; they shall see the time which is now hidden from them. And time shall never more grow old to them; for they shall dwell in the high places of that world, and shall be like unto the angels and equal to the stars, and shall be transformed into all the beauty that they can desire, and changed from light unto the radiance of glory. In their sight shall be unfolded the breadths of Paradise, and there shall be displayed before them the comeliness of the 160majesty of the living creatures which are beneath the throne,²⁰⁰ and all the hosts of angels who now are holden by my word from being seen, and holden by my command that they should stay in their own places till the time of their appearance is come. Thus the excellency of the righteous shall surpass that of the angels. For the first shall succeed the last, those for whom they waited, and the last those whom they heard to have passed by; and they have been delivered from this world of sorrow, and have laid down the weight of care." If it might seem an extravagant belief in the mouth of a Jew that, admitted to the life beyond the grave, he should be more excellent than the angels, yet his hope is far inferior to that of the Christian. We are told that we shall see God, behold "the King in His beauty." The Jewish prophet holds out no hope of this blessed vision. The righteous shall see highest orders of angels, and all the hosts of heaven, yea, the glory of God, the light in which He dwells; but Himself no eye of man, however holy and blessed, shall behold.²⁰¹

The scene of this happiness is the new world which God shall create especially for His true servants. And that the prophecies of the glory of Jerusalem may be rightly understood, the seer is taught that the earthly city may be destroyed once and again, but it shall be renewed in glory, and receive an everlasting crown (chap. xxxii.). "Dost thou remember," says the Lord, "what that city is of which I said, 'I have graven thee 161upon the palm of my hands'?" No earthly city this, but a heavenly, mystic one, prepared before the world was made, shown to Adam before he fell in Paradise, but withdrawn, as Eden itself, after he had sinned.²⁰² Abraham, too, beheld it when he kept watch between his victims slain; and to Moses it was revealed on Mount Sinai, when he

received the communication touching the Tabernacle and its appurtenances. Since then it has been kept in the secret place of God till the time for its disclosure should arrive.²⁰³ This glorious city shall be the abode of the righteous. But the seer, unlike St. John, attempts not to describe its splendours; no revelation of these particulars is made unto him, and he leaves it in its beauty a wonder and a mystery. The Paradise, in which he locates both the throne of God and the home of the blessed, is not the place in the other world where the souls of the just await the day of judgment, which was its usual signification among the Jews, but heaven itself, and, as one would suppose, the so-called third heaven. St. Paul, in the account of his own rapture (2 Cor. xii.), seems to make a distinction between Paradise and the third heaven, speaking of being on one occasion "caught up even to the third heaven," and on another, "being caught up into Paradise." But in this, as in some other points before noticed, Pseudo-Baruch does not adhere closely to the received opinion,¹⁶² but follows another tradition, or takes an original view.

With regard to the punishment of the wicked, the seer holds this opinion. They shall first see the glory of the righteous, and then shall be led away to punishment,—their home shall be in the eternal fire (chap. xlv.). Of the annihilation of the condemned other writers have spoken;²⁰⁴ but nothing of the kind is found in our book. Sinners are said, indeed, to waste away ("tabescere"), but this is only an expression to characterise their torment, which they are transfigured to endure.²⁰⁵

Such are the chief points of interest in this book; and they are useful in many ways, but chiefly as conveying instruction on the tenets and expectations of the Jews about the period of the first Christian century, and exhibiting the contrast between real and spurious revelations.

¹⁶⁹ There exists also an Ethiopic work called by Dillmann, "Reliqua verborum Baruchi haud apocrypha, quæ ad tempora quo in Babylonia captivi erant pertinent."—*Chrest. Ethiop.*, Lips. 1866.

¹⁷⁰ See Kneucker, *Das Buch Baruch*, pp. 190 ff.

¹⁷¹ The most available comment on the book is that by Joseph Langen, *Commentatio qua Apocalypsis Baruch anno superiori primum edita illustratur*, Bonnæ 1867.

¹⁷² Ewald, in *Gött. gelehrte Anz.* 1867, p. 1715.

¹⁷³ Renan, *Journal des Savants*, April 1877.

¹⁷⁴ Kneucker, p. 195.

¹⁷⁵ See Langen, p. 4.

¹⁷⁶ The two works are compared by Langen, p. 6 ff. See also Ewald, *ut sup.* p. 1707.

¹⁷⁷ See Kneucker, p. 191, note 2, and Langen, § vii. We have in the Latin version, "agon et molestia in labore multo," which must be the equivalent of the Greek ἀγών τε καὶ θλίψις ἐν πολλῷ πόνῳ.

¹⁷⁸ Ewald, p. 1713.

¹⁷⁹ So 2 Esdr. v. 13, vi. 31. In other works of this kind the fast is usually of three days' duration (three weeks in Dan. x. 2). Comp. Assumpt. Mos. ix. 6; 2 Macc. xiii. 12; Test. XII. Patr. Test. Jos. 3.

- ¹⁸⁰ Historical truth is here violated. Jeremiah was compelled to go to Egypt, while Baruch in the course of time, according to Jewish tradition, made his way to Babylon. The seer has manipulated facts to suit the requirements of his Apocalypse. Comp. Jer. xliii. and Bar. i.
- ¹⁸¹ This notion is found, 2 Esdr. vi. 55, ix. 13; Assumpt. Mos. i. 12.
- ¹⁸² Comp. 2 Esdr. xiv. 9, 49 (Fr.).
- ¹⁸³ [Ewald expounds them with zest, *Göt. gel. Anz.* pp. 170–8.]
- ¹⁸⁴ "Mensura autem et supputatio temporis illius erunt duæ partes hebdomades septem hebdomadarum" (chap. xxviii.). This somewhat obscure sentence may be intended to signify that this time of tribulation is divided into seven parts which are weeks, and into two parts which are also of septenary dimensions. So Langen, p. 16.
- ¹⁸⁵ *Apost. Constit.* ii. 22; Suidas, s.v. Manasses; Fritzsche, *Exeg. Handb. zu d. Apokr.* i. p. 158.
- ¹⁸⁶ *E.g.* v. 16, x. 4 ff., xiv. 4, etc. Such passages as these substantiate the reading *σειραῖς*, *chains*, not *σιποῖς*, *dens*, in 2 Pet. ii.
- ¹⁸⁷ See Acts vii. 53; Heb. ii. 2. Joseph. *Antiq.* xv. 5. 3: ἡμῶν τὰ κάλλιστα τῶν δογμάτων καὶ τὰ ὀσιώτατα τῶν ἐν τοῖς νόμοις δι' ἀγγέλων παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ μαθόντων.
- ¹⁸⁸ "O thou Adam, what hast thou done? for though it was thou that sinned, thou art not fallen alone, but we all that come of thee" (2 Esdr. vii. 48). "Unto Adam Thou gavest commandment to love Thy way; which he transgressed; and immediately Thou appointedst death in him and in his generations" (iii. 7). "The first Adam bearing a wicked heart transgressed, and was overcome; and so be all they that are born of him. Thus infirmity was made permanent" (iii. 21, 22).
- ¹⁸⁹ See 2 Esdr. vi. 49, where instead of "Enoch," the Syr. and Ethiop. version, read "Behemoth." Book of Enoch, lix. 7 ff.
- ¹⁹⁰ *Spiritus*; or is it "winds"?
- ¹⁹¹ Luke ii. 32; Acts xiii. 47.
- ¹⁹² Comp. 2 Esdr. vi. 25, ix. 8, xiii. 16 ff., 49.
- ¹⁹³ 2 Esdr. vii. 28. Comp. Gen. xv. 13 and Ps. xc. 15.
- ¹⁹⁴ 2 Esdr. vii. 29: "After these years shall my Son Christ die." This clause is wanting in the Arabic version, and many doubt its genuineness.
- ¹⁹⁵ *Promptuaria*. The word often occurs in 2 Esdr. in the same connection.
- ¹⁹⁶ *Antiq.* xviii. 1. 3; *Bell. Jud.* ii. 8. 14.
- ¹⁹⁷ Comp. Acts xxiv. 15. Schoettgen, *Hor. Hebr. in Matt.* xxii. 29; and in Joh. vi. 36.
- ¹⁹⁸ See xcvi., ciii., cviii.
- ¹⁹⁹ Chaps. xxxii., li.

²⁰⁰ These are elsewhere (chap. xxi.) called “the powers, that stand before God,” and seem to mean the highest angels, the seven mentioned Tob. xii. 15 and Rev. viii. 2.

²⁰¹ So in the Book of Enoch xiv. 8. 2 Esdr. vi. 64 (Fr.): “Primo vident in gaudio multo gloriam Altissimi qui assumit eas.”

²⁰² In 2 Esdr. iii. 6, Paradise is said to have been created before the earth.

²⁰³ 2 Esdr. vii. 26: “The bride (or city) shall appear, and she coming forth shall be seen, that now is withdrawn from the earth.” xiii. 36: “Zion shall come, and shall be showed to all men, being prepared and builded.” Comp. Rev. xxi. 2.

²⁰⁴ Pseudo-Clem. *Hom.* iii. 6: εἶναι γὰρ εἰς αἰὲ οὐκ ἔτι δύνανται οἱ εἰς τὸν αἰὲ καὶ μόνον ἀσεβήσαντες θεόν. Thus also, Ascens. Isa. iv. 18.

²⁰⁵ “Fiet enim aspectus eorum qui nunc impie agunt pejor quam est, ut sustineant supplicium”—Chap. li.

The Questions of Mary

Epiphanius writes the following about the Gnostics, and this is our only source for the contents (*Panarion*, 26.8.1 - 26.9.5)

8:1 And they too have lots of books. They publish certain 'Questions of Mary'; but others offer many books about the Ialdabaoth we spoke of, and in the name of Seth. They call others 'Apocalypses of Adam' and have ventured to compose other Gospels in the names of the disciples, and are not ashamed to say that our Saviour and Lord himself, Jesus Christ, revealed this obscenity.

8:2 For in the so-called 'Greater Questions of Mary'—there are also 'Lesser' ones forged by them—they claim that he reveals it to her after taking her aside on the mountain, praying, producing a woman from his side, beginning to have sex with her, and then partaking of his emission, if you please, to show that 'Thus we must do, that we may live.'

8:3 And when Mary was alarmed and fell to the ground, he raised her up and said to her, 'O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?'

8:4 And they say that this is the meaning of the saying in the Gospel, 'If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe the heavenly things?' and so of, 'When ye see the Son of Man ascending up where he was before'—in other words, when you see the emission being partaken of where it came from.

8:5 And when Christ said, 'Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood,' and the disciples were disturbed and replied, 'Who can hear this?'⁴⁰ they say his saying was about the dirt.

8:6 And this is why they were disturbed and fell away; they were not entirely stable yet, they say.

8:7 And when David says, 'He shall be like a tree planted by the outgoings of water that will bring forth its fruit in due season,'⁴¹ they say he is speaking of the man's dirt. 'By the outgoing of water,'

and, 'that will bring forth his fruit,' means the emission at climax. And 'Its leaf shall not fall off' means, 'We do not allow it to fall to the ground, but eat it ourselves.'

9:1 And so as not to do more harm than good by making their proof texts public, I am going to omit most of them—otherwise I would cite all their wicked sayings and go through them here.

9:2 When it says that Rahab put a scarlet thread in her window, this was not scarlet thread, they tell us, but the female organs. And the scarlet thread means the menstrual blood, and 'Drink water from your cisterns' refers to the same.

9:3 They say that the flesh must perish and cannot be raised, and this belongs to the archon.

9:4 But the power in the menses and organs is soul, they say, 'which we gather and eat. And whatever we eat—meat, vegetables, bread or anything else—we are doing creatures a favour by gathering the soul from them all and taking it to the heavens with us.' Hence they eat meat of all kinds and say that this is 'to show mercy to our race.'

9:5 And they claim that the same soul has been implanted in animals, insects, fish, snakes, men—and in vegetation, trees, and the fruits of the soil.

There is little to say concerning the "Lesser Questions of Mary" mentioned here, although some have attempted to identify it with otherwise known texts (such as the Pistis Sophia or the Gospel of Mary).

The Hymn of Light

1. The whole world was lost in the darkness of sin,
The Light of the world is Jesus!
Like sunshine at noonday, His glory shone in;
The Light of the world is Jesus!

Refrain:

Come to the light, 'tis shining for thee;
Sweetly the light has dawned upon me;
Once I was blind, but now I can see:
The Light of the world is Jesus!

2. No darkness have we who in Jesus abide;
The Light of the world is Jesus!
We walk in the light when we follow our Guide!
The Light of the world is Jesus!

3. Ye dwellers in darkness with sin-blinded eyes,
The Light of the world is Jesus!
Go, wash at His bidding, and light will arise;
The Light of the world is Jesus!

4. No need of the sunlight in Heaven we're told;
The Light of the world is Jesus!
The Lamb is the Light in the city of gold,
The Light of the world is Jesus!

The Gospel of Mani

The most Beloved Son, the Savior Jesus, the head of all these gifts,
Who is a refuge for the holy and a blessing for the wise, is exalted.
May he be praised!

The Maiden of Light, the chief of all wisdom, is exalted.
May she be praised!

The Holy Religion, by the power of the Father,
by the blessing of the Mother and by the wisdom of the Son, is exalted.
May it be praised!

Well-being and blessing to the sons of goodness
and to the speakers and hearers of the true Word!
Praise and honor to the Father and the Son
and the Holy Spirit and to the holy recollection!

He (Mani) teaches the word of the Living Gospel
for Eye and Ear, and he preaches the fruit of righteousness.

I, Mani, the Apostle of Jesus the Friend, by the will of the Father,
the true God, of Him, by whom I have become ...
Everything that is and everything that was and will be is by His Power.
The blessed ones will receive this message,
the wise ones understand it,
the strong ones will take on the wisdom of the wise

The Homily on the Good Shepherd by Ambrose of Milan

Gospel text (Jn 10, 11-16): «I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives his life for the sheep. Not so the hired hand or any other person who is not the shepherd and to whom the sheep do not belong. They abandon the sheep as soon as they see the wolf coming; then the wolf snatches and scatters the sheep. This is because the hired hand works for pay and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, as the Father knows me and I know the Father. Because of this I give my life for my sheep».

The Letter of Polycarp to the Philippians (Expanded)

Chapter 1. Praise of the Philippians

I have greatly rejoiced with you in our Lord Jesus Christ, because you have followed the example of true love [as displayed by God], and have accompanied, as became you, those who were bound in chains, the fitting ornaments of saints, and which are indeed the diadems of the true elect of God and our Lord; and because the strong root of your faith, spoken of in days Philippians 1:5 long gone by, endures even until now, and brings forth fruit to our Lord Jesus Christ, who for our sins suffered even unto death, [but] whom God raised from the dead, having loosed the bands of the grave. In whom, though now you see Him not, you believe, and believing, rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; 1 Peter 1:8 into which joy many desire to enter, knowing that by grace you are saved, not of works, Ephesians 2:8-9 but by the will of God through Jesus Christ.

Chapter 2. An exhortation to virtue

Wherefore, girding up your loins, 1 Peter 1:13; Ephesians 6:14 serve the Lord in fear and truth, as those who have forsaken the vain, empty talk and error of the multitude, and believed in Him who raised up our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, and gave Him glory, 1 Peter 1:21 and a throne at His right hand. To Him all things 1 Peter 3:22; Philippians 2:10 in heaven and on earth are subject. Him every spirit serves. He comes as the Judge of the living and the dead. Acts 17:31 His blood will God require of those who do not believe in Him. But He who raised Him up from the dead will raise us up also, if we do His will, and walk in His commandments, and love what He loved, keeping ourselves from all unrighteousness, covetousness, love of money, evil speaking, false witness; not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, 1 Peter 3:9 or blow for blow, or cursing for cursing, but being mindful of what the Lord said in His teaching: Judge not, that you be not judged; Matthew 7:1 forgive, and it shall be forgiven unto you; be merciful, that you may obtain mercy; Luke 6:36 with what measure you measure, it shall be measured to you again; Matthew 7:2; Luke 6:38 and once more, Blessed are the poor, and those that are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of God.

Chapter 3. Expressions of personal unworthiness

These things, brethren, I write to you concerning righteousness, not because I take anything upon myself, but because you have invited me to do so. For neither I, nor any other such one, can come up to the wisdom 2 Peter 3:15 of the blessed and glorified Paul. He, when among you, accurately and steadfastly taught the word of truth in the presence of those who were then alive. And when absent from you, he wrote you a letter, which, if you carefully study, you will find to be the means of building you up in that faith which has been given you, and which, being followed by hope, and preceded by love towards God, and Christ, and our neighbour, is the mother of us all. Galatians 4:26 For if any one be inwardly possessed of these graces, he has fulfilled the command of righteousness, since he that has love is far from all sin.

Chapter 4. Various exhortations

But the love of money is the root of all evils. 1 Timothy 6:10 Knowing, therefore, that as we brought nothing into the world, so we can carry nothing out, 1 Timothy 6:7 let us arm ourselves with the

armour of righteousness; Ephesians 6:11 and let us teach, first of all, ourselves to walk in the commandments of the Lord. Next, [teach] your wives [to walk] in the faith given to them, and in love and purity tenderly loving their own husbands in all truth, and loving all [others] equally in all chastity; and to train up their children in the knowledge and fear of God. Teach the widows to be discreet as respects the faith of the Lord, praying continually 1 Thessalonians 5:17 for all, being far from all slandering, evil-speaking, false-witnessing, love of money, and every kind of evil; knowing that they are the altar of God, that He clearly perceives all things, and that nothing is hid from Him, neither reasonings, nor reflections, nor any one of the secret things of the heart.

Chapter 5. The duties of deacons, youths, and virgins

Knowing, then, that God is not mocked, Galatians 6:7 we ought to walk worthy of His commandment and glory. In like manner should the deacons be blameless before the face of His righteousness, as being the servants of God and Christ, and not of men. They must not be slanderers, double-tongued, 1 Timothy 3:8 or lovers of money, but temperate in all things, compassionate, industrious, walking according to the truth of the Lord, who was the servant Matthew 20:28 of all. If we please Him in this present world, we shall receive also the future world, according as He has promised to us that He will raise us again from the dead, and that if we live worthily of Him, we shall also reign together with Him, 2 Timothy 2:12 provided only we believe. In like manner, let the young men also be blameless in all things, being especially careful to preserve purity, and keeping themselves in, as with a bridle, from every kind of evil. For it is well that they should be cut off from the lusts that are in the world, since every lust wars against the spirit; 1 Peter 2:11 and neither fornicators, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, shall inherit the kingdom of God, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 nor those who do things inconsistent and unbecoming. Wherefore, it is needful to abstain from all these things, being subject to the presbyters and deacons, as unto God and Christ. The virgins also must walk in a blameless and pure conscience.

Chapter 6. The duties of presbyters and others

And let the presbyters be compassionate and merciful to all, bringing back those that wander, visiting all the sick, and not neglecting the widow, the orphan, or the poor, but always providing for that which is becoming in the sight of God and man; Romans 12:17; 2 Corinthians 8:31 abstaining from all wrath, respect of persons, and unjust judgment; keeping far off from all covetousness, not quickly crediting [an evil report] against any one, not severe in judgment, as knowing that we are all under a debt of sin. If then we entreat the Lord to forgive us, we ought also ourselves to forgive; Matthew 6:12-14 for we are before the eyes of our Lord and God, and we must all appear at the judgment-seat of Christ, and must every one give an account of himself. Romans 14:10-12; 2 Corinthians 5:10 Let us then serve Him in fear, and with all reverence, even as He Himself has commanded us, and as the apostles who preached the Gospel unto us, and the prophets who proclaimed beforehand the coming of the Lord [have alike taught us]. Let us be zealous in the pursuit of that which is good, keeping ourselves from causes of offense, from false brethren, and from those who in hypocrisy bear the name of the Lord, and draw away vain men into error.

Chapter 7. Avoid the Docetæ, and persevere in fasting and prayer

For whosoever does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, is antichrist; 1 John 4:3 and whosoever does not confess the testimony of the cross, is of the devil; and whosoever perverts the oracles of the Lord to his own lusts, and says that there is neither a resurrection nor a judgment, he is the first-born of Satan. Wherefore, forsaking the vanity of many, and their false doctrines, let us return to the word which has been handed down to us from Jude 3 the beginning; watching unto prayer, 1 Peter 4:7 and persevering in fasting; beseeching in our supplications the all-seeing God not to lead us into temptation, Matthew 6:13; Matthew 26:41 as the Lord has said: The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak. Matthew 26:41; Mark 14:38

Chapter 8. Persevere in hope and patience

Let us then continually persevere in our hope, and the earnest of our righteousness, which is Jesus Christ, who bore our sins in His own body on the tree, 1 Peter 2:24 who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth, 1 Peter 2:22 but endured all things for us, that we might live in Him. 1 John 4:9 Let us then be imitators of His patience; and if we suffer Acts 5:41; 1 Peter 4:16 for His name's sake, let us glorify Him. For He has set us this example 1 Peter 2:21 in Himself, and we have believed that such is the case.

Chapter 9. Patience inculcated

I exhort you all, therefore, to yield obedience to the word of righteousness, and to exercise all patience, such as you have seen [set] before your eyes, not only in the case of the blessed Ignatius, and Zosimus, and Rufus, but also in others among yourselves, and in Paul himself, and the rest of the apostles. [This do] in the assurance that all these have not run Philippians 2:16; Galatians 2:2 in vain, but in faith and righteousness, and that they are [now] in their due place in the presence of the Lord, with whom also they suffered. For they loved not this present world, but Him who died for us, and for our sakes was raised again by God from the dead.

Chapter 10. Exhortation to the practice of virtue

Stand fast, therefore, in these things, and follow the example of the Lord, being firm and unchangeable in the faith, loving the brotherhood, 1 Peter 2:17 and being attached to one another, joined together in the truth, exhibiting the meekness of the Lord in your intercourse with one another, and despising no one. When you can do good, defer it not, because alms delivers from death. Tobit 4:10, Tobit 12:9 Be all of you subject one to another 1 Peter 5:5 having your conduct blameless among the Gentiles, 1 Peter 2:12 that you may both receive praise for your good works, and the Lord may not be blasphemed through you. But woe to him by whom the name of the Lord is blasphemed! Isaiah 52:5 Teach, therefore, sobriety to all, and manifest it also in your own conduct.

Chapter 11. Expression of grief on account of Valens

I am greatly grieved for Valens, who was once a presbyter among you, because he so little understands the place that was given him [in the Church]. I exhort you, therefore, that you abstain from covetousness, and that you be chaste and truthful. Abstain from every form of evil. 1 Thessalonians 5:22 For if a man cannot govern himself in such matters, how shall he enjoin them on others? If a man does not keep himself from covetousness, he shall be defiled

by idolatry, and shall be judged as one of the heathen. But who of us are ignorant of the judgment of the Lord? Do we not know that the saints shall judge the world? 1 Corinthians 6:2 as Paul teaches. But I have neither seen nor heard of any such thing among you, in the midst of whom the blessed Paul laboured, and who are commended in the beginning of his Epistle. For he boasts of you in all those Churches which alone then knew the Lord; but we [of Smyrna] had not yet known Him. I am deeply grieved, therefore, brethren, for him (Valens) and his wife; to whom may the Lord grant true repentance! And be then moderate in regard to this matter, and do not count such as enemies, 2 Thessalonians 3:15 but call them back as suffering and straying members, that you may save your whole body. For by so acting you shall edify yourselves. 1 Corinthians 12:26

Chapter 12. Exhortation to various graces

For I trust that you are well versed in the Sacred Scriptures, and that nothing is hid from you; but to me this privilege is not yet granted. It is declared then in these Scriptures, Be angry, and sin not, and, Let not the sun go down upon your wrath. Ephesians 4:26 Happy is he who remembers this, which I believe to be the case with you. But may the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ Himself, who is the Son of God, and our everlasting High Priest, build you up in faith and truth, and in all meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, forbearance, and purity; and may He bestow on you a lot and portion among His saints, and on us with you, and on all that are under heaven, who shall believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, and in His Father, who raised Him from the dead. Galatians 1:1 Pray for all the saints. Pray also for kings, 1 Timothy 2:2 and potentates, and princes, and for those that persecute and hate you, Matthew 5:44 and for the enemies of the cross, that your fruit may be manifest to all, and that you may be perfect in Him.

Chapter 13. Concerning the transmission of epistles

Both you and Ignatius wrote to me, that if any one went [from this] into Syria, he should carry your letter with him; which request I will attend to if I find a fitting opportunity, either personally, or through some other acting for me, that your desire may be fulfilled. The Epistles of Ignatius written by him to us, and all the rest [of his Epistles] which we have by us, we have sent to you, as you requested. They are subjoined to this Epistle, and by them you may be greatly profited; for they treat of faith and patience, and all things that tend to edification in our Lord. Any more certain information you may have obtained respecting both Ignatius himself, and those that were with him, have the goodness to make known to us.

Chapter 14. Conclusion

These things I have written to you by Crescens, whom up to the present time I have recommended unto you, and do now recommend. For he has acted blamelessly among us, and I believe also among you. Moreover, you will hold his sister in esteem when she comes to you. Be safe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with you all. Amen.

The Prayer of Clement of Rome

We ask you, Master, be our helper and defender. Rescue those of our number in distress; raise up the fallen; assist the needy; heal the sick; turn back those of your people who stray; feed the hungry; release our captives; revive the weak; encourage those who lose heart. Let all the nations realize that you are the only God, that Jesus Christ is your Child, and that we are your people and the sheep of your pasture.

We shall pray without ceasing to the Creator of all things, and beg him to preserve the number of his elect throughout the whole world, through his beloved son Jesus Christ, and not let a single one of them fall away.

Through him you called us from darkness into light and gave us the knowledge of the glory of your name.

He taught us to hope in you, from whom all creation has its being. He opened our eyes so that we would recognise you, *most high among the highest, holy and surrounded by holiness*. You put an end to the pride of the arrogant, you frustrate the plans of the gentiles, you raise up the lowly and bring down those who are exalted. You give riches and give poverty, you dispense both death and life. You succour every spirit, you are the God of all flesh. You behold what is hidden in the depths, you see all that men do. You give help to those in peril and rescue to those without hope. You create all that has breath and watch over it; you multiply the peoples of the earth, and from among them you choose those who love you through Jesus Christ your beloved Son, through whom you give us wisdom, holiness, and honour.

We beg you, Lord, to be our help and our support. Free us from our troubles; take pity on the lowly; raise up those who have fallen; give help to the poor, health to the sick, and bring home those who have wandered away. Feed the hungry, ransom captives, give strength to the weak and courage to the faint-hearted. Let all peoples come to know that you alone are God, that Jesus Christ is your son, and that we are your people and the sheep of your flock.

For by your acts you made visible the everlasting structure of the Universe and set the Earth on its foundations. For all generations you have been faithful and just in your judgements, and wonderful in your power and majesty. Wisely you have created, and wisely you have kept things in being. All that we see shows your goodness; to all who trust in you, you are faithful, kind, and merciful. Forgive us our wickednesses and injustices, our sins and our transgressions.

Do not weigh down your servants with the burden of their sins, but purify us and direct the paths we take so that we go forward in purity and innocence of heart, so that all that we do is good and acceptable to you and to those who lead us.

Come, Lord, let your face shine upon us so that we may peacefully enjoy all good things. May your powerful hand be a roof over our heads and may your strength preserve us from all wrongdoing. Free us, Lord, from those who hate us without cause. Give peace and harmony to us and to all the inhabitants of the Earth, as you gave them to our fathers who called on you with trust and faith.

You alone can give us these gifts and confer these favours on us. We put our trust in you through Jesus Christ, our high priest, the guardian of our souls. Through him be glory and majesty to you now and through all generations until the end of time. Amen.

The Treatise on Faith by Athanasius

"Declaration of Faith, in Latin and the Original Greek" by Athanasius is a theological treatise written during the early Christian era. The work is both a statement of faith and a defense against the Arian heresy, articulating the Church's beliefs regarding the nature of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. It reflects the doctrinal developments and theological debates of the period, particularly surrounding the Council of Nicaea. The book presents a comprehensive exposition of the Christian faith, emphasizing the co-equal and co-eternal nature of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Athanasius underscores the significance of the Incarnation, describing how Jesus, while divine, assumed human nature for humanity's salvation. He articulates the relationship between the Father and the Son, rejecting any notion of division or subordination, affirming the shared essence of both. Through the examination of scriptural references and philosophical reasoning, Athanasius seeks to establish a unified understanding of the Trinity, reinforcing the orthodox Christian belief system in the face of challenges posed by opposing interpretations of Christ's divinity.

Whoever wishes to be saved, it is necessary before all things, that he cling to the Catholic faith: unless someone will have held this [faith] whole and undefiled and away from falseness, he will perish eternally.

Nevertheless, the Catholic faith is this: that we are to worship one God in Trinity, and the Trinity in unity, neither confusing the persons nor dividing the substance. There is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit: but there is one divinity of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.

That which the Father is, so is the Son, so also is the Holy Spirit. The Father is uncreated, the Son uncreated, the Holy Spirit uncreated. The Father is immeasurable, the Son immeasurable, the Holy Spirit immeasurable. The Father is eternal, the Son eternal, the Holy Spirit eternal. However, there are not three eternal ones but one eternal, just as there are not three uncreated nor three immeasurable, but one uncreated and one immeasurable.

Similarly the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, the Holy Spirit almighty. However, there are not three almighty ones but one almighty. So the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God. However, there are not three Gods but one God.

So the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, the Holy Spirit Lord. However, there are not three Lords but one Lord, since, just as we are compelled by Christian truth to confess that one unified person is singly God and Lord, so we are prohibited by the Catholic religion to say that there are three Gods or Lords.

The Father is made from nothing, neither created nor begotten. The Son is from the Father alone: not made, nor created, but begotten. The Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son: not made, neither created nor begotten but proceeding.

Therefore there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits. And in this Trinity nothing is before or after, nothing greater or less, but all three persons are coeternal and coequal to each other.

Thus, as in all things, so now as it was said above, both the unity in Trinity and the Trinity in unity is to be worshipped. Therefore, he who wishes to be saved is to understand thus concerning the Trinity.

But it is necessary to eternal salvation that one also believe faithfully in the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, the right faith is that we believe and confess, as our Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, is God and man.

He is God born before the ages from the substance of the Father; he is also man born in time from the substance of his mother – perfect God, perfect man: of a rational soul and human flesh subsisting.

He is equal to the Father according to his divinity; less than the Father according to his humanity.

Although he is God and man, nevertheless there are not two, but there is one Christ — one, however, not by the conversion of divinity into flesh, but by the assumption of humanity into God. One, moreover, not by confusion of substance but by unity of person.

For just as a rational soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ.

He suffered for our salvation, he descended to the lower realms, on the third day he rose from the dead. He ascended into the heavens, is seated at the right hand of the Father. Thence he will come to judge the living and the dead, at whose coming all men will rise with their own bodies; and they will be returned reasonably according to their own deeds – those who did good things will go into eternal life; those who did bad into eternal fire.

The Ethiopian Song of Creation

Gospel, Invitations

48G — Promises Of Grace

- 1 In vain we lavish out our lives
 To gather empty wind,
 The choicest blessings earth can yield
 Will starve a hungry mind.
- 2 Come, and the Lord shall feed our souls,
 With more substantial meat,
 With such as saints in glory love,
 With such as angels eat.
- 3 Come, and he'll cleanse our spotted souls,

And wash away our stains,
 In the dear fountain that his Son
 Pour'd from his dying veins.
 4 Our guilt shall vanish all away,
 Though black as hell before,
 Our sins shall sink beneath the sea,
 And shall be found no more.
 5 And lest pollution should o'erspread
 Our inward powers again,
 His Spirit shall bedew our souls,
 Like purifying rain.
 6 Our heart, that flinty, stubborn thing,
 That terrors cannot move,
 That fears no threatenings of his wrath,
 Shall be dissolved by love:
 7 Or he can take the flint away
 That would not be refined;
 And from the treasures of his grace
 Bestow a softer mind.
 8 There shall his sacred Spirit dwell,
 And deep engrave his law;
 And every motion of our souls
 To swift obedience draw.
 9 Thus will he pour salvation down,
 And we shall render praise,
 We the dear people of his love,
 And he our God of grace.

Isaac Watts, 170S.

Man Fallen

474 — Faith In Christ For Cleansing

1 How sad our state by nature is!
 Our sin how deep it stains!
 And Satan binds our captive minds
 Fast in his slavish chains.
 2 But there's a voice of sovereign grace
 Sounds from the sacred Word,
 "Ho, ye despairing sinners, come,
 And trust upon the Lord."
 3 My soul obeys th' almighty call,
 And runs to this relief;
 I would believe thy promise, Lord,
 Oh! help my unbelief.
 4 To the dear fountain of thy blood,

Incarnate God, I fly;
Here let me wash my spotted soul
From crimes of deepest dye.
5 Stretch out thine arm, victorious King!
My reigning sins subdue;
Drive the old dragon from his seat,
With all his hellish crew.
6 A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On thy kind arms I fall;
Be thou my strength and righteousness
My Jesus and my all.

Isaac Watts, 170S.

Holy Spirit

448 – Regeneration

1 Not all the outward forms on earth,
Nor rites that God has given,
Nor will of man, nor blood, nor birth,
Can raise a soul to heaven.
2 The sovereign will of God alone
Creates us heirs of grace;
Born in the image of his Son,
A new peculiar race.
3 The Spirit, like some heavenly wind,
Blows on the sons of flesh;
Creates a new — a heavenly mind,
And forms the man afresh.
4 Our quicken'd souls awake and rise
From the long sleep of death;
On heavenly things we fix our eyes,
And praise employs our breath.

Isaac Watts, 170S, a.

The Hymn of the Martyrs

What psalm did you sing, Perpetua, when you were thrown into the arena to face the wild beasts? I can't help but wonder as I reread the martyrdom account of Sts. Perpetua and Felicity, whose feast we celebrate today. The calm and joy of both women astounds me.

What psalm would one sing in the face of death? And how could one find the courage to even sing?

Martyrdom contradicts everything we are told to value in this world. It entails giving without reserve, sacrificing all, even the greatest good, which is life itself. And yet the martyrs are a stark, beautiful, and perhaps even uncomfortable proof of what sacrificial love can look like. They help us to

readjust our eyes to the eternal.

"Who are the martyrs?" Pope Francis asked in his message for the beatification of the Spanish Martyrs of the Twentieth Century. "They are Christians won by Christ, disciples who learned well the meaning of 'loving to the end' that took Jesus to the Cross.... Christ goes before us in love; the martyrs have imitated him in love to the end."

We read in the first letter to the Corinthians just what we are called to when we are called to love. "Love is patient, love is kind," he begins. But what else does Paul write? That love "bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails." The martyrs, such as Perpetua and Felicity, give testament to this love.

What sets Perpetua and Felicity apart for me is their role in the Church not only as martyrs, but as women, specifically mothers. The account of their martyrdom includes text from Perpetua herself and is one of the few documents we have from the early Church of lay women martyrs. How beautiful that we celebrate the witness of these two women on the same day. Together, they give us a rich portrayal of grace by experiencing suffering with joy and remaining perpetually faithful to Christ. The account of their martyrdom notes that even those who had come to watch the martyrdom shuddered "seeing one a tender girl, the other her breasts yet dropping from her late childbearing." As a new mother myself, re-reading their account makes their sacrifice all the more visceral. Both Perpetua and Felicity lost everything by human standards to face their martyrdom: family, wealth, possessions, children. Yet both gain everything by God's standards: eternal life resting in the beatific vision.

Both women live up to their names. Perpetua remains steadfast to her faith. While Felicity, which means intense happiness, joins the Christian martyrs with joy and serenity, praising God for the early birth of her child so that she could join her companions in martyrdom. The example of these women seems baffling to our world. How could a mother give up her child? How could a person give up wealth, possessions, titles, security? Apart from God, these sacrifices make no sense.

Does this mean we must forfeit our lives, give up everything, if we are to follow Christ? Some have been and still are called to give their physical lives for the Christian faith. However, I think we can all live out martyrdom in many different ways. Pope Francis expands on this understanding. He continues, "We always have to die a bit to come out of ourselves, of our egoism, our wellbeing, our sloth, our sadnesses, and open ourselves to God, to others, especially the neediest."

In other words, we can join in the sacrifice of the martyrs, and of Christ for that matter, each and every day by offering up our own prayers and hardships—by dying to ourselves first and foremost. While we may not be called to give our physical life for our faith, we are always being challenged to give up anything in our lives that is not love. Lent is a particularly intense time of this dying to self, or mortification, in order to grow closer to our neighbor and to Christ. Additionally, we are called to endure this process of "everyday martyrdom" with joy and hope—something Perpetua in particular models beautifully with her singing.

The Prayer of the Righteous

1

Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming upon you.

2

Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes.

3

Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days.

4

Look! The wages you failed to pay the workmen who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty.

5

You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter. ^[1]

6

You have condemned and murdered innocent men, who were not opposing you.

7

Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains.

8

You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near.

9

Don't grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

10

Brothers, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

11

As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

12

Above all, my brothers, do not swear--not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. Let your "Yes" be yes, and your "No," no, or you will be condemned.

13

Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise.

14

Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord.

15

And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.

16

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

17

Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years.

18

Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.

19

My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back,

20

remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.

The Ethiopian Liturgical Hymns

Ethiopian chant, vocal liturgical music of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church in eastern Africa. A musical notation for Ethiopian chant codified in the 16th century is called *melekket* and consists of characters from the ancient Ethiopian language, Ge'ez, in which each sign stands for a syllable of text. The semantic meaning of the syllable and its musical meaning generally bear no relationship; the musical meaning is known only through the oral tradition. These characters serve as a cue for a specific melodic formula, or *serayu*. In performance, a formula is embellished with improvised melodic ornaments. There are three distinctly different manners of chanting: *ge'ez*, in which most melodies are performed; *araray*, presumably containing "cheerful" melodies, sung in a higher range, and used less frequently in services; and *ezel*, associated with periods of fasting and

sorrow and used exclusively for Holy Week. According to church tradition, each style of *zema* is associated with a different person of the Trinity, *ge'ez* with the Father, *ezeI* with the Son, and *araray* with the Holy Spirit. The forms are said to have been revealed in the 6th century to Saint Yared, who composed the entire body of hymns (since revised) that is found in the six books of chants. Yared is also widely acknowledged—in both oral and written sources—for his role in the development of chant notation; the first known manuscripts, however, date to the 14th century. The *debtara*, or singer of *zema*, is an unordained member of the clergy who is well versed in the Ethiopian church rituals, in aspects of the liturgy, and in the scriptures, and he is trained to distinguish the subtleties of moods and manners of performance. Although he is required to copy the whole body of liturgical chants while a student, in the end he memorizes the melodies and, while singing, improvises along the outlines of basic melodic formulas. The exact relationship of Ethiopian musical traditions to those of Middle Eastern cultures is unclear.

The Song of the Angels

1 Now let us sing the Angels' song,
That rang so sweet and clear,
When heav'nly light and music fell
On earthly eye and ear;
To Him we sing, our Savior King,
Who left His throne and crown,
And with redeeming grace and pow'r,
In love to earth came down.

Refrain:

Sing, sing the joyful chorus!
Hark, hear the echo o'er us,
From millions gone before us,
Praise, oh, praise the Lord!

2 He came to tell the Father's love,
His goodness, truth and grace;
To show the brightness of His smile,
The glory of His face;
He came to bring the weary ones
True peace and perfect rest;
To take away the guilt and sin
That darkened and distressed. [Refrain]

3 He came that great and small might hear
His call, and in Him live,—
That to the burd'ned and oppressed
Salvation He might give;
He came to bring a glorious gift,
"Good will to men"—and why?

Because He loved us, Jesus came,
For us to live and die. [Refrain]

The Testament of Benjamin

Chapter 1

1:1 "A copy of the words of Benjamin which he testified to his sons, having lived one hundred twenty-five years."

1:2 "He kissed them and said, Just as Isaac was born to Abraham in his old age, so I was born to Jacob."

1:3 "Since Rachel, my mother, died as she was bearing me, I had no milk from her, but was nursed instead by Bilhah, her maid servant."

1:4 "For after Rachel bore Joseph she was sterile for twelve years; she prayed to the Lord, with fasting,"

1:5 "And conceived and gave birth to me. My father loved Rachel exceedingly, and prayed that he might see two sons born from her."

1:6 "For this reason I was called Benjamin, that is son of days (old age)." (Gen 44:20)

Chapter 2

2:1 "When I came to Joseph in Egypt and my brother recognized me, he said, What did they say to my father when they sold me?"

2:2 "And I replied to him, They spattered your shirt with blood and sent it to him and said, Do you know if this shirt belongs to your son?"

2:3 "And Joseph said to me, Yes, brother. When they stripped off my shirt and gave me to the Ishmaelites, they gave me a loincloth, beat me, and told me to run."

2:4 "One of them who had whipped me was met by a lion and it ate him."

2:5 "So his partners were terrified and kept me under a looser rein."

Chapter 3

3:1 "Now, my children, love the Lord God of heaven and earth; keep his commandments; pattern your life after the good and pious man Joseph."

3:2 "Let your thoughts incline to the good, as you know to be so with me, because he who has the right set of mind sees everything rightly."

3:3 "Fear/reverence the Lord and love your neighbor. Even if the spirits of Beliar/Satan seek to derange you with all sorts of wicked oppression, they will not dominate you, any more than they dominated Joseph, my brother."

3:4 "How many men wanted to destroy him, and God looked out for him! For the person who fears God and loves his neighbor cannot be plagued by the spirit of Beliar/Satan since he is sheltered by the fear/reverence of God."

3:5 "Neither man's schemes nor those of animals can prevail over him, for he is aided in living by this: by the love which he has toward his neighbor."

3:6 "Joseph also urged our father to pray for his brothers, that the Lord would not hold them accountable for their sin which they so wickedly committed against him."

3:7 "And Jacob cried out, O noble child, you have crushed the inner feelings of Jacob, your father. He embraced him and kept kissing him for two hours, saying,"

3:8 "In you will be fulfilled the heavenly prophecy which says that the spotless one will be defiled by lawless men and the sinless one will die for the sake of impious men."

Chapter 4

4:1 "See then, my children, what is the goal of the good man. Be imitators of him in his goodness because of his compassion, in order that you may wear crowns of glory."

4:2 "For a good man does not have a blind eye, but he is merciful to all, even though they may be sinners."

4:3 "And even if persons plot against him for evil ends, by doing good this man conquers evil, being watched over by God. He loves those who wrong him as he loves his own life."

4:4 "If anyone glorifies himself, he holds no envy. If anyone becomes rich, he is not jealous. If anyone is brave, he praises him. He loves the moderate person; he shows mercy to the impoverished; to the ill he shows compassion; he fears God."

4:5 "He loves the person who has the gift of a good spirit as he loves his own life."

Chapter 5

5:1 "If your mind is set toward good, even evil men will be at peace with you; the dissolute will respect you and will turn back to the good. The greedy will not only abstain from their passion but will give to the oppressed the things which they covetously hold."

5:2 "If you continue to do good, even the unclean spirits will flee from you and wild animals will fear you."

5:3 "For where someone has within himself respect for good works and has light in the understanding, darkness will slink away from that person."

5:4 "For if anyone wantonly attacks a pious man, he repents, since the pious man shows mercy to the one who abused him, and maintains silence. And if anyone betrays a righteous man, the righteous man prays. Even though for a brief time he may be humbled, later he will appear far more illustrious, as happened with Joseph, my brother."

Chapter 6

6:1 "The deliberations of the good man are not in the control of the deceitful spirit, Beliar/Satan, for the angel of peace guides his life."

6:2 "For he does not look with passionate longing at corruptible things, nor does he accumulate wealth out of love for pleasure."

6:3 "He does not find delight in pleasure, nor does he grieve his neighbor, nor does he stuff himself with delicacies, nor is he led astray by visual excitement: The Lord is his lot."

6:4 "The good set of mind does not receive glory or dishonor from men, nor does it know deceit, or lying, or conflict, or abuse. For the Lord dwells in him, illumines his life, and he rejoices in everything at every appropriate time."

6:5 "The good set of mind does not talk from both sides of its mouth: praises and curses, abuse and honor, calm and strife, hypocrisy and truth, poverty and wealth, but it has one disposition, uncontaminated and pure, toward all men."

6:6 "There is no duplicity in its perception or its hearing. Whatever it does, or speaks, or perceives, it

knows that the Lord is watching over its life,"

6:7 "For he cleanses his mind in order that he will not be suspected of wrongdoing either by men or by God. The works of Beliar/Satan are twofold, and have in them no integrity."

Chapter 7

7:1 "So I tell you, my children, flee from the evil of Beliar/Satan, because he offers a sword to those who obey him."

7:2 "And the sword is the mother of the seven evils; it receives them through Beliar/Satan: The first is moral corruption, the second is destruction, the third is oppression, the fourth is captivity, the fifth is want, the sixth is turmoil, the seventh is desolation."

7:3 "It is for this reason that Cain was handed over by God for seven punishments, for in every hundredth year the Lord brought upon him one plague."

7:4 "When he was two hundred years old suffering began and in his nine hundredth year he was deprived of life. For he was condemned on account of Abel his brother as a result of all his evil deeds, but Lamech was condemned by seventy times seven."

7:5 "Until eternity those who are like Cain in their moral corruption and hatred of brother shall be punished with similar judgment."

Chapter 8

8:1 "But you, my children, run from evil, corruption, and hatred of brothers;"

8:2 "Cling to goodness and love. For the person with a mind that is pure with love does not look on a woman for the purpose of having sexual relations."

8:3 "He has no pollution in his heart, because upon him is resting the spirit of God. for just as the sun is unpolluted, though it touches dung and slime, but dries up both and drives off the bad odor, so also the pure mind, though involved with the corruptions of earth, edifies instead and is not itself corrupted."

Chapter G

9:1 "From the words of Enoch the Righteous I tell you that you will be sexually promiscuous like the promiscuity of the Sodomites and will perish, with few exceptions. You shall resume your actions with loose women, and the kingdom of the Lord will not be among you, for he will take it away forthwith."

9:2 "But in your allotted place will be the temple of God, and the latter temple will exceed the former in glory. The twelve tribes shall be gathered there and all the nations, until such time as the Most High shall send forth his salvation through the ministration of the unique prophet."

Chapter 10

10:1 "When Joseph was in Egypt I earnestly desired to see his appearance and the form of his face, and through my father Jacob's prayers I saw him, while I was awake during the day, just as he was, his whole appearance."

10:2 "After he had spoken these things to them he said, You know then, my children, that I am dying. do the truth, each of you to his neighbor;"

10:3 "Keep the Law of the Lord and his commandments."

10:4 "For I leave you these things instead of an inheritance. Give them, then, to your children for an

eternal possession; this is what Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob did."

10:5 "They gave us all these things as an inheritance, saying, Keep God's commandments until the Lord reveals his salvation to all the nations."

10:6 "And then you will see Enoch and Seth and Abraham and Isaac and Jacob being raised up at the right hand in great joy."

10:7 "Then shall we also be raised, each of us over our tribe, and we shall prostrate ourselves before the heavenly king."

10:8 "Then all shall be changed, some destined for glory, others for dishonor, for the Lord first judges Israel for the wrong she has committed,"

10:9 "And then he shall do the same for all the nations."

10:10 "Then he shall judge Israel by the chosen gentiles/nations/people as he tested Esau by the Midianites who loved their brothers. You, therefore, my children, may your lot come to be with those who fear/reverence the Lord."

10:11 "Therefore, my children, if you live in holiness, in accord with the Lord's commands, you shall again dwell with me in hope, all Israel will be gathered to the Lord."

Chapter 11

11:1 "And I shall no longer be called a rapacious wolf on account of your rapine, but 'the Lord's worker' providing food for those who do good works."

11:2 "And in later times there shall rise up the beloved of the Lord, from the lineage of Judah and Levi, one who does his good pleasure by his mouth, enlightening all the nations with new knowledge. The light of knowledge will mount up in Israel for her salvation, seizing them like a wolf coming upon them, gathering the tribes."

11:3 "Until the consummation of the ages he shall be in the congregations of the gentiles/nations/people and among the rulers, like a musical air in the mouths of all."

11:4 "He shall be written of in sacred books, both his work and his word. And he shall be God's Chosen One forever."

11:5 "He shall range widely among them, like my father, Jacob, saying, 'He shall fill up what was lacking of your tribe.'"

Chapter 12

12:1 "And when he had finished his statements he said, I command you, my children, carry my bones up out of Egypt; bury me in Hebron near my fathers."

12:2 "Benjamin died last of all in his one hundred twenty-fifth year at a ripe old age, and they placed him in a coffin."

12:3 "And in the ninety-first year after the departure of the sons of Israel for Egypt, they and their brothers took up the bones of their fathers secretly, because of the war with Canaan, and buried them in Hebron by the feet of their fathers."

12:4 "Then they returned from the land of Canaan and resided in Egypt until the day of the departure from Egypt."

The Vision of Enoch (Extended)

Chapter 1

4 And it came to pass that Enoch journeyed in the land, among the people; and as he journeyed, the Spirit of God descended out of heaven, and abode upon him.

5 And he heard a voice from heaven, saying: Enoch, my son, prophesy unto this people, and say unto them Repent, for thus saith the Lord: I am angry with this people, and my fierce anger is kindled against them; for their hearts have waxed hard, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes cannot see afar off;

6 And for these many generations, ever since the day that I created them, have they gone astray, and have denied me, and have sought their own counsels in the dark; and in their own abominations have they devised murder, and have not kept the commandments, which I gave unto their father, Adam.

7 Wherefore, they have foresworn themselves, and, by their oaths, they have brought upon themselves death; and a hell I have prepared for them, if they repent not;

8 And this is a decree, which I have sent forth in the beginning of the world, from my own mouth, from the foundation thereof, and by the mouths of my servants, thy fathers, have I decreed it, even as it shall be sent forth in the world, unto the ends thereof.

9 And when Enoch had heard these words, he bowed himself to the earth, before the Lord, and spake before the Lord, saying: Why is it that I have found favor in thy sight, and am but a lad, and all the people hate me; for I am slow of speech; wherefore am I thy servant?

10 And the Lord said unto Enoch: Go forth and do as I have commanded thee, and no man shall pierce thee. Open thy mouth, and it shall be filled, and I will give thee utterance, for all flesh is in my hands, and I will do as seemeth me good.

11 Say unto this people: Choose ye this day, to serve the Lord God who made you.

12 Behold my Spirit is upon you, wherefore all thy words will I justify; and the mountains shall flee before you, and the rivers shall turn from their course; and thou shalt abide in me, and I in you; therefore walk with me.

13 And the Lord spake unto Enoch, and said unto him: Anoint thine eyes with clay, and wash them, and thou shalt see. And he did so.

14 And he beheld the spirits that God had created; and he beheld also things which were not visible to the natural eye; and from thenceforth came the saying abroad in the land: A seer hath the Lord raised up unto his people.

15 And it came to pass that Enoch went forth in the land, among the people, standing upon the hills and the high places, and cried with a loud voice, testifying against their works; and all men were offended because of him.

16 And they came forth to hear him, upon the high places, saying unto the tent-keepers: Tarry ye here and keep the tents, while we go yonder to behold the seer, for he prophesieth, and there is a strange thing in the land; a wild man hath come among us.

17 And it came to pass when they heard him, no man laid hands on him; for fear came on all them that heard him; for he walked with God.

18 And there came a man unto him, whose name was Mahijah, and said unto him: Tell us plainly who thou art, and from whence thou comest?

19 And he said unto them: I came out from the land of Cainan, the land of my fathers, a land of righteousness unto this day. And my father taught me in all the ways of God.

20 And it came to pass, as I journeyed from the land of Cainan, by the sea east, I beheld a vision; and lo, the heavens I saw, and the Lord spake with me, and gave me commandment; wherefore, for this cause, to keep the commandment, I speak forth these words.

21 And Enoch continued his speech, saying: The Lord which spake with me, the same is the God of heaven, and he is my God, and your God, and ye are my brethren, and why counsel ye yourselves, and deny the God of heaven?

22 The heavens he made; the earth is his footstool; and the foundation thereof is his. Behold, he laid it, an host of men hath he brought in upon the face thereof.

23 And death hath come upon our fathers; nevertheless we know them, and cannot deny, and even the first of all we know, even Adam.

24 For a book of remembrance we have written among us, according to the pattern given by the finger of God; and it is given in our own language.

25 And as Enoch spake forth the words of God, the people trembled, and could not stand in his presence.

26 And he said unto them: Because that Adam fell, we are; and by his fall came death; and we are made partakers of misery and woe.

27 Behold Satan hath come among the children of men, and tempteth them to worship him; and men have become carnal, sensual, and devilish, and are shut out from the presence of God.

28 But God hath made known unto our fathers that all men must repent.

29 And he called upon our father Adam by his own voice, saying: I am God; I made the world, and men before they were in the flesh.

30 And he also said unto him: If thou wilt turn unto me, and hearken unto my voice, and believe, and repent of all thy transgressions, and be baptized, even in water, in the name of mine Only Begotten Son, who is full of grace and truth, which is Jesus Christ, the only name which shall be given under heaven, whereby salvation shall come unto the children of men, ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, asking all things in his name, and whatsoever ye shall ask, it shall be given you.

31 And our father Adam spake unto the Lord, and said: Why is it that men must repent and be baptized in water? And the Lord said unto Adam: Behold I have forgiven thee thy transgression in the Garden of Eden.

32 Hence came the saying abroad among the people, that the Son of God hath atoned for original guilt, wherein the sins of the parents cannot be answered upon the heads of the children, for they are whole from the foundation of the world.

33 And the Lord spake unto Adam, saying: Inasmuch as thy children are conceived in sin, even so when they begin to grow up, sin conceiveth in their hearts, and they taste the bitter, that they may know to prize the good.

34 And it is given unto them to know good from evil; wherefore they are agents unto themselves, and I have given unto you another law and commandment.

35 Wherefore teach it unto your children, that all men, everywhere, must repent, or they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God, for no unclean thing can dwell there, or dwell in his presence; for, in the language of Adam, Man of Holiness is his name, and the name of his Only Begotten is the Son of Man, even Jesus Christ, a righteous Judge, who shall come in the meridian of time.

36 Therefore I give unto you a commandment, to teach these things freely unto your children, saying:

37 That by reason of transgression cometh the fall, which fall bringeth death, and inasmuch as ye were born into the world by water, and blood, and the spirit, which I have made, and so became of dust a living soul, even so ye must be born again into the kingdom of heaven, of water, and of the Spirit, and be cleansed by blood, even the blood of mine Only Begotten; that ye might be sanctified from all sin, and enjoy the words of eternal life in this world, and eternal life in the world to come, even immortal glory;

38 For by the water ye keep the commandment; by the Spirit ye are justified, and by the blood ye are sanctified;

39 Therefore it is given to abide in you; the record of heaven; the Comforter; the peaceable things of

immortal glory; the truth of all things; that which quickeneth all things, which maketh alive all things; that which knoweth all things, and hath all power according to wisdom, mercy, truth, justice, and judgment.

40 And now, behold, I say unto you: This is the plan of salvation unto all men, through the blood of mine Only Begotten, who shall come in the meridian of time.

41 And behold, all things have their likeness, and all things are created and made to bear record of me, both things which are temporal, and things which are spiritual; things which are in the heavens above, and things which are on the earth, and things which are in the earth, and things which are under the earth, both above and beneath: all things bear record of me.

42 And it came to pass, when the Lord had spoken with Adam, our father, that Adam cried unto the Lord, and he was caught away by the Spirit of the Lord, and was carried down into the water, and was laid under the water, and was brought forth out of the water.

43 And thus he was baptized, and the Spirit of God descended upon him, and thus he was born of the Spirit, and became quickened in the inner man.

44 And he heard a voice out of heaven, saying: Thou art baptized with fire, and with the Holy Ghost. This is the record of the Father, and the Son, from henceforth and forever;

45 And thou art after the order of him who was without beginning of days or end of years, from all eternity to all eternity.

46 Behold, thou art one in me, a son of God; and thus may all become my sons. Amen.

Chapter 2

1 And it came to pass that Enoch continued his speech, saying: Behold, our father Adam taught these things, and many have believed and become the sons of God, and many have believed not, and have perished in their sins, and are looking forth with fear, in torment, for the fiery indignation of the wrath of God to be poured out upon them.

2 And from that time forth Enoch began to prophesy, saying unto the people, that: As I was journeying, and stood upon the place Mahujah, and cried unto the Lord, there came a voice out of heaven, saying Turn ye, and get ye upon the mount Simeon.

3 And it came to pass that I turned and went up on the mount; and as I stood upon the mount, I beheld the heavens open, and I was clothed upon with glory;

4 And I saw the Lord; and he stood before my face, and he talked with me, even as a man talketh one with another, face to face; and he said unto me: Look, and I will show unto thee the world for the space of many generations.

5 And it came to pass that I beheld in the valley of Shum, and lo, a great people which dwelt in tents, which were the people of Shum.

6 And again the Lord said unto me: Look; and I looked towards the north, and I beheld the people of Canaan, which dwelt in tents.

7 And the Lord said unto me: Prophecy; and I prophesied, saying: Behold the people of Canaan, which are numerous, shall go forth in battle array against the people of Shum, and shall slay them that they shall utterly be destroyed; and the people of Canaan shall divide themselves in the land, and the land shall be barren and unfruitful, and none other people shall dwell there but the people of Canaan;

8 For behold, the Lord shall curse the land with much heat, and the barrenness thereof shall go forth forever; and there was a blackness came upon all the children of Canaan, that they were despised among all people.

9 And it came to pass that the Lord said unto me: Look; and I looked, and I beheld the land of Sharon, and the land of Enoch, and the land of Omner, and the land of Heni, and the land of Shem, and the land of Haner, and the land of Hanannah, and all the inhabitants thereof;

10 And the Lord said unto me: Go to this people, and say unto them Repent, lest I come out and smite them with a curse, and they die.

11 And he gave unto me a commandment that I should baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, which is full of grace and truth, and of the Holy Ghost, which beareth record of the Father and the Son.

12 And it came to pass that Enoch continued to call upon all the people, save it were the people of Canaan, to repent;

13 And so great was the faith of Enoch that he led the people of God, and their enemies came to battle against them; and he spake the word of the Lord, and the earth trembled, and the mountains fled, even according to his command; and the rivers of water were turned out of their course; and the roar of the lions was heard out of the wilderness; and all nations feared greatly, so powerful was the word of Enoch, and so great was the power of the language which God had given him.

14 There also came up a land out of the depth of the sea, and so great was the fear of the enemies of the people of God, that they fled and stood afar off and went upon the land which came up out of the depth of the sea.

15 And the giants of the land, also, stood afar off; and there went forth a curse upon all people that fought against God;

16 And from that time forth there were wars and bloodshed among them; but the Lord came and dwelt with his people, and they dwelt in righteousness.

17 The fear of the Lord was upon all nations, so great was the glory of the Lord, which was upon his people. And the Lord blessed the land, and they were blessed upon the mountains, and upon the high places, and did flourish.

18 And the Lord called his people ZION, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them.

19 And Enoch continued his preaching in righteousness unto the people of God. And it came to pass in his days, that he built a city that was called the City of Holiness, even ZION.

20 And it came to pass that Enoch talked with the Lord; and he said unto the Lord: Surely Zion shall dwell in safety forever. But the Lord said unto Enoch: Zion have I blessed, but the residue of the people have I cursed.

21 And it came to pass that the Lord showed unto Enoch all the inhabitants of the earth; and he beheld, and lo, Zion, in process of time, was taken up into heaven. And the Lord said unto Enoch: Behold mine abode forever.

22 And Enoch also beheld the residue of the people which were the sons of Adam; and they were a mixture of all the seed of Adam save it was the seed of Cain, for the seed of Cain were black, and had not place among them.

23 And after that Zion was taken up into heaven, Enoch beheld, and lo, all the nations of the earth were before him;

24 And there came generation upon generation; and Enoch was high and lifted up, even in the bosom of the Father, and of the Son of Man; and behold, the power of Satan was upon all the face of the earth.

25 And he saw angels descending out of heaven; and he heard a loud voice saying: Wo, wo be unto the inhabitants of the earth.

26 And he beheld Satan; and he had a great chain in his hand, and it veiled the whole face of the earth with darkness; and he looked up and laughed, and his angels rejoiced.

27 And Enoch beheld angels descending out of heaven, bearing testimony of the Father and Son; and the Holy Ghost fell on many, and they were caught up by the powers of heaven into Zion.

28 And it came to pass that the God of heaven looked upon the residue of the people, and he wept; and Enoch bore record of it, saying: How is it that the heavens weep, and shed forth their tears as the rain upon the mountains?

29 And Enoch said unto the Lord: How is it that thou canst weep, seeing thou art holy, and from all eternity to all eternity?

30 And were it possible that man could number the particles of the earth, yea, millions of earths like this, it would not be a beginning to the number of thy creations; and thy curtains are stretched out still; and yet thou art there, and thy bosom is there; and also thou art just; thou art merciful and kind forever;

31 And thou hast taken Zion to thine own bosom, from all thy creations, from all eternity to all eternity; and naught but peace, justice, and truth is the habitation of thy throne; and mercy shall go before thy face and have no end; how is it thou canst weep?

32 The Lord said unto Enoch: Behold these thy brethren; they are the workmanship of mine own hands, and I gave unto them their knowledge, in the day I created them; and in the Garden of Eden, gave I unto man his agency;

33 And unto thy brethren have I said, and also given commandment, that they should love one another, and that they should choose me, their Father; but behold, they are without affection, and they hate their own blood;

34 And the fire of mine indignation is kindled against them; and in my hot displeasure will I send in the floods upon them, for my fierce anger is kindled against them.

35 Behold, I am God; Man of Holiness is my name; Man of Counsel is my name; and Endless and Eternal is my name, also.

36 Wherefore, I can stretch forth mine hands and hold all the creations which I have made; and mine eye can pierce them also, and among all the workmanship of mine hands there has not been so great wickedness as among thy brethren.

37 But behold, their sins shall be upon the heads of their fathers; Satan shall be their father, and misery shall be their doom; and the whole heavens shall weep over them, even all the workmanship of mine hands; wherefore should not the heavens weep, seeing these shall suffer?

38 But behold, these which thine eyes are upon shall perish in the floods; and behold, I will shut them up; a prison have I prepared for them.

39 And That which I have chosen hath pled before my face. Wherefore, he suffereth for their sins; inasmuch as they will repent in the day that my Chosen shall return unto me, and until that day they shall be in torment;

40 Wherefore, for this shall the heavens weep, yea, and all the workmanship of mine hands.

41 And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto Enoch, and told Enoch all the doings of the children of men; wherefore Enoch knew, and looked upon their wickedness, and their misery, and wept and stretched forth his arms, and his heart swelled wide as eternity; and his bowels yearned; and all eternity shook.

42 And Enoch also saw Noah, and his family; that the posterity of all the sons of Noah should be saved with a temporal salvation;

43 Wherefore Enoch saw that Noah built an ark; and that the Lord smiled upon it, and held it in his own hand; but upon the residue of the wicked the floods came and swallowed them up.

44 And as Enoch saw this, he had bitterness of soul, and wept over his brethren, and said unto the heavens: I will refuse to be comforted; but the Lord said unto Enoch: Lift up your heart, and be glad; and look.

45 And it came to pass that Enoch looked; and from Noah, he beheld all the families of the earth; and he cried unto the Lord, saying: When shall the day of the Lord come? When shall the blood of the Righteous be shed, that all they that mourn may be sanctified and have eternal life?

46 And the Lord said: It shall be in the meridian of time, in the days of wickedness and vengeance.

47 And behold, Enoch saw the day of the coming of the Son of Man, even in the flesh; and his soul rejoiced, saying: The Righteous is lifted up, and the Lamb is slain from the foundation of the world; and through faith I am in the bosom of the Father, and behold, Zion is with me.

48 And it came to pass that Enoch looked upon the earth; and he heard a voice from the bowels thereof, saying: Wo, wo is me, the mother of men; I am pained, I am weary, because of the wickedness of my children. When shall I rest, and be cleansed from the filthiness which is gone forth out of me? When will my Creator sanctify me, that I may rest, and righteousness for a season abide upon my face?

49 And when Enoch heard the earth mourn, he wept, and cried unto the Lord, saying: O Lord, wilt thou not have compassion upon the earth? Wilt thou not bless the children of Noah?

50 And it came to pass that Enoch continued his cry unto the Lord, saying: I ask thee, O Lord, in the name of thine Only Begotten, even Jesus Christ, that thou wilt have mercy upon Noah and his seed, that the earth might never more be covered by the floods.

51 And the Lord could not withhold; and he covenanted with Enoch, and sware unto him with an oath, that he would stay the floods; that he would call upon the children of Noah;

52 And he sent forth an unalterable decree, that a remnant of his seed should always be found among all nations, while the earth should stand;

53 And the Lord said: Blessed is he through whose seed Messiah shall come; for he saith I am Messiah, the King of Zion, the Rock of Heaven, which is broad as eternity; whoso cometh in at the gate and climbeth up by me shall never fall; wherefore, blessed are they of whom I have spoken, for they shall come forth with songs of everlasting joy.

54 And it came to pass that Enoch cried unto the Lord, saying: When the Son of Man cometh in the flesh, shall the earth rest? I pray thee, show me these things.

55 And the Lord said unto Enoch: Look, and he looked and beheld the Son of Man lifted up on the cross, after the manner of men;

56 And he heard a loud voice; and the heavens were veiled; and all the creations of God mourned; and the earth groaned; and the rocks were rent; and the saints arose, and were crowned at the right hand of the Son of Man, with crowns of glory;

57 And as many of the spirits as were in prison came forth, and stood on the right hand of God; and the remainder were reserved in chains of darkness until the judgment of the great day.

58 And again Enoch wept and cried unto the Lord, saying: When shall the earth rest?

59 And Enoch beheld the Son of Man ascend up unto the Father; and he called unto the Lord, saying: Wilt thou not come again upon the earth? Forasmuch as thou art God, and I know thee, and thou hast sworn unto me, and commanded me that I should ask in the name of thine Only Begotten; thou hast made me, and given unto me a right to thy throne, and not of myself, but through thine own grace; wherefore, I ask thee if thou wilt not come again on the earth.

60 And the Lord said unto Enoch: As I live, even so will I come in the last days, in the days of wickedness and vengeance, to fulfil the oath which I have made unto you concerning the children of Noah;

61 And the day shall come that the earth shall rest, but before that day the heavens shall be darkened, and a veil of darkness shall cover the earth; and the heavens shall shake, and also the earth; and great tribulations shall be among the children of men, but my people will I preserve;

62 And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem.

63 And the Lord said unto Enoch: Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there, and we will receive them into our bosom, and they shall see us; and we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other;

64 And there shall be mine abode, and it shall be Zion, which shall come forth out of all the creations which I have made; and for the space of a thousand years the earth shall rest.

65 And it came to pass that Enoch saw the day of the coming of the Son of Man, in the last days, to dwell on the earth in righteousness for the space of a thousand years;

66 But before that day he saw great tribulations among the wicked; and he also saw the sea, that it was troubled, and men's hearts failing them, looking forth with fear for the judgments of the Almighty God, which should come upon the wicked.

67 And the Lord showed Enoch all things, even unto the end of the world; and he saw the day of the righteous, the hour of their redemption, and received a fulness of joy;

68 And all the days of Zion, in the days of Enoch, were three hundred and sixty-five years.

The Apocalypse of Seth

The revelation of Dositheos about the three steles of Seth, the Father of the living and unshakable race, which he (Dositheos) saw and understood. And after he had read them, he remembered them. And he gave them to the elect, just as they were inscribed there. Many times I joined in giving glory with the powers, and I became worthy of the immeasurable majesties. Now they (the steles) are as follows:

The First Stele of Seth

I bless thee, Father Geradama(s), I, as thine (own) Son, Emmacha Seth, whom thou didst beget without begetting, as a blessing of our God; for I am thine (own) Son. And thou art my mind, O my Father. And I, I sowed and begot; but thou hast seen the majesties. Thou hast stood imperishable. I bless thee, Father. Bless me, Father. It is because of thee that I exist; it is because of God that thou dost exist. Because of thee I am with that very one. Thou art light, since thou beholdest light. Thou hast revealed light. Thou art Mirotheas; thou art my Mirotheos. I bless thee as God; I bless thy divinity. Great is the good Self-begotten who stood, the God who had already stood. Thou didst come in goodness; thou hast appeared, and thou hast revealed goodness. I shall utter thy name, for thou art a first name. Thou art unbegotten. Thou hast appeared in order that thou mightest reveal the eternal ones. Thou art he who is. Therefore thou hast revealed those who really are. Thou art he who is uttered by a voice, but by mind art thou glorified, thou who hast dominion everywhere. Therefore the perceptible world too knows thee because of thee and thy seed. Thou art merciful.

And thou art from another race, and its place is over another race. And now thou art from another race, and its place is over another race. Thou art from another race, for thou art not similar. And thou art merciful, for thou art eternal. And thy place is over a race, for thou hast caused all these to increase; and for the sake of my seed. For it is thou who knows it, that its place is in begetting. But they are from other races, for they are not similar. But their place is over other races, for their place is in life. Thou art Mirotheos.

I bless his power which was given to me, who caused the malenesses that really are to become male three times; he who was divided into the pentad, the one who was given to us in triple power, the one who was begotten without begetting, the one who came from that which is elect; because of what is humble, he went forth from the midst.

Thou art a Father through a Father, a word from a command. We bless thee, Thrice Male, for thou didst unite all through them all, for thou hast empowered us. Thou hast arisen from one; from one thou hast gone forth; thou hast come to one. Thou hast saved, thou hast saved, thou hast saved us, O crown-bearer, crown-giver! We bless thee eternally. We bless thee, once we have been saved, as the perfect individuals, perfect on account of thee, those who became perfect with thee who is complete, who completes, the one perfect through all these, who is similar everywhere.

Thrice Male, thou hast stood. Thou hast already stood. Thou wast divided everywhere. Thou didst continue being one. And those whom thou hast willed, thou hast saved. But thou dost will to be saved all who are worthy.

Thou art Perfect! Thou art Perfect! Thou art Perfect!

The Second Stele of Seth

Great is the first aeon, male virginal Barbelo, the first glory of the invisible Father, she who is called "perfect".

Thou (fem.) hast seen first the one who truly pre-exists because he is non-being. And from him and through him thou hast pre-existed eternally, the non-being from one indivisible, triple power, thou a triple power, thou a great monad from a pure monad, thou an elect monad, the first shadow of the holy Father, light from light.

We bless thee, producer (fem.) of perfection, aeon-giver (fem.). Thou hast seen the eternal ones because they are from a shadow. And thou hast become numerable. And thou didst find, thou didst continue being one (fem.); yet becoming numerable in division, thou art three-fold. Thou art truly thrice, thou one (fem.) of the one (masc.). And thou art from a shadow of him, thou a Hidden One, thou a world of understanding, knowing those of the one, that they are from a shadow. And these are thine in the heart.

For their sake thou hast empowered the eternal ones in being; thou hast empowered divinity in living; thou hast empowered knowledge in goodness; in blessedness thou hast empowered the shadows which pour from the one. Thou hast empowered this (one) in knowledge; thou hast empowered another one in creation. Thou hast empowered him who is equal and him who is not equal, him who is similar and him who is not similar. Thou hast empowered in begetting, and (provided) forms in that which exists to others. [...] Thou hast empowered these. - He is that One Hidden in the heart. - And thou hast come forth to these and from these. Thou art divided among them. And thou dost become a great male noetic First-Appearer.

Fatherly God, divine child, begetter of multiplicity according to a division of all who really are, thou (masc.) hast appeared to them all in a word. And thou (masc.) dost possess them all without begetting and eternally indestructible on account of thee (fem.).

Salvation has come to us; from thee is salvation. Thou art wisdom, thou knowledge; thou art truthfulness. On account of thee is life; from thee is life. On account of thee is mind; from thee is mind. Thou art mind, thou a world of truthfulness, thou a triple power, thou threefold. Truly thou art thrice, the aeon of aeons. It is thou only who sees purely the first eternal ones and the unbegotten ones.

But the first divisions are as thou wast divided. Unite us as thou has been united. Teach us those things which thou dost see. Empower us that we may be saved to eternal life. For we are each a shadow of thee as thou art a shadow of that first pre-existent one. Hear us first. We are eternal ones. Hear us as the perfect individuals. Thou art the aeon of aeons, the all-perfect one who is established.

Thou hast heard! Thou hast heard!
Thou hast saved! Thou hast saved!
We give thanks! We bless thee always! We shall glorify thee!

The Third Stele

We rejoice! We rejoice! We rejoice!
We have seen! We have seen! We have seen the really pre-existent one, that he really exists, that he is the first eternal one.

O Unconceived, from thee are the eternal ones and the aeons, the all-perfect ones who are established, and the perfect individuals.

We bless thee, non-being, existence which is before existences, first being which is before beings, Father of divinity and life, creator of mind, giver of good, giver of blessedness!

We all bless thee, knower, in a glorifying blessing, (thou) because of whom [all these are really, ...], who knows thee, through thee alone. For there is no one who is active before thee. Thou art an only and living spirit. And thou knowest one, for this one who belongs to thee is on every side. We are not able to express him. For thy light shines upon us.

Present a command to us to see thee, so that we may be saved. Knowledge of thee, it is the salvation of us all. Present a command! When thou dost command, we have been saved! Truly we have been saved! We have seen thee by mind! Thou art them all, for thou dost save them all, he who was not saved, nor was he saved through them. For thou, thou hast commanded us.

Thou art one. Thou art one, just as there is one (who) will say to thee: Thou art one, thou art a single living spirit. How shall we give thee a name? We do not have it, For thou art the existence of them all. Thou art the life of them all. Thou art the mind of them all. For thou art he in whom they all rejoice.

Thou hast commanded all these to be saved through thy word [.] glory who is before him, Hidden One, blessed Senaon, he who begat himself, Asineu(s), [.]ephneu(s), Optaon, Elemaon the great power, Emouniar, Nibareu(s), Kandephor(os), Aphredon, Deiphaneus, thou who art Armedon to me, power-begetter, Thalanatheu(s), Antitheus, thou who existeth within thyself, thou who art before thyself - and after thee no one entered into activity.

As what shall we bless thee? We are not empowered. But we give thanks, as being humble toward thee. For thou hast commanded us, as he who is elect, to glorify thee to the extent we are able. We bless thee because we were saved. Always we glorify thee. For this reason we shall glorify thee, that we may be saved to eternal salvation. We have blessed thee, for we are empowered. We have been saved, for thou hast willed always, that we all do this.

We all did this. [...] not through [... aeon ...], the one who was [...], we and those who [...]. He who will remember these and give glory always will become perfect among those who are perfect and impassable beyond all things. For they all bless these individually and together. And afterwards they shall be silent. And just as they were ordained, they ascend. After the silence, they descend from the third. They bless the second; after these the first. The way of ascent is the way of descent.

Know therefore, as those who live, that you have attained. And you taught yourselves the infinite things. Marvel at the truth which is within them, and (at) the revelation.

The Letter of Jacob to Joseph

Now it came to pass after these things that Joseph was told, "Indeed your father *is* sick"; and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. ² And Jacob was told, "Look, your son Joseph is coming to you"; and Israel ^[a]strengthened himself and sat up on the bed. ³ Then Jacob said to Joseph: "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me, ⁴ and said to me, 'Behold, I will make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a multitude of people, and give this land to your descendants after you as an everlasting possession.' ⁵ And now your two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, *are* mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine. ⁶ Your ^[b]offspring ^[c]whom you beget after them shall be yours; they will be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance. ⁷ But as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died beside me in the land of Canaan on the way, when *there was* but a little distance to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem)."

⁸ Then Israel saw Joseph's sons, and said, "Who *are* these?"

⁹ Joseph said to his father, "They *are* my sons, whom God has given me in this *place*."

And he said, "Please bring them to me, and I will bless them." ¹⁰ Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, so *that* he could not see. Then Joseph brought them near him, and he kissed them and embraced them. ¹¹ And Israel said to Joseph, "I had not thought to see your face; but in fact, God has also shown me your offspring!"

¹² So Joseph brought them from beside his knees, and he bowed down with his face to the earth. ¹³ And Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought *them* near him. ¹⁴ Then Israel stretched out his right hand and laid *it* on Ephraim's head, who *was* the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, guiding his hands knowingly, for Manasseh *was* the firstborn. ¹⁵ And he blessed Joseph, and said:

"God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,
The God who has fed me all my life long to this day,
¹⁶ The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil,
Bless the lads;
Let my name be named upon them,
And the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac;
And let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."

¹⁷ Now when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him; so he took hold of his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. ¹⁸ And Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father, for this *one is* the firstborn; put your right hand on his head."

¹⁹ But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations."

²⁰ So he blessed them that day, saying, "By you Israel will bless, saying, 'May God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh!' " And thus he set Ephraim before Manasseh.

²¹ Then Israel said to Joseph, "Behold, I am dying, but God will be with you and bring you back to the land of your fathers. ²² Moreover I have given to you one ^[d]portion above your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow."

The Song of Deborah (Expanded)

On that day Deborah and Barak son of Abinoam sang this song:

² "When the princes in Israel take the lead,
when the people willingly offer themselves—
praise the Lord!

³ "Hear this, you kings! Listen, you rulers!
I, even I, will sing to^[a] the Lord;
I will praise the Lord, the God of Israel, in song.

⁴ "When you, Lord, went out from Seir,
when you marched from the land of Edom,
the earth shook, the heavens poured,
the clouds poured down water.

⁵ The mountains quaked before the Lord, the One of Sinai,
before the Lord, the God of Israel.

⁶ "In the days of Shamgar son of Anath,
in the days of Jael, the highways were abandoned;
travelers took to winding paths.

⁷ Villagers in Israel would not fight;

they held back until I, Deborah, arose,
 until I arose, a mother in Israel.
⁸ God chose new leaders
 when war came to the city gates,
 but not a shield or spear was seen
 among forty thousand in Israel.
⁶ My heart is with Israel's princes,
 with the willing volunteers among the people.
 Praise the Lord!

¹⁰ "You who ride on white donkeys,
 sitting on your saddle blankets,
 and you who walk along the road,
 consider ¹¹ the voice of the singers^[b] at the watering places.
 They recite the victories of the Lord,
 the victories of his villagers in Israel.

"Then the people of the Lord
 went down to the city gates.
¹² "Wake up, wake up, Deborah!
 Wake up, wake up, break out in song!
 Arise, Barak!
 Take captive your captives, son of Abinoam.'

¹³ "The remnant of the nobles came down;
 the people of the Lord came down to me against the mighty.
¹⁴ Some came from Ephraim, whose roots were in Amalek;
 Benjamin was with the people who followed you.
 From Makir captains came down,
 from Zebulun those who bear a commander's^[c] staff.
¹⁵ The princes of Issachar were with Deborah;
 yes, Issachar was with Barak,
 sent under his command into the valley.
 In the districts of Reuben
 there was much searching of heart.
¹⁶ Why did you stay among the sheep pens^[d]
 to hear the whistling for the flocks?
 In the districts of Reuben
 there was much searching of heart.
¹⁷ Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan.
 And Dan, why did he linger by the ships?
 Asher remained on the coast
 and stayed in his coves.
¹⁸ The people of Zebulun risked their very lives;
 so did Naphtali on the terraced fields.

¹⁶ "Kings came, they fought,
 the kings of Canaan fought.
 At Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo,
 they took no plunder of silver.
²⁰ From the heavens the stars fought,
 from their courses they fought against Sisera.
²¹ The river Kishon swept them away,
 the age-old river, the river Kishon.
 March on, my soul; be strong!
²² Then thundered the horses' hooves—
 galloping, galloping go his mighty steeds.
²³ 'Curse Meroz,' said the angel of the Lord.
 'Curse its people bitterly,
 because they did not come to help the Lord,
 to help the Lord against the mighty.'
²⁴ "Most blessed of women be Jael,
 the wife of Heber the Kenite,
 most blessed of tent-dwelling women.
²⁵ He asked for water, and she gave him milk;
 in a bowl fit for nobles she brought him curdled milk.
²⁶ Her hand reached for the tent peg,
 her right hand for the workman's hammer.
 She struck Sisera, she crushed his head,
 she shattered and pierced his temple.
²⁷ At her feet he sank,
 he fell; there he lay.
 At her feet he sank, he fell;
 where he sank, there he fell—dead.
²⁸ "Through the window peered Sisera's mother;
 behind the lattice she cried out,
 'Why is his chariot so long in coming?
 Why is the clatter of his chariots delayed?'
²⁶ The wisest of her ladies answer her;
 indeed, she keeps saying to herself,
³⁰ 'Are they not finding and dividing the spoils:
 a woman or two for each man,
 colorful garments as plunder for Sisera,
 colorful garments embroidered,
 highly embroidered garments for my neck—
 all this as plunder?'
³¹ "So may all your enemies perish, Lord!
 But may all who love you be like the sun
 when it rises in its strength."

Then the land had peace forty years.

The Vision of Amos (see the attached Ebook)

Amos 7–9 deals with five visions Amos received from the Lord. Each vision showed that the Lord intended to completely destroy the kingdom of Israel if the people did not repent. The first two visions were of destructions that were avoided because Israel repented (see Amos 7:1–6). The next three visions revealed ways Israel had not repented (see Amos 7:7–9; 8:1–3; 9:1–4). The result of these sins would be that the Northern Kingdom of Israel would be conquered and taken captive. God, however, would not allow Israel to be utterly destroyed. In chapter 9, the Lord promised them that although they would be scattered among all nations, in the last days they would be gathered again to their lands of promise.

The Prayer of Jonah

2 Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the belly of the fish, ² saying,

“I called out to the Lord, out of my distress,
and he answered me;
out of the belly of Sheol I cried,
and you heard my voice.

³ For you cast me into the deep,
into the heart of the seas,
and the flood surrounded me;
all your waves and your billows
passed over me.

⁴ Then I said, ‘I am driven away
from your sight;
yet I shall again look
upon your holy temple.’

⁵ The waters closed in over me to take my life;
the deep surrounded me;
weeds were wrapped about my head

⁶ at the roots of the mountains.

I went down to the land
whose bars closed upon me forever;
yet you brought up my life from the pit,
O Lord my God.

⁷ When my life was fainting away,
I remembered the Lord,
and my prayer came to you,
into your holy temple.

⁸ Those who pay regard to vain idols
forsake their hope of steadfast love.

⁹But I with the voice of thanksgiving
will sacrifice to you;
what I have vowed I will pay.
Salvation belongs to the Lord!"

¹⁰And the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon the dry land.

The Ethiopian Gospel of the Childhood of Mary

The Ethiopic version of IGT comprises chapter eight of Ta'amra 'Iyasus (Miracles of Jesus), a large biographical work compiled from various canonical and noncanonical sources. Sylvain Grébaut published the IGT section of the Miracles in 1919 as part of his ceaseless efforts to publish the entire text ("Les miracles de Jésus: Texte éthiopien publié et traduit," *Patrologia orientalis* 12.4 [1919]: 555-652). His edition was based on a late manuscript of the Bibliothèque nationale (d'Abbadie 168, 19th c.) with four others employed in the apparatus. Since his day it has been determined that the compilation derives from an *Arabic Gospel of John* (CANT 44) written in the tenth or eleventh century from Syriac sources and perhaps translated into Ethiopic in the fourteenth century. This Arabic original, however, did not contain the IGT material; the childhood stories seem to have been added to the Ta'amra 'Iyasus in the Ethiopic milieu at a later date.

The origin of the IGT episodes is difficult to determine. Several scholars have suggested direct translation from a Greek original. If so, the text would have been introduced into Ethiopia prior to the seventh century. A Syriac or Arabic original introduced after the Muslim conquest is more likely. The contents of IGT in Eth represent the short recension (lacking chs. 1, 10, 17 and 18), but ch.12 is placed at the end of the collection along with the story of Jesus Rides the Sunbeam. Notable also is Eth's version of ch. 13 which is cast here as a story of Jesus learning his father's trade without any hint of the miraculous in his actions.

The MS base for the Miracles of Jesus has been considerably expanded since Grébaut's edition. There are now 25 MSS that feature either IGT or a shorter recension of infancy material based on stories from the later infancy gospels. Only one of these MSS predates the seventeenth century (the exception, Vat. Cerulli Etiop. 238 of the fifteenth century, contains only the story of Jesus and the Dyer). Eth has been extremely important in the study of IGT. It is due to Lucas van Rompay's comparison of sections from Eth, Syr, Lv, and Geo that the theory of a short recension arose ("De ethiopische versie van het Kindsheidsevangelië volgens Thomas de Israëlēt," in *Enfant dans les civilisations orientales* [eds. by A. Théodoridès, P. Naster, and J. Riesl; Leuven: Editions Peeters, 1980], pp. 119-132.). Sever Voicu ("Verso il testo primitivo dei Paidika tou Kuriou Iesou, 'Racconti

dell'infanzia del Signore Gesù," *Apocrypha* 9 [1998]: 19-23) developed the theory further and reached the conclusion that Eth represents the best witness to the original form of the Greek text.

The following translation was made directly from the Ethiopic by Paul-Hubert Poirier of Faculté de théologie et de sciences religieuses, Université Laval. It is the only English translation of the text currently available. Chapter and verse divisions follow the standard numbering of Tischendorf's Greek A text except chapter six which is significantly longer in the Ethiopic and other versions. The original divisions are supplied in parentheses.

Eighth Miracle which our Lord and our Saviour Jesus Christ did when he was a young child.

(1) **2 1** When the Lord Jesus Christ was an infant and was in those days about five years old and was playing near a stream, running water, filtering it through sand, running it into a cistern, making it come down pure and limpid and purifying it skilfully.

2 He took from the silt mire and mud, and he fashioned twelve birds. And at that time it was the day of Shabbat. And there were with him many children playing.

(2) **3** And a Jew saw him while he was doing that with the children. And he went to Joseph, his father, and accused the Lord Jesus, saying, "On Shabbat he made mud and with it twelve birds, which is not permitted on Shabbat."

4 When Joseph heard (it), he went to the Lord Jesus. He admonished him and said, "Why do you do such a thing which it is not permitted to do on Shabbat?" When the Lord Jesus heard these words, he clapped his hands and made them to fly away and said to them, "Go and fly to the men who stand there." And these birds flew, crying and saying, "Praised be the Son of the Lord."

(3) **5** A Pharisee saw him. And he was shocked and afraid. He went and told (that) to his friends.

3 1 And so the son of Hannah the scribe went with the Pharisee. Himself took a branch of willow and made to flow out the water that the Lord Jesus had gathered and he dried up the pool.

2 Then the Lord Jesus, seeing that he had done that, said to him, "Without fruit, may your seed (or offspring) be arid! And the shoot of your fruit be like a branch which has no life."

3 And at once the child became arid.

(4) **4 1** Another time, the Lord Jesus went with the Father and the Holy Spirit. And while running, a child stroke the chest of the Lord Jesus. And the Lord said to the child, "May your body not grow." The child died at once and felt. And those who saw the child which had died lamented. And they said, "Where is this infant from, for everything he says happens at once."

2 And the parents of the child which had died mourned him and bemoaned him. And later they went to Joseph and said to him, "Since you have such a son, you cannot stay with us in our city. Either give order that he bless us, or depart from here."

(5) **5 1** Joseph admonished the infant. Coming up to him, he said to him, "Why, my son, are you doing such things? Now, then, these people will hate us. And the Lord Jesus answered Joseph and said, "If the men had not known the word of the wisdom of my Father, they would not know the punishment of their children. Moreover, even what is hidden was made manifest to them, in order for them to understand. And those who have not found this malediction, those too have at once found their judgement. And those who are indignant about it are blind."

2 And Joseph got angry and pulled him hard ears and cheeks.

3 And the Lord Jesus said to him, "It will be enough for you to search for me and not find me. As for you, you have not known me perfectly and you have forgotten."

(6) 6 1 There was a famous teacher, whose name was Zacchaeus. And (Jesus) heard him conversing in this way with his father Joseph.

2 And this teacher, whose name was Zacchaeus, was saying to Joseph, "If you want that this infant be instructed, give him to me, so that I myself instruct him, because I will love him more than his young men and I will honour him more than the elders, so that he too become a friend for the children and moreover become a teacher."

3 Joseph answered and said to him, "Who is this who could take this infant and instruct him, for a great cross is appropriate for this infant?"

(7) 4 The infant answered and said, "Amongst the words you have said, Teacher, you have named something strange: I am different from you, and I do not have, like you, a family of flesh. And you are the only one who has been found in the Law. Because, before you were born yourself, I myself was. And while you expect yourself to become a father, now then you will be instructed by me. And nobody else has seen the form of the cross which I have sworn to carry. And it is fitting for me that myself, having to be crucified, I reject your own works, because you do not know how you were born and where you come from. I alone know exactly when you were born and until when you will be here."

(8) 5 And they began to cry and to be astonished, while they were saying, "We have seen great wonders and marvels. Never have we heard such words, either from the priests or from the masters or from the Pharisees and the scribes. Then indeed, where was born this infant? Because he is about five years old and we see that he speaks thus. Never have we seen such a thing."

6 And once more, the Lord Jesus answered and said to them, "You are astonished, nevertheless you do not know what I have told to you. As for me, I know whence you were born and, which is more than that, I know that from my Father and he himself knows me."

7 And when they heard that, they were completely (astonished) and could not speak. And the Lord Jesus came near and said to them, "I have played with you because you are small in knowledge and of little intelligence."

(G) 8 While Zacchaeus the teacher was persuading Joseph, his father, he said to him, "Give him to me, I have to instruct him." He persuaded him and took him (= Jesus). And he went into the school. Once in, the Lord Jesus kept silent. Zacchaeus the teacher began to teach him the letters. He said to him, "Say 'Alpha'." The Lord Jesus did not answer. The teacher got angry and slapped him on the head. The infant said to him, "While he is struck with a hammer, will (an infant) learn? You speak yourself like a resounding bronze and like a ringing bell, without any sound of word or wisdom or science."

G And the Lord Jesus began from Alpha up to the end and with great accuracy he told him (the letters). Once again, the Lord Jesus answered and said, "Those who do not know 'Alpha', how will they teach 'Beta'? O hypocrites, learn yourself first 'Alpha' and then, I will believe you, when you will have known the interpretation of Alpha and Beta."

10 And then, the Lord Jesus began to tell to the teacher the first form (of letter). And he said to him, "What is the stroke of the triplicate? There are many ... and pull of the hand, return and rising of the (writing) instrument, straight, triplicate, upright and curved."

7 1 The teacher was amazed and astonished of some many names. And after he had been astonished by his words, he cried, lamented and said, "Woe to me who have brought myself affliction upon my head.

2 "Take him out of here, please! It is not convenient that he remains on earth. Truly a great cross is convenient for whoever will be able to reveal this infant and teach him. As for me, I am inclined to place his birth before the flood and the days of Noah, because I myself wonder which womb bore him, which bosom gave him birth, and which mother raised him. As for me, I do not stand it, I am amazed, I have deceived myself. I am miserable, who have thought to have found a disciple, it is rather him who has become for me a teacher!

3 I have no rest, I cannot run away out of the country, I cannot look at the infant. I am myself strongly (surprised) at the eloquence of his mouth, I cannot (understand) what has exposed this infant, because I see intelligence before his eyes. Moreover (I am surprised at) the eloquence of his mouth and the purity of his language.

4 Whether he is the Lord or an angel, I do not know."

8 1 Then the Lord Jesus laughed and said, "Which is not fruitful will be fruitful. The blinds will see the fruit of life which has opened (their eyes)."

2 At once all those who had been cursed by him looked (at him). Therefore there was no one who dared to provoke him.

(10) G 1 One day, while the Lord Jesus was playing on the roof with young children, one of them fell off and died. When the other children saw him (dead), they run away, and the Lord Jesus remained alone.

2 The parents of the one who had died said to the Lord Jesus, "It you who have thrown down this infant." He said to them, "As for me, I have not thrown him down."

3 And when they had debated with him for a long time, the Lord Jesus descended into the tomb and went towards the corpse of the one who had died. He called him with a loud voice and said to him, "Tell, Nā□hu, whether it is I who threw you down." For such was the name of the child. And the child said, "No, my Lord." The parents of the child having seen (that) were amazed and terrified. They glorified the Lord.

(11) 11 1 After our Lord Jesus Christ had reached the age of seven, his mother, our Lady, the Holy Virgin Mary, doubly (virgin), sent him to draw water. While they were going and jostled each other on the road, his jug broke down.

2 The Lord Jesus spread the coat of which he was covered, wrapped the water inside and brought it to his mother. The Lady Mary was amazed at all that and she kept in her hearth what she saw.

(12) 13 1 Then the Lord Jesus reached the age of eight. As to Joseph, he was a carpenter. He made nothing else than yokes, beams and ploughs. A farmer brought him a log and he sawed it up. The Lord Jesus said to his father, "Father, show me how to saw up." And Joseph showed him.

2 The Lord Jesus took his measures to saw up. He trimmed and squared off the wood. He showed it to his father Joseph and said to him, "Is this how you want me to do now?"

(13) 14 1 When Joseph saw that he was intelligent, he wished him to be instructed and that he did not remain idle, and he led the Lord Jesus towards a teacher. Again he said, "Say: 'Alpha'."

2 The teacher got angry at him and stroke him. At once the teacher fell and died.

3 The Lord Jesus went back to his parents. And he was ordained not to go out of his parents' so that, if he was to curse someone, (this one) would not die.

(14) 15 1 There was besides another teacher and he said to Joseph, "Give me your son so that I myself instruct him properly." He took the Lord Jesus.

2 The Lord Jesus took a book, read what was written, opened his mouth and recited (it) by heart so that the teacher fell to the ground, terror-stricken, and implored him. Many people gathered there. They talked together so that all those who lived there were amazed.

3 Joseph heard and hurried, because it seemed to him that they were killing Jesus. The teacher said to Joseph, "It is not a disciple that you have given to me but a teacher."

4 And Joseph took the Lord Jesus and they went back home.

(15) 16 1 Later Joseph sent his son James to gather straw. The Lord Jesus went with him. While he was gathering straw, a serpent bit James' hand and he fainted.

2 The Lord Jesus did nothing else than blowing on his hand, where (the serpent) had bitten, and he cured him. As for the serpent, he died immediately.

(16) 1G 1 The Lord Jesus was about twelve years old. Joseph and our Lady Mary went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover, as they were used to do. Once there, they celebrated and returned home. And while they were coming back, the Lord Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. They did not know (but) it seemed to them that he was behind on the road.

2 When they reached their country, our Lady Mary and Joseph looked for him among his kindred and among their relatives, and they did not find him. When they saw him missing, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. At the seventh hour, they found him in the temple, sitting among the doctors who listened to him and were asking him questions. And all those who were listening to him were astonished at him. He admonished the priests and he explained to them the writings of the Prophets and the hidden symbols which are in the Law.

3 Her mother said to him, "O my child, why have you done such (a thing) to us? For we have been afflicted while searching for you, I and your father." The Lord Jesus answered and said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I was with my Father?"

4 The scribes and the Pharisees said to our Lady Mary, "Is it you, Mary, the mother of this child? For you are blessed in your fruit, because we have never seen or heard someone as illustrious in wisdom."

5 The Lord Jesus rose and followed his parents. His mother, our Lady Mary, kept all these words and put them in her heart. The Lord Jesus grew in stature, wisdom and grace, before God and men.

(17) Again the Lord Jesus did a miracle. When sun entered through the window, the Lord Jesus straddled the sun ray and went to Orient and Occident, as far as reached the sun ray.

(18) 12 Again he sowed five grains of barley and harvested five hundred bags, which he gave to the poor.

The Ethiopian Martyrdom of Saint Stephen

Dedication to the ordination of the First Martyr and Archdeacon Stephen, who was stoned to death about three years after the Ascension of the Lord.

Saint Stephen was a Hellenistic Jew and belonged to the group of the seven deacons selected by the Apostles to carry out the charity work of the first Christian community of Jerusalem.

According to the Acts of the Apostles, he was a man filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit. He preached with boldness and performed many great wonders. His action caused the animosity of the Judean priesthood, for they failed to understand and accept the ecumenical dimension and the liberating content of Christ's preaching to every human being, and especially to those who had been wronged.

The First Martyr Stephen was considered a blasphemer and a denier of Judaism, for he declared, even before the Sanhedrin (great assembly), that Moses and the Mosaic Law, as well as all the Prophets and the Righteous of the Old Testament, were not carriers of salvation, but prepared the way for the coming of the true Savior, who is Christ.

Imitating His love, and dedicating himself to Him, he forgave his murderers, begging the Triune God not to impute to them the sin they had committed.

May his intercession be with all of us, Amen!

The Ethiopian Hymn to the Trinity

Introduction

A member of the Oriental Orthodox family of Churches, the Church of Ethiopia shares with them in essence a common faith. This faith, the churches believes, is derived from the apostolic heritage and borne witness to in the New Testament against the background of the Old Testament. It has been expounded by the fathers of the Church both in the ancient councils and in their teaching. It continues as a living reality in the church in its life of worship, preaching and discipline. In a word, then in the church of Ethiopia is a community which has inherited and which holds to the historic Christian faith as it has been handed down through the centuries. What is attempted here is, only to give a brief introduction to the faith of the Church of Ethiopia. (1)

The Mystery of the Holy Trinity

God is the only eternal Being. Beyond time, space and all limitations, He abides without a beginning and without an end. "Thou hast no beginning," says in prayer the Ethiopian priest who celebrates the Anaphora of St. John, "but Thou bringest all things to their end. Infinite art Thou, but for all things Thou didst set bounds."

God is the Creator of all that exists. Having made them all, He continues to sustain them. The Lord

is high, says the Anaphora. Yet "all were created through His grace, and all live through His kindness". Perfect in Himself, He continually imparts perfection to His creatures. Individuals as well as the entire historical process are ultimately under His control. God is not a passive perfection or an abstract ideal, but a dynamic reality who is ever active in bringing all that exists to the final destiny which He has for each of them as well as for the whole created realm.

God is one in three and three in one. The unity of God is not convinced in the sense of an arithmetical digit nor of a solitary condition, but in that of an all-inclusive perfection. So the one is also eternally three. He is, affirms the Anaphora, "three names and one God, three prosopa and one appearance, three persons and one essence".

The unity of God is confessed as the unity of Godhead – Melekote as the word is used in Ethiopia. The one Godhead is shared equally and eternally by the three Persons – Akal as they are referred to in Ethiopia. As in other parts of the Christian world, in Ethiopia also there were men who tried to interpret the doctrine in various ways. There were, for instance, persons who refused to accept the personal distinctions in the one Godhead and others who insisted that the three Persons were three Gods. Both these views were rejected by the Church.

God is eternally Father, eternally Son, and eternally Holy Spirit. "The Father beget His son without days or hours; and when He beget Him, His Father was not separated from Him." Beyond time, God is the eternal One. That One is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. No one of the three Persons is prior to the other two in time. "The One was not before the Other", says the Anaphora, "and the Second was not before the Third." But "we proclaim that the Father lived with His Son, and that the Son lived with His Father before creation, and before the heavens and the earth were made."

In the one co-eternal and co-equal Trinity, the Father is the eternal source of the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Son is born of, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from, the Father. While affirming that the Son and the Holy Spirit derive each of them His respective being eternally from the Father, it is insisted that "the Father did not beget the Son to help Him in His work before the world was created and the existence of the Holy Spirit is not to contribute wisdom and work."

It is not with the Deity as it was with Abraham who was older than Isaac. Or with Isaac who was older than Jacob, but the Father is not older than the Son, neither is the Son older than the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is not younger than the Son, neither is the Son younger than His Father.

The Father is different from the Son and the Holy Spirit only in that He alone is Father. The Son alone is Son, and the Holy Spirit alone dwells in us and makes God known to us. So the priest who celebrates the Anaphora of St. John says in prayer, "But thy living Holy Spirit knoweth the depth of Thy Godhead. He has declared to us Thy nature, and told us about Thy oneness. He taught thy unity, and helped to know Thy Trinity." The one Godhead is, therefore, in the Father in perfection. From Him the same Godhead is received in perfection by the Son through His eternal generation; and from the Father again the same Godhead in perfection is derived eternally by the Holy Spirit. It is affirmed at the same time with equal force that "the father is not greater than the Son, and the Son is not less than His Father," and the Holy Spirit is not greater or less than either the Father or Son. Thus

the unity of God is affirmed by confessing that the Godhead is one, and that the Godhead is eternally in the Father. The Son and the Holy Spirit receive the same Godhead eternally and in perfection from the Father.

There is also another equally important emphasis regarding divine unity. This lies in the affirmation that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are eternally inseparably together. In everything that the Father does, the Son and the Holy Spirit are there with Him; in all the things that the Son does, the Father and the Holy Spirit are there with Him; and in all activities of the Holy Spirit, the Father and the Son are also with him. It is affirmed that "the father, being Father, doth not give orders to the Son; and the Son, being Son, is not exalted; and the Holy Spirit is equal. Both the divine Father, Son and Holy Spirit is equal. But the divine Father, Son and Holy Spirit and are one God, one Kingdom, one authority and one government."

If we may put the emphasis in our words, the term "Father" with reference to God signifies the divine reality which originates everything; the Son indicates the divine reality implying all that is originated; and the Holy Spirit signifies the divine reality which dwells in creatures relating them both individually and corporately to God. The eternal God, as we have noted already, is the all-inclusive perfection. He creates all things; He sustains them; and He guides them to a final destiny.

Infinite love, God creates and sustains the world and all that there is in it. It is God the Father who bring all this into being; but it is accomplished in reality through the Son, and is perfected in the Holy Spirit. All this is one activity of God consisting of different aspects. Grounded in the Son and upheld and perfected by the Holy Spirit, the created world belongs to the Father. In His love God the Father sent His only Son into the world in order to accomplish its salvation; in the same love God the Son came and worked out the world's salvation; in the same love again God the Holy Spirit perfects the salvation thus given. All these are manifestation at different levels of the same activity of God in relation to the world. (1)

The meaning of Holy Trinity (Pope Shenouda III)

The Mystery of the Incarnation

The incarnation of God the Son is primarily for the salvation of the world. Salvation means to restoration of the world to its direct and unimpeded relation with God.

As God made it, the world was very good. But evil came there in it. God who made the world is ever concerned and active to save it from the clutches of evil and restore it to the destiny for which it has been created. Incarnation is God's supreme act in saving the world.

God the Son entered the earthly realm of existence in a unique way by taking over Himself a perfectly real human life. This is incarnation by which God the Father who created the world through God the Son and perfects it through God the Holy Spirit, manifests through the Son His saving work for the world and completes it in the Holy Spirit. As creation is the work of God, redemption is also God's work.

God who created the world made man as the crown of creation. Made in God's image and endowed

with creaturely freedom and autonomy, man seeks God and reflects on His being and nature. Through the wrong exercise of man's freewill there came on him and the world at large misery and suffering as well as sin and evil. The salvation of the world, therefore, required pre-eminently the healing of man. It is this healing which the Incarnation is believed by the Church to have aimed to accomplish.

In the Incarnation, God the Son united to Himself real and perfect manhood. Conceived in her womb by Mary the Virgin through the work of the Holy Spirit, He was born in the world as a real man. At the very moment of His conception, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, a personal manhood was formed in the Virgin's womb in union with God the Son. Thus God the Son united to Himself the manhood taken from the human mother and was born as perfect God and perfect man in the real sense.

Jesus Christ, the incarnate God the Son, is one Person, continuous with Godhead and continuous with manhood. In Him Godhead and manhood continue each in its integrity and perfection, in a state of indivisible and unconfused union.

On this ground the Church of Ethiopia, with the other Oriental Orthodox Churches, affirms that Jesus Christ is not two natures, but one incarnate nature of God the Word. The "one" here is not meant to ignore the dynamic continuance of either Godhead or manhood in the one Christ, but to confess a real incarnation whereby God the Son entered the world of ours as a man. He is indeed God the incarnate Son even while He is found to undergo the frailty of manhood.

Living as He did a life of unbroken communion with God, He was absolutely sinless. Maintaining this union in the most inward and real sense, He entered into our battle with sin and evil as a man, and fell a victim to our death. By His suffering and ignominious death on the cross He scored a victory over the forces of evil, and by His resurrection from the dead He lives eternally in His natural unity with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, and in his unbroken and indivisible union with the manhood. In Jesus Christ, then, we have the incarnate, crucified and glorified God the Son, who is Himself our brother, signifying the final destiny awaiting the human race.

Regarding the Person of Jesus Christ also there have been serious discussions in Ethiopia. But the Church holds to the view that He is God the Son in His incarnate state. Born of God the Father eternally as God the Son, He was born of the Virgin Mother as a real man. There are a number of affirmations in the Anaphora regarding Him, some of which may be noted here.

1. Jesus Christ was born of Our Lady Mary for our salvation. He who does not believe in His birth from Holy Mary, let him be anathema.
2. In this way, after being conceived in the womb of the Virgin, God the Son was born as a man. By His conception, God the Son became incarnate "taking our nature." The Son who is born of the Father without a mother, was born as a man without a Father. "He put on mortal flesh and made it immortal," and He came truly into the world "clothed in the body which He took from us."
3. His human birth was a unique event, whereby God the Son "came down through the will of His Father" and was made man. "His humanity was not inferior because He had no Father to be born of

His seed." This is incarnation, whereby God the Son entered the historical realm in order to save it forever.

4. In the Incarnation, God the Son united to Himself manhood and "made it one with his Godhead without mixture or confusion, without division or alternation." Therefore, "His Godhead was not separated from His manhood, not for an hour, nor for the twinkling of an eye."

5. God the Son came to us "without being separated from His Godhead." After being born, "He grew like an infant, and grew little by little until He matured like a man. At the age of thirty He was baptized in the Jordan." He was tempted by the devil; "He hungered and thirsted," He went about "preaching the gospel of the kingdom of Heaven." By this, who is perfect like God the Father and is His image walked among us in our image.

6. He suffered passion and death voluntarily on our behalf and for our sakes. He became hungry as man, and granted food to many with very little bread. He thirsted as a man who dies, but changed water into wine as being able to give life to all.

They bet Him on the head as a servant and He set free from the yoke of sin as Lord of all. He suffered all. He cured the blind with His spittle and gave us the Holy Spirit by receiving the spittle of the unclean. He who forgiveth sin was accused as a sinner by them. The judge of judges was judged by them. He was crucified on the tree to destroy sin, was crucified with the sinner to control with the righteous. He died through His will, and was buried willingly; He died to destroy death, He died to give life to the dead; He was buried to raise those who were buried, to keep the living, to justify the impure, to justify the sinners, to gather together those who were scattered, and to turn the sinners to glory and honour.

Such passages in the Anaphora are too numerous to be reproduced or even noted in the present context. They show that Jesus Christ was at once God and man without division or confusion. The same Christ, God the Son incarnate, expressed the divine actions as well as the human. He is one Christ, in whom God and man are indivisibly united.

7. As to the absolute reality of the suffering and death, there are passages almost without number. We shall reproduce here two of them, one taken from the Anaphora of St. James of Serug, and the other from the Anaphora of St. Dioscorus. The priest who celebrates using the first of these two Anaphora's says in prayer:

O Lord, Thou wast struck with the hands of a servant, beaten with sticks, pierced with a spear, and they caused Thee to drink a little gall with vinegar. While Thou was God able to prevent them, thou didst not prevent them, Thou didst become patient even to death; all this thou didst accept for the love of man.

The Anaphora of St. Dioscorus contains the following passages bearing on the point at issue in the present context. The priest says there in prayer:

He was laid in the manger of the cattle, received the presents of His kingdom, and wept as infants do, asking for food from the breast of His mother. As to suffering and death in particular, we have

passages like the following. They crucified Him on the tree, nailed him with nails, beat Him on the head with sticks, pierced his side with a spear, to Him who gave drink to the Israelites from a rock they gave to drink gall mixed with myrrh in His thirst. The immortal died, died to destroy death, died to quicken the dead as He promised them with the word of covenant.

8. Death was not the end of His dispensation. "He rose from the dead, absolutely without corruption and set is free from the yoke of sin." The risen Christ ascended into heaven and is with God the Father. He has triumphed over death and decay.

These and the many other passages in the Liturgy show that the manhood of Christ was absolutely real and perfect. But everywhere the emphasis is on the unity of Jesus Christ. It is affirmed that He is God the Son in His incarnate state. As regards the Incarnation, it is clearly shown that He was conceived in the Virgin's womb, and that He was born as a real man. At the very moment of His conception, through the Holy Spirit, actual manhood was formed from the human mother in union with Himself. It is to Him who was thus conceived that the Virgin gave birth. Therefore, Jesus Christ is indivisibly one. The two natures of Godhead and manhood which came into union in Him continue in the one Christ, each in its absolute integrity and perfection with its respective properties, without change or division. Each of them continues in its dynamic reality, not in a quiescent state, so that Christ is God and man at the same time.

The Church of Ethiopia, with the other Oriental Orthodox Churches, has refused to accept the Chalcedonian Definition of the Faith with the affirmation that Christ is "made known in two natures." If by the expression the Churches which accept the Definition mean only that Godhead and manhood continue in the one Christ dynamically, this is the teaching of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. On the other hand, if the expression is taken in the sense that Godhead and manhood continue in Christ only in a state of moral union, there is a basic difference on this issue between the churches of the Chalcedonian tradition and the Church of Ethiopia, which should be noted. (1)

The Incarnation (St. Athanasius)

The Mystery of Baptism

"He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned." (Mk. 16:6). Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the spirit he can not enter the kingdom of God." (John 3:5).

In accordance with such writings of the Holy Scriptures, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church baptizes male infants at the age of 40 days and female infants at the age of 80 days, (Lev. 12:2-7). Yet if an infant is sick, so that the infant may not die before being baptized and be subjected to the unchangeable order of the Lord Jesus Christ, "unless one is born of water and the spirit he can not enter the kingdom of God", the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church baptizes infants just as they come even prior to the above fixed baptismal dates. In addition, if an adult believes and requests baptism, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church willingly complies and baptizes him or her.

Few words from the Holy Scriptures that testify Baptism

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt. 28:19). And Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of the Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts. 2:38). "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts. 10:48). "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into His death" (Rome 6:3). "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free- and all were made to drink of one spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13). "Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves us (you), not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a clear conscience..." (1 Pet. 3:12). Such words testify to the usefulness of our Baptism. (2)

The Mystery of the Holy Communion; what is Holy Communion?

It is a sacrament through which we are far off from the domination of sin and get nearer of attain to communion with God. It originates from the rites conducted by the children of Israel when they attained their freedom from the bondage of slavery and so killed a ritual sheep and sprinkled its blood on the door posts to protect themselves from sudden death and destruction. Based on this example, Jesus Christ, who is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world has founded the Mystery of the Holy Communion by offering. Himself as a true sacrifice on the cross. (Ex. 5-15 Isa. 53: 7 Jn. 1:29). "For the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God," (Heb. 7:19)

The Preparation and Presentation of the Holy Communion is in the form of bread and wine; i.e. like that of Melchizedek, King of Salem's presentation to Abraham (Gen. 14:18). Why the Holy Communion is called Mystery is that by partaking of the visible Bread and Wine, we attain to invisible heavenly blessings and eternal life. "...Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, you have no life in you; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in Me; and I in him," (Jn. 6: 53-57). "Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, (will be examined by the Blessed Holy Trinity of being unworthy) and will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the Bread and drink of the Cup. For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment upon himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. But if we judged ourselves truly, we should not be judged" (1 Cor. 11:27-32). It is, therefore, based on this teaching that the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church calls upon her followers to be pure from sin, reveille strange thoughts, fornication etc. and to receive the true flesh and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ who was crucified upon the cross on Holy Friday for the salvation of the world.

The priest when putting the bread on the plate and the wine in the cup (chalice) blesses them. During the service of the Holy Liturgy, the bread turns into the true flesh of the Son of God and the wine into the true blood of the Son of God. Athanasius said, "we believe that the bread and wine before the priest blesses them are simple bread and wine, but after the blessing they are truly turned into the flesh and the blood of the Son of God," "Therefore, what the Apostles received on the night of Good Thursday, and what has been sacrificed upon the cross on Good Friday, and what is still being offered today and to the end of the world in the four corners of the world is one band the

same. St. John of Chrysostom said that, the poor sacrifice which the priests offer every time is one and the same sacrifice, which has been offered upon the cross.

He (St. John) also confirms that it is not a symbol, but the real and blood of the Son of God.

Supporting scriptural words about the teaching Of the Holy Communion "Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, take, eat; this is my Body. And He took a cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, saying, drink of it, all of you; for this is my Blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins," (Mt. 26: 26-29; Mk, 14: 22; Lk. 22: 19). "Truly truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven, and gives life to the world" (Jn. 6: 32; 35; 51-59), such passages confirm the doctrine of the Holy Communion. (2)

The Mystery of the Resurrection

"Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear His voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment" (Jn. 5: 28-29). St. Paul said. "There is one glory of the Sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. So it is with the resurrection of the dead. (1 Cor. 15: 41-42).

Supporting Scriptural Words Concerning the Resurrection

" For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the son and believes in Him should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn. 5: 25, 6: 40, 11:25)" Knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into His presence" (2 Cor. 4:14). " For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call; and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first," (1 Thess. 4:16). "Having a hope in God which these themselves accept that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust." (Acts 24: 15, Dan. 12: 2). The Resurrection of those already raised in the Scripture is an evidence of our Resurrection.

Elijah raised one child (1 Kg. 17: 21-22) Elisha raised the Son of the Shunammite (2 Kg 4:35) a dead man raised on the touch of the bone of Elisha (2 Kg. 13: 21).

A daughter of a ruler was raised by the Lord (Mt. 9: 25). The dead who were raised on the crucifixion day of the Lord. (Mt. 27:52)

The Son of a widow at Nail was raised by the Lord (Lk. 7:15).

The raising of Lazarus at Bethany by the Lord (Jn. 11: 43-44)

Dorcas was raised by Peter (Acts 9: 40) .

The bodily living (life) of Enoch and Elijah is one indication of our resurrected eternal life. But our fundamental understanding of our raising is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. As Amoniyos and Awsabeyos stated in the introduction of the Gospel, "He is risen so as to teach the Resurrection, of our bodies"

Based on the above teachings, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church offers belief and worships the High God who creates and rules. In this teaching, our church is in accordance with the ancient churches; such as Alexandrian, Syrian, Armenian, and Indian Orthodox Churches. (2)

Hunan Salvation

The Incarnation is first and foremost for the salvation of the world, The salvation of the world means pre-eminently the redemption of the human race. The saving work of God accomplished through the Incarnation is to be appropriated by man, both individually and corporately. It is when this is done with reference to the entire human race that the work of salvation of the world will have been perfected. God Himself is carrying on this work through the Holy Spirit.

In his life and existence man includes both the individual and the corporate dimensions. The saving work accomplished by God in the Incarnation should, therefore, be assimilated and perfected in both these dimensions. It is to carry on this divine work that the Church is founded by God. The incarnate, crucified and risen Christ is in the Church, which is His body on earth, through the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit works in the Church through individual members as well as its community as a corporate body, in order to make the saving activity of God real to them. This is done through the various ministries of the Sacraments, preaching and teaching. In this way individual persons are inspired to dedicate their lives, and both individuals and communities are guided to carry forward the ministry of Jesus Christ in the social, economic, political and such other spheres of human life for the well-being of man and the world at large.

This concern is giving expression to in the Anaphora's of the Church of Ethiopia by including prayers for all these areas of life in the world. Thus prayers are offered for rains, that God may send them where they are needed; for waters of the rivers, that "God should fill them unto their due measure and bounds"; for the fruits of the earth, that "God may grant to the earth her fruit for sowing and for harvest"; and for the prevailing of the spirit of peace for the people. In the same way every liturgical celebration includes intercession for the Emperor as the Head of the State and for ecclesiastical leaders. Besides, traders, farmers and craftsmen, as well as those in need, sickness or oppression are specially remembered. Prayers are also offered for those who have fallen in any manner of sin. All these show that the entire realm of nature and all conditions of men and women are committed to divine protection and care at every service of worship.

The Christian's ultimate concern in life is not understood in terms merely of the hope for a blessed life in the world to come. On the other hand, this world itself is affirmed to belong to God. But the fact of evil in it is admitted, both in the natural realm and in the moral realm. Salvation is a present experience consisting in man's complete confidence and communion with God as well as his perfect peace and harmony with his fellow beings. This state of being which should be ours here and now should grow till it reaches its final culmination in the eternal realm. Thus salvation is a present reality which has a future reference. The Church has the responsibility to inspire its member to work for the well being of life in the world here and now and to proclaim the hope of eternal life in the world to come.

In this world man is entitled to individual freedom, social justice, economic sufficiency and such other rights as will enable him to develop his talents for the good of himself and of others. The Church as a body should stand for the realization of these rights. However, the Church of Ethiopia does not agree with the view that the Christian's concern is only to work for the welfare of man in

this world. This world and our lives in it are nothing but transitory. No man can be absolutely sure of what will happen to him tomorrow. Furthermore, material prosperity does not as a rule lead to peaceful life, either for the individual or for peoples and nations. In any case, the Church of Ethiopia does not think that its mission is to build up exclusively a city in this world. The hope in the life of the world to come is an integral part of its faith

The Apostolic Creed which is in use in the Church of Ethiopia has three sections bearing on our discussion in the present context. The first of them insists that "all creatures of God are good and there is nothing to be rejected, and the spirit, the life of the body, is pure and holy in all." The entire natural realm has been made pure and holy by God and all that is for man's regular use. The second passage affirms that "marriage is pure, and childbirth is undefiled, because God created Adam and Eve to multiply." This is a clear statement which shows that in the faith of the Church of Ethiopia, human society is of divine creation, so that the social, economic political and other such ties of man are divinely instituted. In the third passage there is the confession that we "believe in the resurrection of the dead, the righteous and sinners; and in the Day of Judgment when everyone will be recompensed according to his deeds." This statement affirms the eschatological hope in the Church's faith.

Putting the three ideas together, we can say that according to the faith of the Church of Ethiopia, the natural realm has been created by God, who has Himself placed man in the world as a member of society. There is a destiny awaiting man, and that is to be attained by him in the risen life in the world to come. In the face of evil and sin in this world of our God has worked out man's salvation through His incarnate Son, who rose from the dead and lives eternally offering us the assurance of a resurrection that will be ours also. (1)

A word in conclusion

The eternal and triune God who is beyond time and space has created the world in time and space. He has redeemed the world and continues His work of perfecting the saving act. The salvation was accomplished by God through the suffering, death and resurrection of His incarnate Son and is perfected through His Holy Spirit.

It is this saving work of God that is represented in every celebration of the Holy Eucharist, which is not merely a memorial service to commemorate the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But in it the Church offers itself and the whole-redeemed human race together with the natural realm of earthly existence to the triune God. This is why in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, as also in its various other acts of worship, the Church calls to remembrance the living and the departed sections of the communion of saints. This is done in the context of remembering the saving acts of God, not merely as past events, but as events which happened actually in the realm of history and which signify the continuous work of God for the salvation of the world. The Service of the Holy Eucharist brings to us above all the assurance of the eschatological dimension of the Christian faith.

We proclaim Thy death, Lord and Thy holy resurrection, we believe in Thine ascension and Thy second coming, we glorify Thee, we offer our prayer unto Thee and supplicate Thee our Lord and our God.

Grant us, Lord, to do Thy will and Thy good pleasure at all times, and write our names in the book of life in the kingdom of heaven with all saints and martyrs, through Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom, to Thee, with Him and with the Holy Spirit be glory and dominion, both now and ever and

world without end.
Amen. (1)

The Book of Bartholomew

Jerome, in the prologue to his Commentary on Matthew, mentions a number of apocryphal Gospels -those according to the Egyptians, Thomas, Matthias, Bartholomew, the Twelve, Basilides, and Apelles: probably he depends upon Origen, for he himself disliked and avoided apocryphal books, with few exceptions; the Gospel according to the Hebrews, for instance, he hardly reckoned as apocryphal. Of this Gospel of Bartholomew we have no sort of description: we find it condemned in the Gelasian Decree, which may mean either that the compiler of the Decree knew a book of that name, or that he took it on trust from Jerome. In the pseudo-Dionysian writings two sentences are quoted from 'the divine Bartholomew,' and a third has just been brought to light from the kindred 'book of Hierotheus'. But one cannot be sure that these writers are quoting real books.

We have, however, a writing attributed to Bartholomew which attained some popularity; the manuscripts do not call it a Gospel, but the Questions of Bartholomew. It contains ancient elements, and I think that MM. Wilmart and Tisserant have made out their claim that it at least represents the old Gospel. I therefore give a translation of it here.

It exists in three languages, and not, apparently, in a very original form in any of them: Greek is the original language, of which we have two manuscripts, at Vienna and Jerusalem; Latin 1, consisting of two leaves of extracts, of the ninth century; Latin 2, complete: see below; Slavonic (i-iv. 15). The Greek text may be as old as the fifth century; the Latin 2 of the sixth or seventh.

In the *Revue Biblique* for 1913 the Latin fragments and a fresh Greek text were published by MM. Wilmart and Tisserant, with the variants of the other authorities and in 1921-2 yet another text, a complete Latin one, appeared in the same periodical, edited by Professor Moricca from a manuscript in the Casanatensian library at Rome in which the text is, in parts, tremendously expanded. This copy is of the eleventh century and came from the monastery of Monte Amiata. The Latin is exceedingly incorrect, and there are many corruptions, and interpolations which extend to whole pages of closely printed text. I cite it as Lat. 2.

I take the Greek and Slavonic, where they exist, as the basis of my version, and add some passages from the Latin. The main topics, common to two or more of the texts, are:

- i. The descent into Hell: the number of souls saved and lost.
- ii. The Virgin's account of the Annunciation.
- iii. The apostles see the bottomless pit.
- iv. The devil is summoned and gives an account of his doings.

The Wisdom of the Serpent

It is difficult to imagine a tale that has had more of an impact upon Western culture than the story of Adam[1] in the garden of Eden.[2] Although neither the other writers of the Hebrew Scriptures nor the early Rabbis paid much attention to this Genesis tale, the apostle Paul lifted it out of its apparent oblivion by making the fall of Adam "into sin" the whole reason for the Christian epic of redemption.[3] For Paul, the Christ, that is to say the Messiah, came not to reestablish earthly, righteous, political rule as the Jews expected, but to solve the problem posed by Adam's disobedience and his subsequent fall. "In Adam's fall we sin-ned all," teaches Pauline theology, and so Christ came to redeem humanity by reestablishing human righteousness in a way no mere sinful mortal could. According to some theologies, Christ paid the debt which Adam had incurred, but which only a God-man had the righteousness and hence the ability to pay.[4]

That is the context in which Genesis 2 and 3 have been read for centuries and for many people that is the only way to read the passage. The problem, however, is that the story has too many loose ends, too many confusing subtleties to be so easily unraveled and explained. If it is to be understood as an account of why humans are all sinful, why does the word "sin" never appear in the story? And why is it that in a certain sense the serpent appears more truthful than Yahweh? Yahweh tells the man and the woman that on the day they eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil they will surely die, but this does not happen. Instead Adam lives on to a very ripe old age of 930 years (Gen. 5:5). The serpent, on the other hand, tells them quite truthfully that they will not die, but instead promises that they will become wise, like God, knowing good and evil.

One could argue that the sort of wisdom that the knowledge of good and evil brings has been troubling, the source of human discontent, but could anyone imagine human beings without any sense of good and evil? Is that not what makes us human? Was the gaining of such knowledge then really a fall at all? It is perhaps significant that God himself has to admit that the couple has become "as one of us, knowing good and evil." [5] In other words, God finally confesses that the serpent was correct, or is He only speaking ironically? A good argument could be made that the serpent, far from ruining humanity, saved Adam from perpetual, blind subservience in a very restrictive garden.

These and many other details lead me to believe that we should return to look at the story once more. Perhaps there still are secrets it has not yielded to us yet. Perhaps the most subtle and important points, in fact, have thus far eluded most readers.

Let me begin by asking an obvious question: "Who is this serpent who addresses the woman?" John Milton, of course, knew the answer implicitly. The serpent for Milton and most other Christian theologians of the past is obviously the Devil. Indeed, the whole Christian story has been seen as a struggle between God and Satan for the soul of humanity. The problem is that the concept of Satan does not emerge in the recorded thought of Israel until long after this part of Genesis was written. Indeed, when Satan first appears as a character in the book of Job he is hardly a full-blown Devil at all. Rather he is God's emissary and tester, not his enemy. The same seems true for the other references to Satan[6] in the Hebrew Scriptures. To think of the serpent as Satan is, therefore, highly anachronistic. It is to impose upon Hebrew Scripture a later, Christian understanding.

How did ancient peoples understand serpents? Certainly not as some deceitful embodiment of evil. On the contrary, the serpent was, and in some cultures still is, regarded as the source of great wisdom, for the serpent can shed its skin and go on living. Like the butterfly that bursts out of its own chrysalis to new life, the serpent was often regarded as a symbol of immortality. And more, perhaps because of this intimation of new life, the serpent was frequently regarded in the ancient world as the messenger from the great Goddess and the guardian of her sacred precincts.[7]

If this is the symbolism intended, the tale of the Garden of Eden takes on radically new dimensions. The essential plot can be understood, not as a struggle between God and the Devil, but as a conflict involving the dynamic, royal, masculine God of the heavens and the primordial Mother Goddess who for millennia had been worshipped as the Mistress of the earth. To be sure, the story is told from the point of view of the former. The serpent is reduced to being the subtlest of the creatures that the Lord God had made. The Goddess is not even mentioned by name, though she is there, as the tree of life, for that is how she was so often depicted among the ancient Canaanites. Indeed, because she was represented in tree form,[8] it is not surprising that Yahweh declared that the tree and its fruit were taboo.

The Goddess was not a new comer to human history. Archaeologists have discovered on the Golan heights an image of her which can be dated to more than 220,000 years ago!!!! From a human point of view, Yahweh, and all the other heavenly Gods like him, are far more recent historically. Her predominance in earlier forms of the story may well be mirrored by the fact that the very name *adam* is cognate with *adamah*, earth. In other words, humanity was originally hers.

Yahweh's triumph over the Goddess,[9] which this tale describes from his point of view, marked a radical transformation of society, a transformation which has continued virtually to this day. When Adam is divided into male and female, the story makes clear, the first stage of human life was matriarchal, for the male "left his father and mother to cleave unto his wife." [10] In a patriarchal society, which the victory of Yahweh brings, the direction is reversed. The woman goes to live in the man's home. It is also obvious that before the "fall," the woman (later to be called Eve) takes the leading role, reasoning about her options and, in effect, deciding what the couple will do. Only after Yahweh steps in does the male claim rule over the female by naming her.

In a certain sense we should not lament overly much the victory of the patriarchy. From our historical vantage point, the transformation of theology and hence society appears to have been inevitable, probably even necessary. Certainly it occurred in many different cultures with amazing synchronicity. The triumph of patriarchy in Israel is mirrored in China, India, Europe---in most parts of the world. At the same time, however, patriarchalists should not complain, now that it is time for the Goddess to reassert herself and recover the status and the dignity that is rightfully hers.

Moreover, those lovers of the patriarchal "victory" must also be aware that the triumph of Yahweh and the patriarchy was never as complete as is usually assumed. In fact, the story about Adam in the garden is but the first skirmish in a war that continues throughout the Biblical period. The essential conflict in the Hebrew Scriptures is not between God and Satan but between Yahweh and the Goddess.

Right at the beginning, Yahweh tries to isolate her. Her guardian, the serpent, is replaced by the bizarre and monstrous Cherub (usually connected with political centers)[11] who is to keep

humans from the tree of life, i.e. the Mother. No sooner does the family of humanity begin, however, than Cain, the agriculturalist, sacrifices his brother to the earth who opens her mouth to receive Abel's blood.[12] Yahweh punishes Cain by alienating him from the earth, but the problem for Yahweh continues. The Mother, whose offspring is always some form of Eros, tempts the sons of God so that they come down and cohabit with the daughters of men.[13] This leads God to decide to destroy the whole earth with a great flood. The earth is cleansed, but the conflict does not go away. Noah's drunkenness[14] results from imbibing of the earth's secret mysteries.

Throughout the historical books and the prophets we see Israel repeatedly "going after" other deities. In particular, it is the Goddess Asherah who tempts the Israelites to be unfaithful to Yahweh. Even one of the tribes of Israel, Asher, seems to have been named after her. The great southern seaport was also given her epithet, Elath. Archaeology has confirmed through the discovery of the many images of Asherah and her sister goddess Astarte, that the prophets did not exaggerate.[15] The Goddess, in her several forms, remained until the end of the Biblical period a major divinity for the people. Jeremiah, an eye-witness to the final destruction of the nation of Judah in 587 BCE, laments that even then Israelites were still "baking cakes for the Queen of Heaven." [16] In a sense, one could interpret the fall of Jerusalem and the end of the kingdom of Judah as the ultimate example of the Goddess' victory.

The official dogma of Israel was that Yahweh is the one God who creates and rules all. Heaven completely triumphs over Earth. In the second version of the ten commandments, Israelites are specifically commanded to "cut down their Asherim." [17] In actual fact, however, Asherah did not vanish at all.

We have known for sometime about the Jewish community on the isle of Elephantine in the Nile River that worshipped both male and female deities., but new examples continue to be found. In *The Old Testament in Archaeology and History*[18] there is a fascinating account of artifacts from Kuntilet Ajrud in the Sinai Peninsula and Khirbet el-Qom east of Hebron in which Yahweh and Asherah seem on good terms. In fact, Yahweh even refers to Asherah as "his."

Sometimes Yahweh and Asherah seem very close. Her image and a bronze serpent[19] were even to be found within the temple, probably next to the Ark of the Covenant.[20] At other times, however, her cult stood opposed to the official cult. Although there was much criticism and even persecution, however, the cult of Asherah persevered. Perhaps it is time to ask with some seriousness what it was that Asherah offered which attracted so many away from Yahweh? What is the wisdom of the serpent?

To answer that question, let us begin by looking at the Goddess' sometime adversary. Yahweh is of the heavens, heavenly, surrounded by the hosts of heaven. He rules over the world but his true throne is located in the realm above. When he appears, he descends from that higher realm. In other words, like all the celestial beings he transcends the earth and stands in judgment over it. As the writer of Ecclesiastes puts it, "God is in heaven and you upon earth." [21] To use a metaphorical ratio, God is to the world as the immortal soul is to the mortal body. Although the Hebrew Scriptures are not extreme in this regard, this metaphor, when followed out, leads eventually to a sense that the heavenly soul is everything and that the body is the enemy which must be controlled or escaped. The end of radical transcendence and disassociation is gnostic flight.

It is the New Testament that takes the Hebrew metaphors to their inevitable conclusion. Jesus comes from above, the offspring of the Holy Spirit, and in the end he returns to heaven. And he calls his followers to renounce this world---family, possessions, even life---in order to enter the kingdom of heaven.[22] He teaches his disciples to pray to the Father who is in heaven, whose will must be obeyed, whose compassion is shown by forgiving the debts owed to him. It is not surprising that many of his early followers understood Jesus as teaching the denial of the body and the supreme importance of the soul.

We know much less about Asherah, because her worship was officially repressed and with her worship whatever teaching she had to offer. Our picture, therefore, must be conjectural, based not only upon specific references to her but upon our knowledge of goddesses in general.

What we can be sure is that Asherah is a wholly different sort of deity from Yahweh. Though connected to the Moon as Yahweh is to the Sun and sometimes identified with the morning star,[23] she is of the earth, earthly. She affirms the body and its desires; her symbol is the tree of life, an organic, growing cosmic reality. Like Yahweh she too can punish and destroy---the serpent who intimates immortality also threatens a venomous bite---but both her immortality and her mortality are of this world. To find immortality in her is to be absorbed in her perennial cycles, to know yourself as one with her body. Spring is a metaphor for Yahweh; it is her reality.

To worship the goddess is to participate in those cycles of the seasons that constitute the rhythm of life. For Yahweh the seasons are but occasions to remember historical (or perhaps pseudo-historical) events in which he is said to have acted and revealed himself. For the Goddess spring is spring, a time of renewed warmth, fecundity, birth. If Yahweh represents civilization---the tribe, history, the forefathers---Asherah is nature in both its creative and destructive modes. In her is life and death. Yahweh is particular and unique; Asherah is universal and non-discriminating.

Yahweh's salvation is historical and elective. The exodus from Egypt only happens once, to one group of people. Great emphasis then is put upon remembering with gratitude what happened in the past. Asherah also provides salvation, but it is cyclical and available to all. To live in harmony with her rhythms is to find peace. Death is not her enemy but simply an aspect of her rhythm. Moreover, her *salus* (health) is not metaphorical and spiritual but real and practical. Paracelsus in the 16th Century expressed his faith that Natura contains within her a cure for every human illness.[24] It simply is up to the physician to find it. Her secrets, he saw, are not historical but botanical.

The wisdom of Asherah's serpent is medicinal, healing wisdom. That is why her serpents coil themselves around the caduceus, the physician's symbol. Her mysteries are the mysteries of herbs and poultices, of recipes and draughts. Jesus cures "from above," through the spirit, by faith. For him, it would seem, disease is directly connected to disobedience and lack of faith. For Asherah, harmony with her rhythms is also healthful, but she offers the leaves of a particular tree to ease persistent headaches, the bark of a special shrub that grows high in the mountains to cure a skin disease.

Many of the mysteries of the earth, of course, are dangerous. There are poisons as well as healing draughts, though even the poisons may have some healing use if their secrets are known. The

Goddess hedges in her mysteries with ritual sanctity and orally transmitted lore. Each of her gifts must be used with specially prescribed care.

This is particularly true for those psychotropic substances---soma, peyote, fly agaric, jimson weed, tobacco, the water of life (whiskey) *et al*---which can devour and kill but which, if imbibed with appropriate ritual, can also be revelatory. The Huichol of Mexico, who go to the land of the Mothers to hunt and collect peyote, do so with specially prescribed rituals and with a leader who knows the secrets of that land.[25] Therefore, the result is not just a psychedelic high but a deeply transforming religious experience. Through peyote, the Mother allows the pilgrims "to see their own lives."

Along with plants and herbs, the Goddess also produces metals and other minerals from her telluric "womb." [26] The miner and the smith know her mysteries that must be handled with ritual care. Forging in the ancient world was a sacred process, not just a secular job, for the mysteries of ores and metals belonged to the Goddess. This may be the reason why the Philistines mastered the art of iron work before the Israelites and why the latter had to go to their goddess-worshipping neighbors for the smithing of iron implements.[27]

Perhaps most important, the Goddess is revealed in *eros*, in that most powerful of earthly urges. For heavenly Gods and transcendent philosophies, *eros* frequently appears as the great enemy. We must be rid of desire: Buddhism, Upanishadic Hinduism, and many forms of Christianity agree with that. *Eros* leads us into illusion, breaks up the patriarchal family, pollutes the mind.

To the Goddess, however, *eros* is not the enemy but her child, her driving power. The earth continues to restore and replenish itself through *eros*. *Eros* must be ritualized and controlled, the way psychedelic drugs are, but it is finally the gift of the Goddess and must be revered as such. Most Biblical scholars love to speak of the Goddess' so-called "fertility cult" as the reason for prophetic denunciation and there may be some truth in that. Certainly, representatives of the cult of Yahweh repeatedly attacked what they saw as the erotic dimension of Goddess worship. Sacred prostitution by both sexes and seasonal orgiastic celebrations were roundly excoriated.

Before we join our voices with the prophets in condemning such excesses, however, we should at least note that the Goddess and her followers treated the rites of *eros* as a sacred mystery rather than as a secular vice and we must ask whether her seasonal orgies were really worse than our perpetual, modern obscenities. The Goddess regards us all as creatures of the earth who are born out of *eros* and live through *eros*. *Eros* is her gift to us. When we forget that, *eros* becomes mere pornography and sleaze or worse, violence and abuse. The more the heavenly (and political) powers seek to repress earthly *eros*, the more *eros* takes bitter and degrading revenge.

Until the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BCE, which the prophets attributed to Israel's unfaithfulness (i.e. whoring after other gods), Israel had endured an uneasy relationship between the cults of Yahweh and Asherah. The latter was frequently condemned but continued as an alternative tradition, in some ways keeping Israel sane. One of the joys of the Bible is that despite its formal "heavenly" ideology it remains an earthy, very creaturely book. When Israel returned from exile, however, and attempted to live a righteous life quite apart from Asherah a rather rigid and unattractive religiosity began to prevail. Judaism became a religion of the heavenly law, imposed by the King of Kings. Piety

became defined as subservience to a set of rules which needed no rationale or justification but which forever seemed to multiply.

Jesus recognized the repressiveness and hypocrisy of this religious tradition, but in fact developed the heavenly aspect of Biblical religiosity even further. Now not only adulterous acts but lustful thoughts were considered sinful.[28] Now followers were called to be perfect as their father in heaven is perfect.[29] If Jesus himself did not totally abandon the significance of this earth, many of his followers, particularly the gnostics, did. The so-called orthodox kept a modicum of sanity by either overlooking what Jesus, in fact, taught or by reinterpreting what he said in a more this-worldly way. Few, however, listened to the wisdom of the serpent. What the serpent said was of the Devil. The Church became the ark that saved men by ferrying them out of this world to heaven.

Feminine, Goddess-like images were preserved, but generally lost much earthly connection. The Virgin Mary, Jesus' link with this earth, was bodily transported into heaven, totally alienated from eros and the secrets of the earth. The same is true of many other goddesses who were converted into pious saints and who generally lost their most erotic connections. There were, however, exceptions to this rule, for goddesses like Brigit preserved something of their earthly and erotic roles long after they were converted to sainthood. They were, however, regularly attacked as remnants of paganism and were dismissed entirely by the Protestant Reformation.

One of the few intellectual movements to preserve something of the traditions of the earth within Christendom was the Hermetic movement supposedly inspired by the writings of an unknown author or authors known collectively as Hermes Trismegistus[30] but, in fact, dependent upon Daoist forms of alchemy imported from China. Although not overtly erotic, the Hermetic tradition preserved the notion that the secrets of spiritual transformation are to be found here, in this earth, in the metals and chemicals with which the smiths and metallurgists work. Couched in the most secret language, the Hermetic writings affirm that there is a decided and mysterious synchronicity between what happens in the material world and what happens in the inner self. *The Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz*[31] combines this theme with definite but esoteric erotic ideas. Everything points ultimately to the reconciliation of opposites, to the Great Marriage of the cosmic King and Queen.

Hermeticists are often lumped together with Gnostics because, I suppose, both movements are esoteric. In fact, however, Hermeticists are actually the obverse of the Gnostics. Gnostics seek to flee this world of foolishness and illusion to return to the soul's true home. Hermeticists seek a union of opposites---the King and the Queen---to produce harmony once more in this world, in the human self and in society. To do this they employ the secret pharmacopeial and metallurgical wisdom of the serpent. This Western movement finds parallels and clear inspiration in Daoist alchemy in China as well possible influence from Tantricism in India. The latter is, of course, the most obvious, most successful attempt to reintegrate the Goddess into a patriarchal society and to preserve her wisdom.

Modern science, though it learned much from the Hermetic alchemists, uses nature in a very different way. Gone are the secret and sacred rituals of Hermeticism that point toward psychic and social reintegration. The world under the influence of Protestant Christianity became desacralized; science, secular; the earth, threatened with ecological disaster. Scientific discovery lost any secret, mystical dimension. Science simply exploits the world for the so-called benefit of humanity. The

mysteries of the earth are dissolved and forgotten. Whatever remnants there were of the Goddess in Hermeticism have long since vanished though the reconstitution of the Druids in the 18th Century and much Romantic poetry in the 19th Century have attempted to preserve the love of nature. One thinks, for instance of Bryant's famous poem, *Thanatopsis* and his attempt to reunite with the natural world. On the whole, however, for most people Nature today may still be called Mother, but that is about all that is left of her wisdom.

Despite the general decline of Christianity in the West, the whole "heavenly ideology" remains basic to our worldview. Mind transcends body; reason transcends superstition. Although there may be some truth in this viewpoint, it is because of our transcendent ideology that we persist in our wars against the earth. Most particularly I think of our war on drugs, on pornography and on violence. What we fail to see about these losing causes is that because we have forsaken the wisdom of the serpent and regarded the holiness of the Goddess with contempt, we have lost control of the erotic, the psychotropic, and the violent. We have rejected her ritual sacrifices only to become addicted to violence and blood on the screen and in the streets.

The wisdom of the serpent offers holy gifts from the Goddess that must not be scorned. They are her mysteries and should be treated with the utmost respect and ritual care. Suppression is not the answer, for as we have discovered, it never works. When we forget that the gifts are from Asherah and simply use them for our own pleasure, when all ritual control is abandoned, then Asherah takes her revenge. *Eros* becomes porn; the revelation of the Goddess becomes drugs; progress becomes pollution; sacrifice becomes bloody violence. The earth herself is simply raped. These scourges, as we all know, threaten to destroy our society.

One may suspect that Israel ultimately rejected Asherah not so much because of her fertility rituals or even because of Israel's monotheism, but because she did not serve to support the tribal particularism of Israel. Yahweh, though from heaven, did. He was identified as the God of the tribe, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. He both fought for Israel and punished her. He entered into a marriage covenant with her on Mt. Sinai. Asherah could never do that, for Nature is for all people everywhere. She has sacred places---wells, rivers, mountains, caves---but no chosen people, no elect. Although she has many names and much particular lore, she has been worshipped around the world in curiously similar ways.

Could she be worshipped again, seriously, in Western culture? Could post-modern people turn from their wars of repression and their quest to justify their own nationalistic particularism to consider with awe and reverence the wisdom of the serpent? In truth, we have never really stopped paying homage to her. Officially, we are a monotheistic society, "under God," espousing the highest ideals, but, in fact, her earthly powers---eros, violence, psychedelics --- continue to haunt us. The question is whether we can reintegrate her rituals and her reverence into our social and religious life in order to control the forces to which we are addicted.

There are many powers which stand against her: The Christian and Jewish religions, which have always officially denied her; science, which doubtless would regard any recognition of her as sheer superstition; industry, which considers too great a concern for nature a detriment to its own ends; national self-interest that fears her universality. Because of these forces, there seems little chance that we will admit that Josiah's reform, that removed Asherah from the temple and laid waste her holy places, was a terrible mistake. Until we end the demonization of Asherah, however, the

consequences seem obvious and frightening. Quite simply, she will remain what we make her---a demoness--- and our society will continue to be plagued by pornography, violence, environmental pillaging, and drugs.

Perhaps the Great Marriage of the King and the Queen---the reintegration of the masculine and the feminine on both a human and divine level--- is, after all, the greatest hope we can have. Adam, created in the image of God, was made male and female together. Is it not time to acknowledge not only the equality of male and female in humanity but to recognize and listen to the feminine side of the Godhead? Beyond the great antithesis there is a synthesis. But will the wisdom of the serpent be heard? Perhaps, just perhaps, this is what the Age of Aquarius will be about.

Notes

[1] The Hebrew word adam can be translated as simply "human." Adam, as originally created contained within him both male and female. Therefore, it is appropriate to speak of the man and the woman (*ish* and *ishshah*), but not Adam and Eve, in the garden. The male only claims to be the whole of Adam and therefore calls his wife *Chawwah* (In Greek, Eve) after they have been driven out of the garden.

[2] Genesis 2-3.

[3] Romans 5:12ff.

[4] See St. Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo?*

[5] Gen. 3:22.

[6] I Chronicles 21:1 and Zechariah 3:1-2.

[7] See Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, Trans. Rosemary Sheed (New York: World Publishing Co., 1966), pp.164-174. See also: Indra Sinha, *The Book of the Great Tantra*, Rochester, Vermont: Destiny Books, 1993), pp.45,56.

[8] Usually Asherah was represented by a pole. Archaeologists have discovered a pre-Mosaic casting mold that pictured the Goddess as a tree with knobby knees and body, rooted in the earth. She is also sometimes pictured as a woman offering her breasts to the world for sustenance.

[9] In many respects this victory is reminiscent of Apollo's victory over the Pythian (serpent) Goddess at Delphi in Greece.

[10] Gen. 2:24.

[11] Cherubs guarded the royal palace in Assyria.

[12] Gen. 4:11. The Goddess' rites were always typically bloody, demanding animal and sometimes human sacrifice.

[13] Gen. 6:1-2.

[14] Gen. 9:20-21.

[15] From very ancient times, Canaanite mythology distinguished several goddesses but also succeeded in utterly conflating them. We shall follow ancient precedent, then, in not separating carefully Asherah, Astarte, Anat, etc. See Raphael Patai, *The Hebrew Goddess* (Ktav Publishing House, 1967), pp. 13-100.

[16] Jer. 7:18.

[17] Exodus 34:13.

[18] Ebeling, Jennie, Edward Wright, Mark Elliott, Pail Flecher, *The Old Testament in Archaeology and History*, Baylor University Press, 2017, pp. 463-467.

[19] One suspects that the story about Moses' use of the bronze serpent (Num. 21:9) to heal Israelites was a bit of pious fiction designed to justify the existence of such a blatant symbol of the Goddess in the temple itself.

[20] II Kings 23:4ff.

[21] Ecc. 5:2.

[22] See particularly Luke 14:23-33.

[23] Her role as morning star, that is as Lucifer (light bearer), was eventually transferred in a demonic sense to the devil.

[24] *Paracelsus, Paracelsus: Selected Writings*, edited Jolande Jacobi (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 69,76.

[25] Peter T. Furst (ed.) *Flesh of the Gods; the ritual use of hallucinogens* (New York: Praeger Press, 1972). See also Peter Furst and Stacy B. Schaefer (eds.), *Huichol Indian History, Religion, and Survival* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996).

[26] Mircea Eliade, *The Forge and the Crucible*, trans. Stephen Corrin (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1962), *passim*.

[27] I Samuel 13:19-21.

[28] Matt. 5:28.

[29] Matt. 5:48.

[30] It is somewhat ironic that Hermes Trismegistus is generally considered the founder of the movement of alchemy since many of his essays are very Platonic and "heavenly." Nevertheless, there are passages that did inspire the later alchemical work.

[31] *The Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz*, Trans. Joscelyn Godwin; Introduction and Commentary by Adam McLean (Phanes Press, 1991).

Comments (2)

This is the essential thesis (or more accurately evidence for the thesis) presented by Merlin Stone's 1976 book *When God Was a Woman* which I was surprised NOT to see mentioned in the references.

But Prof Williams' article is more apropos to the present-day student as it interweaves fact with kumbaya new age philosophy (Age of Aquarius? Really?) that really has no place in what I THINK is supposed to be an academic article. Finally, the underlying implication of this presentation is very much in line with the unfortunately popular notion on college campuses today that history is essentially a class war between women and the patriarchy.

#1 - Jonathan Wayne - 06/02/2018 - 15:35

May I suggest a somewhat different approach? Might we not take the subtle serpent, who is wrong even when he's right, as a representative of Greek style philosophy, and God, who is right even when he's wrong, as the rightful object of the kind of faith beyond knowledge later to be celebrated by Paul? I know that this implies a rather late date for the final version of Genesis, but maybe not impossibly late considering that it may not have taken the conquests of Alexander to make Greek style philosophy known in the Middle East and considering that the principal hero of Genesis, Abraham, is a benevolent Iraqi who puts everything right in Palestine just like the Returning Exiles of the Persian period?

Mind you, I accept that within all the elaborate symbolism of the Eden story we see that the title Mother of All Living is, whatever has gone wrong, deeply honourable and that a royal bride, intended to be a mother of the most representative family, inherits something of this honour. Hence we understand the deep need for Meghans and Harrys. Greek style philosophy may be slow to understand this.

The Gospel of the Twelve Apostles

The *Gospel of the Twelve Apostles* is a Western Syriac apocryphon that dates to the mid-eighth century CE. The work claims to be originally composed in Hebrew and later translated into Greek, where it then made its way to Syriac. Although writers of the fifth century mention a "Gospel of the Twelve" as a second-century work (i.e., Origen and Epiphanius), they either make reference only to the title or provide content that differs from the one at hand. In addition, no earlier source that is extant confirms their claims. Furthermore, the environmental factors of the mid-eighth century Middle East (i.e., the Islamic Conquest) seem to correspond well with the context of *Gos. Twelve*.

The text begins with a narrative on the nativity, ministerial activity, and resurrection of Jesus. The text also provides an account of Jesus instructing his apostles to scatter across the "four quarters" to baptize and evangelize peoples and nations for the "New Kingdom." Thus, each evangelist is assigned a region and miraculously, without training, embrace the ability to speak a foreign tongue that is practised in his assigned area. Before the Twelve's mission takes launch, the apostles gather and pray in a house to ask God to reveal to them the "secret mysteries" concerning the end times. Their prayers are answered, and God instructs the apostles to go to the mountain where Moses and Elijah appeared to them in the past (i.e., the location of the Transfiguration, Mark 9:2–8 par.). Forthwith, these instructions are followed and for seven days the apostles journey until finally, they arrive to receive the divine mysteries. Three of the twelve apostles receive the apocalyptic revelations: Peter, James, and John.

Peter declares that the archangel Michael came to him and gave him a vision in which he saw church leaders "divide out Lord" (perhaps an allusion to Nestorianism), thus displeasing God, who in turn hands them over to oppressive peoples that persecute them (either Romans, Persians, or Moslems). This process continues until the churches unite and depart from their wicked ways and bring back the orthodox teachings to their flocks. The angel then approaches James and James tells the others that he sees the destruction of Jerusalem (perhaps under Hadrian). The people experience waves of oppression and the city is left with only weeping inhabitants. In due time, a ruler rises to power (likely Licinius) and reorganizes the people and leads them into war but dies in battle. His successor (Constantine) constructs the third temple and allows the faithful to worship God within it once more. The final successor "burdens the chief men with many ills," which would indicate that this ruler should be identified with Julian, yet this same ruler is said to bring peace and prosperity to the land and the author declares that he will save those who call on the name of Jesus.

The angel then approaches John and informs him that he has been exclusively chosen to view the greatest revelation. John's vision starts with rulers of the "North" gaining power, led by a man who bears a marvellous sign (again, likely Constantine). He is succeeded by kings of the Romans who anger God by their constant idol-worship and turpitude. As punishment, God raises up the Persians who expel Rome. One of the Persian rulers (Chosroes the Great), a "lover of money," is killed by his son and then the Persians are succeeded by the Medes. The following events are interpreted by John as the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy. The kings of the "South" rise to power (i.e., Arabia and Mohammad) and do so with severe burden with taxation, enslavement, etc. to the world. In addition, the rulers hate the name of Jesus and do even more iniquities to the Christians. Moreover, God soon puts an end to this kingdom by dividing the rulers into "two parties" (i.e., the Abbassid and Omiyyad dynasties) who war against each other until they are severely weakened. At the same time, the kings of the "North" rise and unite the world and all those oppressed by the kings of the "South" and defeat them. The "South" then faces numerous plagues and are fated to never hold a standing army nor engage in battle again. The conclusion of the text is damaged but it is clear that John's vision comes to a close and a voice commands John to share his vision with his companions.

Named historical figures and characters: Abraham (patriarch), Adam (patriarch), Alexander (the Great), Andrew (apostle), Asher (patriarch), Bartholomew (apostle), Benjamin (patriarch), Daniel (prophet), David (king), Elijah (prophet), Gabriel (angel), Gad (patriarch), Herod (the Great), Holy Spirit, Ishmael, Issachar (patriarch), James (son of Alphaeus), James (son of Zebedee), John (son of Zebedee), Jesus Christ, Joseph (of Nazareth), Joseph (patriarch), Judah (patriarch), Judas Iscariot, Levi (patriarch), Mary (Virgin), Matthaïas (apostle), Matthew (apostle), Michael (angel), Moses (patriarch), Naphtali (patriarch), Peter (apostle), Philip (apostle), Reuben (patriarch), Satan, Sibyl, Simeon (patriarch), Simon (the Canaanite/Zealot), Thaddaeus (apostle), Thomas (apostle), Tiberius (emperor), Zebulon (patriarch).

Geographical locations: Africa, Bethlehem, Canaan, Diglath, Egypt, Israel, Jerusalem, Judah, Media, Mesopotamia, Nazareth, Persia, Rome, temple (Jerusalem).

The Apocalypse of the Seven Heavens (please see the attached Ebook)

The Acts of John the Baptist

18 Now John was hastening to Ephesus, moved thereto by a vision. Damonicus therefore, and Aristodemus his kinsman, and a certain very rich man Cleobius, and the wife of Marcellus, hardly prevailed to keep him for one day in Miletus, reposing themselves with him. And when very early in the morning they had set forth, and already about four miles of the journey were accomplished, a voice came from heaven in the hearing of all of us, saying: John, thou art about to give glory to thy Lord in Ephesus, whereof thou shalt know, thou and all the brethren that are with thee, and certain of them that are there, which shall believe by thy means. John therefore pondered, rejoicing in himself, what it should be that should befall (meet) him at Ephesus, and said: Lord, behold I go according to thy will: let that be done which thou desirest.

19 And as we drew near to the city, Lycomedes the praetor of the Ephesians, a man of large substance, met us, and falling at John's feet besought him, saying: Is thy name John? the God whom thou preachest hath sent thee to do good unto my wife, who hath been smitten with palsy now these seven days and lieth incurable. But glorify thou thy God by healing her, and have compassion on us. For as I was considering with myself what resolve to take in this matter, one stood by me and said: Lycomedes, cease from this thought which warreth against thee, for it is evil (hard): submit not thyself unto it. For I have compassion upon mine handmaid Cleopatra, and have sent from Miletus a man named John who shall raise her up and restore her to thee whole. Tarry not, therefore, thou servant of the God who hath manifested himself unto me, but hasten unto my wife who hath no more than breath. And straightway John went from the gate, with the brethren that were with him and Lycomedes, unto his house. But Cleobius said to his young men: Go ye to my kinsman Callippus and receive of him comfortable entertainment -for I am come hither with his son- that we may find all things decent.

20 Now when Lycomedes came with John into the house wherein his wife lay, he caught hold again of his feet and said: See, lord, the withering of the beauty, see the youth, see the renowned flower of my poor wife, whereat all Ephesus was wont to marvel: wretched me, I have suffered envy, I have been humbled, the eye of mine enemies hath smitten me: I have never wronged any, though I might have injured many, for I looked before to this very thing, and took care, lest I should see any evil or any such ill fortune as this. What profit, then, hath Cleopatra from my anxiety? what have I gained by being known for a pious man until this day? nay, I suffer more than the impious, in that I see thee, Cleopatra, lying in such plight. The sun in his course shall no more see me conversing with thee: I will go before thee, Cleopatra, and rid myself of life: I will not spare mine own safety though it be yet young. I will defend myself before Justice, that I have rightly deserted, for I may indict her as judging unrighteously. I will be avenged on her when I come before her as a ghost [bereft] of life. I will say to her: Thou didst force me to leave the light when thou didst rob me of Cleopatra: thou didst cause me to become a corpse when thou sentest me this ill fortune: thou didst compel me to insult Providence, by cutting off my joy in life (my confidence).

21 And with yet more words Lycomedes addressing Cleopatra came near to the bed and cried aloud and lamented: but John pulled him away, and said: Cease from these lamentations and from thine unfitting words: thou must not disobey him that (?) appeared unto thee: for know that thou shalt receive thy consort again. Stand, therefore, with us that have come hither on her account and pray to the God whom thou sawest manifesting himself unto thee in dreams. What, then, is it, Lycomedes? Awake, thou also, and open thy soul. Cast off the heavy sleep from thee: beseech the Lord, entreat him for thy wife, and he will raise her up. But he fell upon the floor and lamented, fainting. [It is evident from what follows that Lycomedes died: but the text does not say so; some words may have fallen out.]

John therefore said with tears: Alas for the fresh (new) betraying of my vision! for the new temptation that is prepared for me! for the new device of him that contriveth against me! the voice from heaven that was borne unto me in the way, hath it devised this for me? was it this that it foreshowed me should come to pass here, betraying me to this great multitude of the citizens because of Lycomedes? the man lieth without breath, and I know well that they will not suffer me to go out of the house alive. Why tarriest thou, Lord (or, what wilt thou do)? why hast thou shut off from us thy good promise? Do not, I beseech thee, Lord, do not give him cause to exult who rejoiceth in the suffering of others; give him not cause to dance who alway derideth us; but let thy holy name and thy mercy make haste. Raise up these two dead whose death is against me.

22 And even as John thus cried out, the city of the Ephesians ran together to the house of Lycomedes, hearing that he was dead. And John, beholding the great multitude that was come, said unto the Lord: Now is the time of refreshment and of confidence toward thee, O Christ; now is the time for us who are sick to have the help that is of thee, O physician who healest freely; keep thou mine entering in hither safe from derision. I beseech thee, Jesu, succour this great multitude that it may come to thee who art Lord of all things: behold the affliction, behold them that lie here. Do thou prepare, even from them that are assembled for that end, holy vessels for thy service, when they behold thy gift. For thyself hast said, O Christ, 'Ask, and it shall be given you'. We ask therefore of thee, O king, not gold, not silver, not substance, not possessions, nor aught of what is on earth and perisheth, but two souls, by whom thou shalt convert them that are here unto thy way, unto thy teaching, unto thy liberty (confidence), unto thy most excellent (or unfailing) promise: for when they perceive thy power in that those that have died are raised, they will be saved, some of them. Do thou thyself, therefore, give them hope in thee: and so go I unto Cleopatra and say: Arise in the name of Jesus Christ.

23 And he came to her and touched her face and said: Cleopatra, He saith, whom every ruler feareth, and every creature and every power, the abyss and all darkness, and unsmiling death, and the height of heaven, and the circles of hell [and the resurrection of the dead, and the sight of the blind], and the whole power of the prince of this world, and the pride of the ruler: Arise, and be not an occasion unto many that desire not to believe, or an affliction unto souls that are able to hope and to be saved. And Cleopatra straightway cried with a loud voice: I arise, master: save thou thine handmaid.

Now when she had arisen [who for incurable lain had] seven days, the city of the Ephesians was moved at the unlooked-for sight. And Cleopatra asked concerning her husband Lycomedes, but John said to her: Cleopatra, if thou keep thy soul unmoved and steadfast, thou shalt forthwith have

Lycomedes thine husband standing here beside thee, if at least thou be not disturbed nor moved at that which hath befallen, having believed on my God, who by my means shall grant him unto thee alive. Come therefore with me into thine other bedchamber, and thou shalt behold him, a dead corpse indeed, but raised again by the power of my God.

24 And Cleopatra going with John into her bedchamber, and seeing Lycomedes dead for her sake, had no power to speak (suffered in her voice), and ground her teeth and bit her tongue, and closed her eyes, raining down tears: and with calmness gave heed to the apostle. But John had compassion on Cleopatra when he saw that she neither raged nor was beside herself, and called upon the perfect and condescending mercy, saying: Lord Jesus Christ, thou seest the pressure of sorrow, thou seest the need; thou seest Cleopatra shrieking her soul out in silence, for she constraineth within her the frenzy that cannot be borne; and I know that for Lycomedes' sake she also will die upon his body. And she said quietly to John: That have I in mind, master, and nought else.

And the apostle went to the couch whereon Lycomedes lay, and taking Cleopatra's hand he said: Cleopatra, because of the multitude that is present, and thy kinsfolk that have come in, with strong crying, say thou to thine husband: Arise and glorify the name of God, for he giveth back the dead to the dead. And she went to her husband and said to him according as she was taught, and forthwith raised him up. And he, when he arose, fell on the floor and kissed John's feet, but he raised him, saying: O man, kiss not my feet but the feet of God by whose power ye are both arisen.

25 But Lycomedes said to John: I entreat and adjure thee by the God in whose name thou hast raised us, to abide with us, together with all them that are with thee. Likewise Cleopatra also caught his feet and said the same. And John said to them: For tomorrow I will be with you. And they said to him again: We shall have no hope in thy God, but shall have been raised to no purpose, if thou abide not with us. And Cleobius with Aristodemus and Damonius were touched in the soul and said to John: Let us abide with them, that they continue without offence towards the Lord. So he continued there with the brethren.

26 There came together therefore a gathering of a great multitude on John's account; and as he discoursed to them that were there, Lycomedes, who had a friend who was a skilful painter, went hastily to him and said to him: You see me in a great hurry to come to you: come quickly to my house and paint the man whom I show you without his knowing it. And the painter, giving some one the necessary implements and colours, said to Lycomedes: Show him to me, and for the rest have no anxiety. And Lycomedes pointed out John to the painter, and brought him near him, and shut him up in a room from which the apostle of Christ could be seen. And Lycomedes was with the blessed man, feasting on the faith and the knowledge of our God, and rejoiced yet more in the thought that he should possess him in a portrait.

27 The painter, then, on the first day made an outline of him and went away. And on the next he painted him in with his colours, and so delivered the portrait to Lycomedes to his great joy. And he took it and set it up in his own bedchamber and hung it with garlands: so that later John, when he perceived it, said to him: My beloved child, what is it that thou always doest when thou comest in from the bath into thy bedchamber alone? do not I pray with thee and the rest of the brethren? or is there something thou art hiding from us? And as he said this and talked jestingly with him, he went into the bedchamber, and saw the portrait of an old man crowned with garlands, and lamps and

altars set before it. And he called him and said: Lycomedes, what meanest thou by this matter of the portrait? can it be one of thy gods that is painted here? for I see that thou art still living in heathen fashion. And Lycomedes answered him: My only God is he who raised me up from death with my wife: but if, next to that God, it be right that the men who have benefited us should be called gods -it is thou, father, whom I have had painted in that portrait, whom I crown and love and reverence as having become my good guide.

28 And John who had never at any time seen his own face said to him: Thou mockest me, child: am I like that in form, [excelling] thy Lord? how canst thou persuade me that the portrait is like me? And Lycomedes brought him a mirror. And when he had seen himself in the mirror and looked earnestly at the portrait, he said: As the Lord Jesus Christ liveth, the portrait is like me: yet not like me, child, but like my fleshly image; for if this painter, who hath imitated this my face, desireth to draw me in a portrait, he will be at a loss, [needing more than] the colours that are now given to thee, and boards and plaster (?) and glue (?), and the position of my shape, and old age and youth and all things that are seen with the eye.

29 But do thou become for me a good painter, Lycomedes. Thou hast colours which he giveth thee through me, who painteth all of us for himself, even Jesus, who knoweth the shapes and appearances and postures and dispositions and types of our souls. And the colours wherewith I bid thee paint are these: faith in God, knowledge, godly fear, friendship, communion, meekness, kindness, brotherly love, purity, simplicity, tranquillity, fearlessness, grieflessness, sobriety, and the whole band of colours that painteth the likeness of thy soul, and even now raiseth up thy members that were cast down, and levelleth them that were lifted up, and tendeth thy bruises, and healeth thy wounds, and ordereth thine hair that was disarranged, and washeth thy face, and chasteneth thine eyes, and purgeth thy bowels, and emptieth thy belly, and cutteth off that which is beneath it; and in a word, when the whole company and mingling of such colours is come together, into thy soul, it shall present it to our Lord Jesus Christ undaunted, whole (unsmoothed), and firm of shape. But this that thou hast now done is childish and imperfect: thou hast drawn a dead likeness of the dead.

There need be no portion of text lost at this point: but possibly some few sentences have been omitted. The transition is abrupt and the new episode has not, as elsewhere, a title of its own.

30 And he commanded Verus (Berus), the brother that ministered to him, to gather the aged women that were in all Ephesus, and made ready, he and Cleopatra and Lycomedes, all things for the care of them. Verus, then, came to John, saying: Of the aged women that are here over threescore years old I have found four only sound in body, and of the rest some. (a word gone) and some palsied and others sick. And when he heard that, John kept silence for a long time, and rubbed his face and said: O the slackness (weakness) of them that dwell in Ephesus! O the state of dissolution, and the weakness toward God! O devil, that hast so long mocked the faithful in Ephesus! Jesus, who giveth me grace and the gift to have my confidence in him, saith to me in silence: Send after the old women that are sick and come (be) with them into the theatre, and through me heal them: for there are some of them that will come unto this spectacle whom by these healings I will convert and make them useful for some end.

31 Now when all the multitude was come together to Lycomedes, he dismissed them on John's behalf, saying: Tomorrow come ye to the theatre, as many as desire to see the power of God. And

the multitude, on the morrow, while it was yet night, came to the theatre: so that the proconsul also heard of it and hasted and took his seat with all the people. And a certain praetor, Andromeus, who was the first of the Ephesians at that time, put it about that John had promised things impossible and incredible: But if, said he, he is able to do any such thing as I hear, let him come into the public theatre, when it is open, naked, and holding nothing in his hands, neither let him name that magical name which I have heard him utter.

32 John therefore, having heard this and being moved by these words, commanded the aged women to be brought into the theatre: and when they were all brought into the midst, some of them upon beds and others lying in a deep sleep, and all the city had run together, and a great silence was made, John opened his mouth and began to say:

33 Ye men of Ephesus, learn first of all wherefore I am visiting in your city, or what is this great confidence which I have towards you, so that it may become manifest to this general assembly and to all of you (or, so that I manifest myself to). I have been sent, then, upon a mission which is not of man's ordering, and not upon any vain journey; neither am I a merchant that make bargains or exchanges; but Jesus Christ whom I preach, being compassionate and kind, desireth by my means to convert all of you who are held in unbelief and sold unto evil lusts, and to deliver you from error; and by his power will I confound even the unbelief of your praetor, by raising up them that lie before you, whom ye all behold, in what plight and in what sicknesses they are. And to do this (to confound Andronicus) is not possible for me if they perish: therefore shall they be healed.

34 But this first I have desired to sow in your ears, even that ye should take care for your souls -on which account I am come unto you- and not expect that this time will be for ever, for it is but a moment, and not lay up treasures upon the earth where all things do fade. Neither think that when ye have gotten children ye can rest upon them (?), and try not for their sakes to defraud and overreach. Neither, ye poor, be vexed if ye have not wherewith to minister unto pleasures; for men of substance when they are diseased call you happy. Neither, ye rich, rejoice that ye have much money, for by possessing these things ye provide for yourselves grief that ye cannot be rid of when ye lose them; and besides, while it is with you, ye are afraid lest some one attack you on account of it.

35 Thou also that art puffed up because of the shapeliness of thy body, and art of an high look, shalt see the end of the promise thereof in the grave; and thou that rejoicest in adultery, know that both law and nature avenge it upon thee, and before these, conscience; and thou, adulteress, that art an adversary of the law, knowest not whither thou shalt come in the end. And thou that sharest not with the needy, but hast monies laid up, when thou departest out of this body and hast need of some mercy when thou burnest in fire, shalt have none to pity thee; and thou the wrathful and passionate, know that thy conversation is like the brute beasts; and thou, drunkard and quarreller, learn that thou lovest thy senses by being enslaved to a shameful and dirty desire.

36 Thou that rejoicest in gold and delightest thyself with ivory and jewels, when night falleth, canst thou behold what thou lovest? thou that art vanquished by soft raiment, and then leavest life, will those things profit thee in the place whither thou goest? And let the murderer know that the condign punishment is laid up for him twofold after his departure hence. Likewise also thou poisoner, sorcerer, robber, defrauder, sodomite, thief, and as many as are of that band, ye shall come at last, as your works do lead you, unto unquenchable fire, and utter darkness, and the pit of punishment,

and eternal threatenings. Wherefore, ye men of Ephesus, turn yourselves, knowing this also, that kings, rulers, tyrants, boasters, and they that have conquered in wars, stripped of all things when they depart hence, do suffer pain, lodged in eternal misery.

37 And having thus said, John by the power of God healed all the diseases.

This sentence must be an abridgement of a much longer narration. The manuscript indicates no break at this point: but we must suppose a not inconsiderable loss of text. For one thing, Andronicus, who is here an unbeliever, appears as a convert in the next few lines. Now he is, as we shall see later, the husband of an eminent believer, Drusiana; and his and her conversion will have been told at some length; and I do not doubt that among other things there was a discourse of John persuading them to live in continence.

37 (continued.) Now the brethren from Miletus said unto John: We have continued a long time at Ephesus; if it seem good to thee, let us go also to Smyrna; for we hear already that the mighty works of God have reached it also. And Andronicus said to them: Whosoever the teacher willeth, then let us go. But John said: Let us first go unto the temple of Artemis, for perchance there also, if we show ourselves, the servants of the Lord will be found.

38 After two days, then, was the birthday of the idol temple. John therefore, when all were clad in white, alone put on black raiment and went up into the temple. And they took him and essayed to kill him. But John said: Ye are mad to set upon me, a man that is the servant of the only God. And he gat him up upon an high pedestal and said unto them:

39 Ye run hazard, men of Ephesus, of being like in character to the sea: every river that floweth in and every spring that runneth down, and the rains, and waves that press upon each other, and torrents full of rocks are made salt together by the bitter telementt (MS. promise!) that is therein. So ye also remaining unchanged unto this day toward true godliness are become corrupted by your ancient rites of worship. How many wonders and healings of diseases have ye seen wrought through me? And yet are ye blinded in your hearts and cannot recover sight. What is it, then, O men of Ephesus? I have adventured now and come up even into this your idol temple. I will convict you of being most godless, and dead from the understanding of mankind. Behold, I stand here: ye all say that ye have a goddess, even Artemis: pray then unto her that I alone may die; or else I only, if ye are not able to do this, will call upon mine own god, and for your unbelief I will cause every one of you to die.

40 But they who had beforetime made trial of him and had seen dead men raised up, cried out: Slay us not so, we beseech thee, John. We know that thou canst do it. And John said to them: If then ye desire not to die, let that which ye worship be confounded, and wherefore it is confounded, that ye also may depart from your ancient error. For now is it time that either ye be converted by my God, or I myself die by your goddess; for I will pray in your presence and entreat my God that mercy be shown unto you.

41 And having so said he prayed thus: O God that art God above all that are called gods, that until this day hast been set at nought in the city of the Ephesians; that didst put into my mind to come into this place, whereof I never thought; that dost convict every manner of worship by turning men unto thee; at whose name every idol fleeth and every evil spirit and every unclean power; now also

by the flight of the evil spirit here at thy name, even of him that deceiveth this great multitude, show thou thy mercy in this place, for they have been made to err.

42 And as John spake these things, immediately the altar of Artemis was parted into many pieces, and all the things that were dedicated in the temple fell, and [MS. that which seemed good to him] was rent asunder, and likewise of the images of the gods more than seven. And the half of the temple fell down, so that the priest was slain at one blow by the falling of the (?roof, ? beam). The multitude of the Ephesians therefore cried out: One is the God of John, one is the God that hath pity on us, for thou only art God: now are we turned to thee, beholding thy marvellous works! have mercy on us, O God, according to thy will, and save us from our great error! And some of them, lying on their faces, made supplication, and some kneeled and besought, and some rent their clothes and wept, and others tried to escape.

43 But John spread forth his hands, and being uplifted in soul, said unto the Lord: Glory be to thee, my Jesus, the only God of truth, for that thou dost gain (receive) thy servants by divers devices. And having so said, he said to the people: Rise up from the floor, ye men of Ephesus, and pray to my God, and recognize the invisible power that cometh to manifestation, and the wonderful works which are wrought before your eyes. Artemis ought to have succoured herself: her servant ought to have been helped of her and not to have died. Where is the power of the evil spirit? where are her sacrifices? where her birthdays? where her festivals? where are the garlands? where is all that sorcery and the poisoning (witchcraft) that is sister thereto?

44 But the people rising up from off the floor went hastily and cast down the rest of the idol temple, crying: The God of John only do we know, and him hereafter do we worship, since he hath had mercy upon us! And as John came down from thence, much people took hold of him, saying: Help us, O John! Assist us that do perish in vain! Thou seest our purpose: thou seest the multitude following thee and hanging upon thee in hope toward thy God. We have seen the way wherein we went astray when we lost him: we have seen our gods that were set up in vain: we have seen the great and shameful derision that is come to them: but suffer us, we pray thee, to come unto thine house and to be succoured without hindrance. Receive us that are in bewilderment.

45 And John said to them: Men (of Ephesus), believe that for your sakes I have continued in Ephesus, and have put off my journey unto Smyrna and to the rest of the cities, that there also the servants of Christ may turn to him. But since I am not yet perfectly assured concerning you, I have continued praying to my God and beseeching him that I should then depart from Ephesus when I have confirmed you in the faith: and whereas I see that this is come to pass and yet more is being fulfilled, I will not leave you until I have weaned you like children from the nurse's milk, and have set you upon a firm rock.

46 John therefore continued with them, receiving them in the house of Andromeus. And one of them that were gathered laid down the dead body of the priest of Artemis before the door [of the temple], for he was his kinsman, and came in quickly with the rest, saying nothing of it. John, therefore, after the discourse to the brethren, and the prayer and the thanksgiving (eucharist) and the laying of hands upon every one of the congregation, said by the spirit: There is one here who moved by faith in God hath laid down the priest of Artemis before the gate and is come in, and in the yearning of his soul, taking care first for himself, hath thought thus in himself: It is better for me to take thought for the living than for my kinsman that is dead: for I know that if I turn to the Lord and

save mine own soul, John will not deny to raise up the dead also. And John arising from his place went to that into which that kinsman of the priest who had so thought was entered, and took him by the hand and said: Hadst thou this thought when thou camest unto me, my child? And he, taken with trembling and affright, said: Yes, lord, and cast himself at his feet. And John said: Our Lord is Jesus Christ, who will show his power in thy dead kinsman by raising him up.

47 And he made the young man rise, and took his hand and said: It is no great matter for a man that is master of great mysteries to continue wearying himself over small things: or what great thing is it to rid men of diseases of the body? And yet holding the young man by the hand he said: I say unto thee, child, go and raise the dead thyself, saying nothing but this only: John the servant of God saith to thee, Arise. And the young man went to his kinsman and said this only -and much people was with him- and entered in unto John, bringing him alive. And John, when he saw him that was raised, said: Now that thou art raised, thou dost not truly live, neither art partaker or heir of the true life: wilt thou belong unto him by whose name and power thou wast raised? And now believe, and thou shall live unto all ages. And he forthwith believed upon the Lord Jesus and thereafter clave unto John.

[Another manuscript (Q. Paris Gr. 14c8, of the eleventh century) has another form of this story. John destroys the temple of Artemis, and then 'we' go to Smyrna and all the idols are broken: Bucolus, Polycarp, and Andronicus are left to preside over the district. There were there two priests of Artemis, brothers, and one died. The raising is told much as in the older text, but more shortly.

'We' remained four years in the region, which was wholly converted, and then returned to Ephesus.]

48 Now on the next day John, having seen in a dream that he must walk three miles outside the gates, neglected it not, but rose up early and set out upon the way, together with the brethren.

And a certain countryman who was admonished by his father not to take to himself the wife of a fellow labourer of his who threatened to kill him -this young man would not endure the admonition of his father, but kicked him and left him without speech (sc. dead). And John, seeing what had befallen, said unto the Lord: Lord, was it on this account that thou didst bid me come out hither to-day?

49 But the young man, beholding the violence (sharpness) of death, and looking to be taken, drew out the sickle that was in his girdle and started to run to his own abode; and John met him and said: Stand still, thou most shameless devil, and tell me whither thou runnest bearing a sickle that thirsteth for blood. And the young man was troubled and cast the iron on the ground, and said to him: I have done a wretched and barbarous deed and I know it, and so I determined to do an evil yet worse and more cruel, even to die myself at once. For because my father was alway curbing me to sobriety, that I should live without adultery, and chastely, I could not endure him to reprove me, and I kicked him and slew him, and when I saw what was done, I was hasting to the woman for whose sake I became my father's murderer, with intent to kill her and her husband, and myself last of all: for I could not bear to be seen of the husband of the woman, and undergo the judgement of death.

50 And John said to him: That I may not by going away and leaving you in danger give place to him that desireth to laugh and sport with thee, come thou with me and show me thy father, where he lieth. And if I raise him up for thee, wilt thou hereafter abstain from the woman that is become a

snare to thee. And the young man said: If thou raisest up my father himself for me alive, and if I see him whole and continuing in life, I will hereafter abstain from her.

51 And while he was speaking, they came to the place where the old man lay dead, and many passers-by were standing near thereto. And John said to the youth: Thou wretched man, didst thou not spare even the old age of thy father? And he, weeping and tearing his hair, said that he repented thereof; and John the servant of the Lord said: Thou didst show me I was to set forth for this place, thou knewest that this would come to pass, from whom nothing can be hid of things done in life, that givest me power to work every cure and healing by thy will: now also give me this old man alive, for thou seest that his murderer is become his own judge: and spare him, thou only Lord, that spared not his father (because he) counselled him for the best.

52 And with these words he came near to the old man and said: My Lord will not be weak to spread out his kind pity and his condescending mercy even unto thee: rise up therefore and give glory to God for the work that is come to pass at this moment. And the old man said: I arise, Lord. And he rose and sat up and said: I was released from a terrible life and had to bear the insults of my son, dreadful and many, and his want of natural affection, and to what end hast thou called me back, O man of the living God? (And John answered him: If) thou art raised only for the same end, it were better for thee to die; but raise thyself unto better things. And he took him and led him into the city, preaching unto him the grace of God, so that before he entered the gate the old man believed.

53 But the young man, when he beheld the unlooked-for raising of his father, and the saving of himself, took a sickle and mutilated himself, and ran to the house wherein he had his adulteress, and reproached her, saying: For thy sake I became the murderer of my father and of you two and of myself: there thou hast that which is alike guilty of all. For on me God hath had mercy, that I should know his power.

54 And he came back and told John in presence of the brethren what he had done. But John said to him: He that put it into thine heart, young man, to kill thy father and become the adulterer of another man's wife, the same made thee think it a right deed to take away also the unruly members. But thou shouldest have done away, not with the place of sin, but the thought which through those members showed itself harmful: for it is not the instruments that are injurious, but the unseen springs by which every shameful emotion is stirred and cometh to light. Repent therefore, my child, of this fault, and having learnt the wiles of Satan thou shalt have God to help thee in all the necessities of thy soul. And the young man kept silence and attended, having repented of his former sins, that he should obtain pardon from the goodness of God: and he did not separate from John.

55 When, then, these things had been done by him in the city of the Ephesians, they of Smyrna sent unto him saying: We hear that the God whom thou preachest is not envious, and hath charged thee not to show partiality by abiding in one place. Since, then, thou art a preacher of such a God, come unto Smyrna and unto the other cities, that we may come to know thy God, and having known him may have our hope in him.

[Q has the above story also, and continues with an incident which is also quoted in a different form (and not as from these Acts) by John Cassian. Q has it thus:

Now one day as John was seated, a partridge flew by and came and played in the dust before him; and John looked on it and wondered. And a certain priest came, who was one of his hearers, and came to John and saw the partridge playing in the dust before him, and was offended in himself and said: Can such and so great a man take pleasure in a partridge playing in the dust? But John perceiving in the spirit the thought of him, said to him: It were better for thee also, my child, to look at a partridge playing in the dust and not to defile thyself with shameful and profane practices: for he who awaiteth the conversion and repentance of all men hath brought thee here on this account: for I have no need of a partridge playing in the dust. For the partridge is thine own soul.

Then the elder, hearing this and seeing that he was not bidden, but that the apostle of Christ had told him all that was in his heart, fell on his face on the earth and cried aloud, saying: Now know I that God dwelleth in thee, O blessed John! for he that tempteth thee tempteth him that cannot be tempted. And he entreated him to pray for him. And he instructed him and delivered him the rules (canons) and let him go to his house, glorifying God that is over all.

Cassian, Collation XXIV. 21, has it thus:

It is told that the most blessed Evangelist John, when he was gently stroking a partridge with his hands, suddenly saw one in the habit of a hunter coming to him. He wondered that a man of such repute and fame should demean himself to such small and humble amusements, and said: Art thou that John whose eminent and widespread fame hath enticed me also with great desire to know thee? Why then art thou taken up with such mean amusements? The blessed John said to him: What is that which thou carriest in thy hands? A bow, said he. And why, said he, dost thou not bear it about always stretched? He answered him: I must not, lest by constant bending the strength of its vigour be wrung and grow soft and perish, and when there is need that the arrows be shot with much strength at some beast, the strength being lost by excess of continual tension, a forcible blow cannot be dealt. Just so, said the blessed John, let not this little and brief relaxation of my mind offend thee, young man, for unless it doth sometimes ease and relax by some remission the force of its tension, it will grow slack through unbroken rigour and will not be able to obey the power of the Spirit.

The only common point of the two stories is that St. John amuses himself with a partridge, and a spectator thinks it unworthy of him. The two morals differ wholly. The amount of text lost here is of quite uncertain length. It must have told of the doings at Smyrna, and also, it appears, at Laodicca (see the title of the next section). One of the episodes must have been the conversion of a woman of evil life (see below, 'the harlot that was chaste ')-]

Our best manuscript prefixes a title to the next section:

From Laodicca to Ephesus the second time.

58 Now when some long time had passed, and none of the brethren had been at any time grieved by John, they were then grieved because he had said: Brethren, it is now time for me to go to Ephesus (for so have I agreed with them that dwell there) lest they become slack, now for a long time having no man to confirm them. But all of you must have your minds steadfast towards God, who never forsaketh us.

But when they heard this from him, the brethren lamented because they were to be parted from him. And John said: Even if I be parted from you, yet Christ is always with you: whom if ye love purely ye will have his fellowship without reproach, for if he be loved, he preventeth (anticipateth) them that love him.

59 And having so said, and bidden farewell to them, and left much money with the brethren for distribution, he went forth unto Ephesus, while all the brethren lamented and groaned. And there accompanied him, of Ephesus, both Andronicus and Drusiana and Lycomedes and Cleobius and their families. And there followed him Aristobula also, who had heard that her husband Tertullus had died on the way, and Aristippus with Xenophon, and the harlot that was chaste, and many others, whom he exhorted at all times to cleave to the Lord, and they would no more be parted from him.

60 Now on the first day we arrived at a deserted inn, and when we were at a loss for a bed for John, we saw a droll matter. There was one bedstead lying somewhere there without coverings, whereon we spread the cloaks which we were wearing, and we prayed him to lie down upon it and rest, while the rest of us all slept upon the floor. But he when he lay down was troubled by the bugs, and as they continued to become yet more troublesome to him, when it was now about the middle of the night, in the hearing of us all he said to them: I say unto you, O bugs, behave yourselves, one and all, and leave your abode for this night and remain quiet in one place, and keep your distance from the servants of God. And as we laughed, and went on talking for some time, John addressed himself to sleep; and we, talking low, gave him no disturbance (or, thanks to him we were not disturbed).

61 But when the day was now dawning I arose first, and with me Verus and Andronicus, and we saw at the door of the house which we had taken a great number of bugs standing, and while we wondered at the great sight of them, and all the brethren were roused up because of them, John continued sleeping. And when he was awaked we declared to him what we had seen. And he sat up on the bed and looked at them and said: Since ye have well behaved yourselves in hearkening to my rebuke, come unto your place. And when he had said this, and risen from the bed, the bugs running from the door hasted to the bed and climbed up by the legs thereof and disappeared into the joints. And John said again: This creature hearkened unto the voice of a man, and abode by itself and was quiet and trespassed not; but we which hear the voice and commandments of God disobey and are light-minded: and for how long?

62 After these things we came to Ephesus: and the brethren there, who had for a long time known that John was coming, ran together to the house of Andronicus (where also he came to lodge), handling his feet and laying his hands upon their own faces and kissing them (and many rejoiced even to touch his vesture, and were healed by touching the clothes of the holy apostle. [So the Latin, which has this section; the Greek has: so that they even touched his garments].)

63 And whereas there was great love and joy unsurpassed among the brethren, a certain one, a messenger of Satan, became enamoured of Drusiana, though he saw and knew that she was the wife of Andronicus. To whom many said: It is not possible for thee to obtain that woman, seeing that for a long time she has even separated herself from her husband for godliness' sake. Art thou only ignorant that Andronicus, not being aforesaid that which now he is, a God-fearing man, shut her up in a tomb, saying: Either I must have thee as the wife whom I had before, or thou shalt die. And she chose rather to die than to do that foulness. If, then, she would not consent, for godliness' sake, to

cohabit with her lord and husband, but even persuaded him to be of the same mind as herself, will she consent to thee desiring to be her seducer? depart from this madness which hath no rest in thee: give up this deed which thou canst not bring to accomplishment.

64 But his familiar friends saying these things to him did not convince him, but with shamelessness he courted her with messages; and when he learnt the insults and disgraces which she returned, he spent his life in melancholy (or better, she, when she learnt of this disgrace and insult at his hand, spent her life in heaviness). And after two days Drusiana took to her bed from heaviness, and was in a fever and said: Would that I had not now come home to my native place, I that have become an offence to a man ignorant of godliness! for if it were one who was filled with the word of God, he would not have gone to such a pitch of madness. But now (therefore) Lord, since I am become the occasion of a blow unto a soul devoid of knowledge, set me free from this chain and remove me unto thee quickly. And in the presence of John, who knew nothing at all of such a matter, Drusiana departed out of life not wholly happy, yea, even troubled because of the spiritual hurt of the man.

65 But Andronicus, grieved with a secret grief, mourned in his soul, and wept openly, so that John checked him often and said to him: Upon a better hope hath Drusiana removed out of this unrighteous life. And Andronicus answered him: Yea, I am persuaded of it, O John, and I doubt not at all in regard of trust in my God: but this very thing do I hold fast, that she departed out of life pure.

66 And when she was carried forth, John took hold on Andronicus, and now that he knew the cause, he mourned more than Andronicus. And he kept silence, considering the provocation of the adversary, and for a space sat still. Then, the brethren being gathered there to hear what word he would speak of her that was departed, he began to say:

67 When the pilot that voyageth, together with them that sail with him, and the ship herself, arriveth in a calm and stormless harbour, then let him say that he is safe. And the husbandman that hath committed the seed to the earth, and toiled much in the care and protection of it, let him then take rest from his labours, when he layeth up the seed with manifold increase in his barns. Let him that enterpriseth to run in the course, then exult when he beareth home the prize. Let him that inscribeth his name for the boxing, then boast himself when he receiveth the crowns: and so in succession is it with all contests and crafts, when they do not fail in the end, but show themselves to be like that which they promised (corrupt).

68 And thus also I think is it with the faith which each one of us practiseth, that it is then discerned whether it be indeed true, when it continueth like itself even until the end of life. For many obstacles fall into the way, and prepare disturbance for the minds of men: care, children, parents, glory, poverty, flattery, prime of life, beauty, conceit, lust, wealth, anger, uplifting, slackness, envy, jealousy, neglect, fear, insolence, love, deceit, money, pretence, and other such obstacles, as many as there are in this life: as also the pilot sailing a prosperous course is opposed by the onset of contrary winds and a great storm and mighty waves out of calm, and the husbandman by untimely winter and blight and creeping things rising out of the earth, and they that strive in the games 'just do not win', and they that exercise crafts are hindered by the divers difficulties of them.

69 But before all things it is needful that the believer should look before at his ending and understand it in what manner it will come upon him, whether it will be vigorous and sober and without any obstacle, or disturbed and clinging to the things that are here, and bound down by

desires. So is it right that a body should be praised as comely when it is wholly stripped, and a general as great when he hath accomplished every promise of the war, and a physician as excellent when he hath succeeded in every cure, and a soul as full of faith and worthy (or receptive) of God when it hath paid its promise in full: not that soul which began well and was dissolved into all the things of this life and fell away, nor that which is numb, having made an effort to attain to better things, and then is borne down to temporal things, nor that which hath longed after the things of time more than those of eternity, nor that which exchangeth [enduring for things] those that endure not, nor that which hath honoured the works of dishonour that deserve shame, nor that which taketh pledges of Satan, nor that which hath received the serpent into its own house, nor that which suffereth reproach for God's sake and then is [not] ashamed, nor that which with the mouth saith yea, but indeed approveth not itself: but that which hath prevailed not to be made weak by foul pleasure, not to be overcome by light-mindedness, not to be caught by the bait of love of money, not to be betrayed by vigour of body or wrath.

70 And as John was discoursing yet further unto the brethren that they should despise temporal things in respect of the eternal, he that was enamoured of Drusiana, being inflamed with an horrible lust and possession of the many-shaped Satan, bribed the steward of Andronicus who was a lover of money with a great sum: and he opened the tomb and gave him opportunity to wreak the forbidden thing upon the dead body. Not having succeeded with her when alive, he was still importunate after her death to her body, and said: If thou wouldst not have to do with me while thou livedst, I will outrage thy corpse now thou art dead. With this design, and having managed for himself the wicked act by means of the abominable steward, he rushed with him to the sepulchre; they opened the door and began to strip the grave-clothes from the corpse, saying: What art thou profited, poor Drusiana? couldst thou not have done this in life, which perchance would not have grieved thee, hadst thou done it willingly?

71 And as these men were speaking thus, and only the accustomed shift now remained on her body, a strange spectacle was seen, such as they deserve to suffer who do such deeds. A serpent appeared from some quarter and dealt the steward a single bite and slew him: but the young man it did not strike; but coiled about his feet, hissing terribly, and when he fell mounted on his body and sat upon him.

72 Now on the next day John came, accompanied by Andronicus and the brethren, to the sepulchre at dawn, it being now the third day from Drusiana's death, that we might break bread there. And first, when they set out, the keys were sought for and could not be found; but John said to Andronicus: It is quite right that they should be lost, for Drusiana is not in the sepulchre; nevertheless, let us go, that thou mayest not be neglectful, and the doors shall be opened of themselves, even as the Lord hath done for us many such things.

73 And when we were at the place, at the commandment of the master, the doors were opened, and we saw by the tomb of Drusiana a beautiful youth, smiling: and John, when he saw him, cried out and said: Art thou come before us hither too, beautiful one? and for what cause? And we heard a voice saying to him: For Drusiana's sake, whom thou art to raise up-for I was within a little of finding her [shamed] - and for his sake that lieth dead beside her tomb. And when the beautiful one had said this unto John he went up into the heavens in the sight of us all. And John, turning to the other side of the sepulchre, saw a young man-even Callimachus, one of the chief of the Ephesians-

and a huge serpent sleeping upon him, and the steward of Andronicus, Fortunatus by name, lying dead. And at the sight of the two he stood perplexed, saying to the brethren: What meaneth such a sight? or wherefore hath not the Lord declared unto me what was done here, he who hath never neglected me?

74 And Andronicus seeing those corpses, leapt up and went to Drusiana's tomb, and seeing her lying in her shift only, said to John: I understand what has happened, thou blessed servant of God, John. This Callimachus was enamoured of my sister; and because he never won her, though he often assayed it, he hath bribed this mine accursed steward with a great sum, perchance designing, as now we may see, to fulfil by his means the tragedy of his conspiracy, for indeed Callimachus avowed this to many, saying: If she will not consent to me when living, she shall be outraged when dead. And it may be, master, that the beautiful one knew it and suffered not her body to be insulted, and therefore have these died who made that attempt. And can it be that the voice that said unto thee, 'Raise up Drusiana', foreshowed this? because she departed out of this life in sorrow of mind. But I believe him that said that this is one of the men that have gone astray; for thou wast bidden to raise him up: for as to the other, I know that he is unworthy of salvation. But this one thing I beg of thee: raise up Callimachus first, and he will confess to us what is come about.

75 And John, looking upon the body, said to the venomous beast: Get thee away from him that is to be a servant of Jesus Christ; and stood up and prayed over him thus: O God whose name is glorified by us, as of right: O God who subduest every injurious force: O God whose will is accomplished, who alway hearest us: now also let thy gift be accomplished in this young man; and if there be any dispensation to be wrought through him, manifest it unto us when he is raised up. And straightway the young man rose up, and for a whole hour kept silence.

76 But when he came to his right senses, John asked of him about his entry into the sepulchre, what it meant, and learning from him that which Andronicus had told him, namely, that he was enamoured of Drusiana, John inquired of him again if he had fulfilled his foul intent, to insult a body full of holiness. And he answered him: How could I accomplish it when this fearful beast struck down Fortunatus at a blow in my sight: and rightly, since he encouraged my frenzy, when I was already cured of that unreasonable and horrible madness: but me it stopped with affright, and brought me to that plight in which ye saw me before I arose. And another thing yet more wondrous I will tell thee, which yet went nigh to slay and was within a little of making me a corpse. When my soul was stirred up with folly and the uncontrollable malady was troubling me, and I had now torn away the grave-clothes in which she was clad, and I had then come out of the grave and laid them as thou seest, I went again to my unholy work: and I saw a beautiful youth covering her with his mantle, and from his eyes sparks of light came forth unto her eyes; and he uttered words to me, saying: Callimachus, die that thou mayest live. Now who he was I knew not, O servant of God; but that now thou hast appeared here, I recognize that he was an angel of God, that I know well; and this I know of a truth that it is a true God that is proclaimed by thee, and of it I am persuaded. But I beseech thee, be not slack to deliver me from this calamity and this fearful crime, and to present me unto thy God as a man deceived with a shameful and foul deceit. Beseeching help therefore of thee, I take hold on thy feet. I would become one of them that hope in Christ, that the voice may prove true which said to me, 'Die that thou mayest live': and that voice hath also fulfilled its effect, for he is dead, that faithless, disorderly, godless one, and I have been raised by thee, I who will be faithful, God-fearing, knowing the truth, which I entreat thee may be shown me by thee.

77 And John, filled with great gladness and perceiving the whole spectacle of the salvation of man, said: What thy power is, Lord Jesu Christ, I know not, bewildered as I am at thy much compassion and boundless long-suffering. O what a greatness that came down into bondage! O unspeakable liberty brought into slavery by us! O incomprehensible glory that is come unto us! thou that hast kept the dead tabernacle safe from insult; that hast redeemed the man that stained himself with blood and chastened the soul of him that would defile the corruptible body; Father that hast had pity and compassion on the man that cared not for thee; We glorify thee, and praise and bless and thank thy great goodness and long-suffering, O holy Jesu, for thou only art God, and none else: whose is the might that cannot be conspired against, now and world without end. Amen.

78 And when he had said this John took Callimachus and saluted (kissed) him, saying: Glory be to our God, my child, who hath had mercy on thee, and made me worthy to glorify his power, and thee also by a good course to depart from that thine abominable madness and drunkenness, and hath called thee unto his own rest and unto renewing of life.

79 But Andronicus, beholding the dead Callimachus raised, besought John, with the brethren, to raise up Drusiana also, saying: O John, let Drusiana arise and spend happily that short space (of life) which she gave up through grief about Callimachus, when she thought she had become a stumbling block to him: and when the Lord will, he shall take her again to himself. And John without delay went unto her tomb and took her hand and said: Upon thee that art the only God do I call, the more than great, the unutterable, the incomprehensible: unto whom every power of principalities is subjected: unto whom all authority boweth: before whom all pride falleth down and keepeth silence: whom devils hearing of tremble: whom all creation perceiving keepeth its bounds. Let thy name be glorified by us, and raise up Drusiana, that Callimachus may yet more be confirmed unto thee who dispensest that which unto men is without a way and impossible, but to thee only possible, even salvation and resurrection: and that Drusiana may now come forth in peace, having about her not any the least hindrance -now that the young man is turned unto thee- in her course toward thee.

80 And after these words John said unto Drusiana: Drusiana, arise. And she arose and came out of the tomb; and when she saw herself in her shift only, she was perplexed at the thing, and learned the whole accurately from Andronicus, the while John lay upon his face, and Callimachus with voice and tears glorified God, and she also rejoiced, glorifying him in like manner.

81 And when she had clothed herself, she turned and saw Fortunatus lying, and said unto John: Father, let this man also rise, even if he did assay to become my betrayer. But Callimachus, when he heard her say that, said: Do not, I beseech thee, Drusiana, for the voice which I heard took no thought of him, but declared concerning thee only, and I saw and believed: for if he had been good, perchance God would have had mercy on him also and would have raised him by means of the blessed John: he knew therefore that the man was come to a bad end [Lat. he judged him worthy to die whom he did not declare worthy to rise again]. And John said to him: We have not learned, my child, to render evil for evil: for God, though we have done much ill and no good toward him, hath not given retribution unto us, but repentance, and though we were ignorant of his name he did not neglect us but had mercy on us, and when we blasphemed him, he did not punish but pitied us, and when we disbelieved him he bore us no grudge, and when we persecuted his brethren he did not recompense us evil but put into our minds repentance and abstinence from evil, and exhorted us to

come unto him, as he hath thee also, my son Callimachus, and not remembering thy former evil hath made thee his servant, waiting upon his mercy. Wherefore if thou allowest not me to raise up Fortunatus, it is for Drusiana so to do.

82 And she, delaying not, went with rejoicing of spirit and soul unto the body of Fortunatus and said: Jesu Christ, God of the ages, God of truth, that hast granted me to see wonders and signs, and given to me to become partaker of thy name; that didst breathe thyself into me with thy many-shaped countenance, and hadst mercy on me in many ways; that didst protect me by thy great goodness when I was oppressed by Andronicus that was of old my husband; that didst give me thy servant Andronicus to be my brother; that hast kept me thine handmaid pure unto this day; that didst raise me up by thy servant John, and when I was raised didst show me him that was made to stumble free from stumbling; that hast given me perfect rest in thee, and lightened me of the secret madness; whom I have loved and affectioned: I pray thee, O Christ, refuse not thy Drusiana that asketh thee to raise up Fortunatus, even though he assayed to become my betrayer.

83 And taking the hand of the dead man she said: Rise up, Fortunatus, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. And Fortunatus arose, and when he saw John in the sepulchre, and Andronicus, and Drusiana raised from the dead, and Callimachus a believer, and the rest of the brethren glorifying God, he said: O, to what have the powers of these clever men attained! I did not want to be raised, but would rather die, so as not to see them. And with these words he fled and went out of the sepulchre.

84 And John, when he saw the unchanged mind (soul) of Fortunatus, said: O nature that is not changed for the better! O fountain of the soul that abideth in foulness! O essence of corruption full of darkness! O death exulting in them that are thine! O fruitless tree full of fire! O tree that bearest coals for fruit! O matter that dwellest with the madness of matter (al. O wood of trees full of unwholesome shoots) and neighbour of unbelief! Thou hast proved who thou art, and thou art always convicted, with thy children. And thou knowest not how to praise the better things: for thou hast them not. Therefore, such as is thy way (?fruit), such also is thy root and thy nature. Be thou destroyed from among them that trust in the Lord: from their thoughts, from their mind, from their souls, from their bodies, from their acts) their life, their conversation, from their business, their occupations, their counsel, from the resurrection unto (or rest in) God, from their sweet savour wherein thou wilt [not] share, from their faith, their prayers, from the holy bath, from the eucharist, from the food of the flesh, from drink, from clothing, from love, from care, from abstinence, from righteousness: from all these, thou most unholy Satan, enemy of God, shall Jesus Christ our God and [the judge] of all that are like thee and have thy character, make thee to perish.

85 And having thus said, John prayed, and took bread and bare it into the sepulchre to break it; and said: We glorify thy name, which converteth us from error and ruthless deceit: we glorify thee who hast shown before our eyes that which we have seen: we bear witness to thy loving-kindness which appeareth in divers ways: we praise thy merciful name, O Lord (we thank thee), who hast convicted them that are convicted of thee: we give thanks to thee, O Lord Jesu Christ, that we are persuaded of thy [grace] which is unchanging: we give thanks to thee who hadst need of our nature that should be saved: we give thanks to thee that hast given us this sure [faith], for thou art [god] alone, both now and ever. We thy servants give thee thanks, O holy one, who are assembled with [good] intent and are gathered out of the world (or risen from death).

86 And having so prayed and given glory to God, he went out of the sepulchre after imparting unto all the brethren of the eucharist of the Lord. And when he was come unto Andronicus' house he said to the brethren: Brethren, a spirit within me hath divined that Fortunatus is about to die of blackness (poisoning of the blood) from the bite of the serpent; but let some one go quickly and learn if it is so indeed. And one of the young men ran and found him dead and the blackness spreading over him, and it had reached his heart: and came and told John that he had been dead three hours. And John said: Thou hast thy child, O devil.

'John therefore was with the brethren rejoicing in the Lord.' This sentence is in the best manuscript. In Bonnet's edition It introduces the last section of the Acts, which follows immediately in the manuscript. It may belong to either episode. The Latin has: And that day he spent joyfully with the brethren.

There cannot be much of a gap between this and the next section, which is perhaps the most interesting in the Acts.

The greater part of this episode is preserved only in one very corrupt fourteenth-century manuscript at Vienna. Two important passages (S3-5 (part) and S7-8 (part)) were read at the Second Nicene Council and are preserved in the Acts thereof: a few lines of the Hymn are also cited in Latin by Augustine (Ep. 237 (253) to Ceretius): he found it current separately among the Priscillianists. The whole discourse is the best popular exposition we have of the Docetic view of our Lord's person.

87 Those that were present inquired the cause, and were especially perplexed, because Drusiana had said: The Lord appeared unto me in the tomb in the likeness of John, and in that of a youth. Forasmuch, therefore, as they were perplexed and were, in a manner, not yet stablished in the faith, so as to endure it steadfastly, John said (or John bearing it patiently, said):

88 Men and brethren, ye have suffered nothing strange or incredible as concerning your perception of the [lord], inasmuch as we also, whom he chose for himself to be apostles, were tried in many ways: I, indeed, am neither able to set forth unto you nor to write the things which I both saw and heard: and now is it needful that I should fit them for your hearing; and according as each of you is able to contain it I will impart unto you those things whereof ye are able to become hearers, that ye may see the glory that is about him, which was and is, both now and for ever.

For when he had chosen Peter and Andrew, which were brethren, he cometh unto me and James my brother, saying: I have need of you, come unto me. And my brother hearing that, said: John, what would this child have that is upon the sea-shore and called us? And I said: What child? And he said to me again: That which beckoneth to us. And I answered: Because of our long watch we have kept at sea, thou seest not aright, my brother James; but seest thou not the man that standeth there, comely and fair and of a cheerful countenance? But he said to me: Him I see not, brother; but let us go forth and we shall see what he would have.

89 And so when we had brought the ship to land, we saw him also helping along with us to settle the ship: and when we departed from that place, being minded to follow him, again he was seen of me as having rather bald, but the beard thick and flowing, but of James as a youth whose beard was newly come. We were therefore perplexed, both of us, as to what that which we had seen should mean. And after that, as we followed him, both of us were by little and little [yet more] perplexed as

we considered the matter. Yet unto me there then appeared this yet more wonderful thing: for I would try to see him privily, and I never at any time saw his eyes closing (winking), but only open. And oft-times he would appear to me as a small man and uncomely, and then against as one reaching unto heaven. Also there was in him another marvel: when I sat at meat he would take me upon his own breast; and sometimes his breast was felt of me to be smooth and tender, and sometimes hard like unto stones, so that I was perplexed in myself and said: Wherefore is this so unto me? And as I considered this, he . .

90 And at another time he taketh with him me and James and Peter unto the mountain where he was wont to pray, and we saw in him a light such as it is not possible for a man that useth corruptible (mortal) speech to describe what it was like. Again in like manner he bringeth us three up into the mountain, saying: Come ye with me. And we went again: and we saw him at a distance praying. I, therefore, because he loved me, drew nigh unto him softly, as though he could not see me, and stood looking upon his hinder parts: and I saw that he was not in any wise clad with garments, but was seen of us naked, and not in any wise as a man, and that his feet were whiter than any snow, so that the earth there was lighted up by his feet, and that his head touched the heaven: so that I was afraid and cried out, and he, turning about, appeared as a man of small stature, and caught hold on my beard and pulled it and said to me: John, be not faithless but believing, and not curious. And I said unto him: But what have I done, Lord? And I say unto you, brethren, I suffered so great pain in that place where he took hold on my beard for thirty days, that I said to him: Lord, if thy twitch when thou wast in sport hath given me so great pain, what were it if thou hadst given me a buffet? And he said unto me: Let it be thine henceforth not to tempt him that cannot be tempted.

91 But Peter and James were wroth because I spake with the Lord, and beckoned unto me that I should come unto them and leave the Lord alone. And I went, and they both said unto me: He (the old man) that was speaking with the Lord upon the top of the mount, who was he? for we heard both of them speaking. And I, having in mind his great grace, and his unity which hath many faces, and his wisdom which without ceasing looketh upon us, said: That shall ye learn if ye inquire of him.

92 Again, once when all we his disciples were at Gennesaret sleeping in one house, I alone having wrapped myself in my mantle, watched (or watched from beneath my mantle) what he should do: and first I heard him say: John, go thou to sleep. And I thereon feigning to sleep saw another like unto him [sleeping], whom also I heard say unto my Lord: Jesus, they whom thou hast chosen believe not yet on thee (or do they not yet, Cc.?). And my Lord said unto him: Thou sayest well: for they are men.

93 Another glory also will I tell you, brethren: Sometimes when I would lay hold on him, I met with a material and solid body, and at other times, again, when I felt him, the substance was immaterial and as if it existed not at all. And if at any time he were bidden by some one of the Pharisees and went to the bidding, we went with him, and there was set before each one of us a loaf by them that had bidden us, and with us he also received one; and his own he would bless and part it among us: and of that little every one was filled, and our own loaves were saved whole, so that they which bade him were amazed. And oftentimes when I walked with him, I desired to see the print of his foot, whether it appeared on the earth; for I saw him as it were lifting himself up from the earth: and I never saw it. And these things I speak unto you, brethren, for the encouragement of your faith

toward him; for we must at the present keep silence concerning his mighty and wonderful works, inasmuch as they are unspeakable and, it may be, cannot at all be either uttered or heard.

94 Now before he was taken by the lawless Jews, who also were governed by (had their law from) the lawless serpent, he gathered all of us together and said: Before I am delivered up unto them let us sing an hymn to the Father, and so go forth to that which lieth before us. He bade us therefore make as it were a ring, holding one another's hands, and himself standing in the midst he said: Answer Amen unto me. He began, then, to sing an hymn and to say:

Glory be to thee, Father.

And we, going about in a ring, answered him: Amen.

Glory be to thee, Word: Glory be to thee, Grace. Amen.

Glory be to thee, Spirit: Glory be to thee, Holy One:

Glory be to thy glory. Amen.

We praise thee, O Father; we give thanks to thee, O Light, wherein darkness dwelleth not. Amen.

95 Now whereas (or wherefore) we give thanks, I say:

I would be saved, and I would save. Amen.

I would be loosed, and I would loose. Amen.

I would be wounded, and I would wound. Amen.

I would be born, and I would bear. Amen.

I would eat, and I would be eaten. Amen.

I would hear, and I would be heard. Amen.

I would be thought, being wholly thought. Amen.

I would be washed, and I would wash. Amen.

Grace danceth. I would pipe; dance ye all. Amen.

I would mourn: lament ye all. Amen.

The number Eight (lit. one ogdoad) singeth praise with us. Amen.

The number Twelve danceth on high. Amen.

The Whole on high hath part in our dancing. Amen.

Whoso danceth not, knoweth not what cometh to pass. Amen.

I would flee, and I would stay. Amen.

I would adorn, and I would be adorned. Amen.

I would be united, and I would unite. Amen.

A house I have not, and I have houses. Amen.

A place I have not, and I have places. Amen.

A temple I have not, and I have temples. Amen.

A lamp am I to thee that beholdest me. Amen.

A mirror am I to thee that perceivest me. Amen.

A door am I to thee that knockest at me. Amen.

A way am I to thee a wayfarer. [amen].

96 Now answer thou (or as thou respondest) unto my dancing. Behold thyself in me who speak, and seeing what I do, keep silence about my mysteries.

Thou that dancest, perceive what I do, for thine is this passion of the manhood, which I am about to suffer. For thou couldest not at all have understood what thou sufferest if I had not been sent unto thee, as the word of the Father. Thou that sawest what I suffer sawest me as suffering, and seeing it thou didst not abide but wert wholly moved, moved to make wise. Thou hast me as a bed, rest upon me. Who I am, thou shalt know when I depart. What now I am seen to be, that I am not. Thou shalt see when thou comest. If thou hadst known how to suffer, thou wouldest have been able not to suffer. Learn thou to suffer, and thou shalt be able not to suffer. What thou knowest not, I myself will teach thee. Thy God am I, not the God of the traitor. I would keep tune with holy souls. In me know thou the word of wisdom. Again with me say thou: Glory be to thee, Father; glory to thee, Word; glory to thee, Holy Ghost. And if thou wouldst know concerning me, what I was, know that with a word did I deceive all things and I was no whit deceived. I have leaped: but do thou understand the whole, and having understood it, say: Glory be to thee, Father. Amen.

97 Thus, my beloved, having danced with us the Lord went forth. And we as men gone astray or dazed with sleep fled this way and that. I, then, when I saw him suffer, did not even abide by his suffering, but fled unto the Mount of Olives, weeping at that which had befallen. And when he was crucified on the Friday, at the sixth hour of the day, darkness came upon all the earth. And my Lord standing in the midst of the cave and enlightening it, said: John, unto the multitude below in Jerusalem I am being crucified and pierced with lances and reeds, and gall and vinegar is given me to drink. But unto thee I speak, and what I speak hear thou. I put it into thy mind to come up into this mountain, that thou mightest hear those things which it behoveth a disciple to learn from his teacher and a man from his God.

98 And having thus spoken, he showed me a cross of light fixed (set up), and about the cross a great multitude, not having one form: and in it (the cross) was one form and one likenesst [so the MS.; I would read: and therein was one form and one likeness: and in the cross another multitude, not having one form]. And the Lord himself I beheld above the cross, not having any shape, but only a voice: and a voice not such as was familiar to us, but one sweet and kind and truly of God, saying unto me: John, it is needful that one should hear these things from me, for I have need of one that

will hear. This cross of light is sometimes called the (or a) word by me for your sakes, sometimes mind, sometimes Jesus, sometimes Christ, sometimes door, sometimes a way, sometimes bread, sometimes seed, sometimes resurrection, sometimes Son, sometimes Father, sometimes Spirit, sometimes life, sometimes truth, sometimes faith, sometimes grace. And by these names it is called as toward men: but that which it is in truth, as conceived of in itself and as spoken of unto you (MS. us), it is the marking-off of all things, and the firm uplifting of things fixed out of things unstable, and the harmony of wisdom, and indeed wisdom in harmony [this last clause in the MS. is joined to the next: 'and being wisdom in harmony']. There are [places] of the right hand and the left, powers also, authorities, lordships and demons, workings, threatenings, wraths, devils, Satan, and the lower root whence the nature of the things that come into being proceeded.

99 This cross, then, is that which fixed all things apart (al. joined all things unto itself) by the (or a) word, and separate off the things that are from those that are below (lit. the things from birth and below it), and then also, being one, streamed forth into all things (or, made all flow forth. I suggested: compacted all into [one]). But this is not the cross of wood which thou wilt see when thou goest down hence: neither am I he that is on the cross, whom now thou seest not, but only hearest his (or a) voice. I was reckoned to be that which I am not, not being what I was unto many others: but they will call me (say of me) something else which is vile and not worthy of me. As, then, the place of rest is neither seen nor spoken of, much more shall I, the Lord thereof, be neither seen [nor of spoken].

100 Now the multitude of one aspect (al. [not] of one aspect) that is about the cross is the lower nature: and they whom thou seest in the cross, if they have not one form, it is because not yet hath every member of him that came down been comprehended. But when the human nature (or the upper nature) is taken up, and the race which draweth near unto me and obeyeth my voice, he that now heareth me shall be united therewith, and shall no more be that which now he is, but above them, as I also now am. For so long as thou callest not thyself mine, I am not that which I am (or was): but if thou hear me, thou, hearing, shalt be as I am, and I shall be that which I was, when I [have] thee as I am with myself. For from me thou art that (which I am). Care not therefore for the many, and them that are outside the mystery despise; for know thou that I am wholly with the Father, and the Father with me.

101 Nothing, therefore, of the things which they will say of me have I suffered: nay, that suffering also which I showed unto thee and the rest in the dance, I will that it be called a mystery. For what thou art, thou seest, for I showed it thee; but what I am I alone know, and no man else. Suffer me then to keep that which is mine, and that which is thine behold thou through me, and behold me in truth, that I am, not what I said, but what thou art able to know, because thou art akin thereto. Thou hearest that I suffered, yet did I not suffer; that I suffered not, yet did I suffer; that I was pierced, yet I was not smitten; hanged, and I was not hanged; that blood flowed from me, and it flowed not; and, in a word, what they say of me, that befell me not, but what they say not, that did I suffer. Now what those things are I signify unto thee, for I know that thou wilt understand. Perceive thou therefore in me the praising (al. slaying al. rest) of the (or a) Word (Logos), the piercing of the Word, the blood of the Word, the wound of the Word, the hanging up of the Word, the suffering of the Word, the nailing (fixing) of the Word, the death of the Word. And so speak I, separating off the manhood. Perceive thou therefore in the first place of the Word; then shalt thou perceive the Lord, and in the third place the man, and what he hath suffered.

102 When he had spoken unto me these things, and others which I know not how to say as he would have me, he was taken up, no one of the multitudes having beheld him. And when I went down I laughed them all to scorn, inasmuch as he had told me the things which they have said concerning him; holding fast this one thing in myself, that the Lord contrived all things symbolically and by a dispensation toward men, for their conversion and salvation.

103 Having therefore beheld, brethren, the grace of the Lord and his kindly affection toward us, let us worship him as those unto whom he hath shown mercy, not with our fingers, nor our mouth, nor our tongue, nor with any part whatsoever of our body, but with the disposition of our soul -even him who became a man apart from this body: and let us watch because (or we shall find that) now also he keepeth ward over prisons for our sake, and over tombs, in bonds and dungeons, in reproaches and insults, by sea and on dry land, in scourgings, condemnations, conspiracies, frauds, punishments, and in a word, he is with all of us, and himself suffereth with us when we suffer, brethren. When he is called upon by each one of us, he endureth not to shut his ears to us, but as being everywhere he hearkeneth to all of us; and now both to me and to Drusiana, -forasmuch as he is the God of them that are shut upbringing us help by his own compassion.

104 Be ye also persuaded, therefore, beloved, that it is not a man whom I preach unto you to worship, but God unchangeable, God invincible, God higher than all authority and all power, and elder and mightier than all angels and creatures that are named, and all aeons. If then ye abide in him, and are builded up in him, ye shall possess your soul indestructible.

105 And when he had delivered these things unto the brethren, John departed, with Andronicus, to walk. And Drusiana also followed afar off with all the brethren, that they might behold the acts that were done by him, and hear his speech at all times in the Lord.

The remaining episode which is extant in the Greek is the conclusion of the book, the Death or Assumption of John. Before it must be placed the stories which we have only in the Latin (of 'Abdias' and another text by 'Mellitus', i.e. Melito), and the two or three isolated fragments.

(Lat. XIV.) Now on the next (or another) day Craton, a philosopher, had proclaimed in the market-place that he would give an example of the contempt of riches: and the spectacle was after this manner. He had persuaded two young men, the richest of the city, who were brothers, to spend their whole inheritance and buy each of them a jewel, and these they brake in pieces publicly in the sight of the people. And while they were doing this, it happened by chance that the apostle passed by. And calling Craton the philosopher to him, he said: That is a foolish despising of the world which is praised by the mouths of men, but long ago condemned by the judgement of God. For as that is a vain medicine whereby the disease is not extirpated, so is it a vain teaching by which the faults of souls and of conduct are not cured. But indeed my master taught a youth who desired to attain to eternal life, in these words; saying that if he would be perfect, he should sell all his goods and give to the poor, and so doing he would gain treasure in heaven and find the life that has no ending. And Craton said to him: Here the fruit of covetousness is set forth in the midst of men, and hath been broken to pieces. But if God is indeed thy master and willeth this to be, that the sum of the price of these jewels should be given to the poor, cause thou the gems to be restored whole, that what I have done for the praise of men, thou mayest do for the glory of him whom thou callest thy master. Then the blessed John gathered together the fragments of the gems, and holding them in his hands, lifted up his eyes to heaven and said: Lord Jesu Christ, unto whom nothing is impossible: who when

the world was broken by the tree of concupiscence, didst restore it again in thy faithfulness by the tree of the cross: who didst give to one born blind the eyes which nature had denied him, who didst recall Lazarus, dead and buried, after the fourth day unto the light; and has subjected all diseases and all sicknesses unto the word of thy power: so also now do with these precious stones which these, not knowing the fruits of almsgiving, have broken in pieces for the praise of men: recover thou them, Lord, now by the hands of thine angels, that by their value the work of mercy may be fulfilled, and make these men believe in thee the unbegotten Father through thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ our Lord, with the Holy Ghost the illuminator and sanctifier of the whole Church, world without end. And when the faithful who were with the apostle had answered and said Amen, the fragments of the gems were forthwith so joined in one that no mark at all that they had been broken remained in them. And Craton the philosopher, with his disciples, seeing this, fell at the feet of the apostle and believed thenceforth (or immediately) and was baptized, with them all, and began himself publicly to preach the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.

XV. Those two brothers, therefore, of whom we spake, sold the gems which they had bought by the sale of their inheritance and gave the price to the poor; and thereafter a very great multitude of believers began to be joined to the apostle.

And when all this was done, it happened that after the same example, two honourable men of the city of the Ephesian sold all their goods and distributed them to the needy, and followed the apostle as he went through the cities preaching the word of God. But it came to pass, when they entered the city of Pergamum, that they saw their servants walking abroad arrayed in silken raiment and shining with the glory of this world: whence it happened that they were pierced with the arrow of the devil and became sad, seeing themselves poor and clad with a single cloak while their own servants were powerful and prosperous. But the apostle of Christ, perceiving these wiles of the devil, said: I see that ye have changed your minds and your countenances on this account, that, obeying the teaching of my Lord Jesus Christ, ye have given all ye had to the poor. Now, if ye desire to recover that which ye formerly possessed of gold, silver, and precious stones, bring me some straight rods, each of you a bundle. And when they had done so, he called upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and they were turned into gold. And the apostle said to them: Bring me small stones from the seashore. And when they had done this also, he called upon the majesty of the Lord, and all the pebbles were turned into gems. Then the blessed John turned to those men and said to them: Go about to the goldsmiths and jewellers for seven days, and when ye have proved that these are true gold and true jewels, tell me. And they went, both of them, and after seven days returned to the apostle, saying: Lord, we have gone about the shops of all the goldsmiths, and they have all said that they never saw such pure gold. Likewise the jewellers have said the same, that they never saw such excellent and precious gems.

XVI. Then the holy John said unto them: Go, and redeem to you the lands which ye have sold, for ye have lost the estates of heaven. Buy yourselves silken raiment, that for a time ye may shine like the rose which showeth its fragrance and redness and suddenly fadeth away. For ye sighed at beholding your servants and groaned that ye were become poor. Flourish, therefore, that ye may fade: be rich for the time, that ye may be beggars for ever. Is not the Lord's hand able to make riches overflowing and unsurpassably glorious? but he hath appointed a conflict for souls, that they may believe that they shall have eternal riches, who for his name's sake have refused temporal wealth. Indeed, our master told us concerning a certain rich man who feasted every day and shone with gold and

purple, at whose door lay a beggar, Lazarus, who desired to receive even the crumbs that fell from his table, and no man gave unto him. And it came to pass that on one day they died, both of them, and that beggar was taken into the rest which is in Abraham's bosom, but the rich man was cast into flaming fire: out of which he lifted up his eyes and saw Lazarus, and prayed him to dip his finger in water and cool his mouth for he was tormented in the flames. And Abraham answered him and said: Remember, son, that thou receivedst good things in thy life, but this Lazarus likewise evil things. Wherefore rightly is he now comforted while thou art tormented, and besides all this, a great gulf is fixed between you and us, so that neither can they come thence hither, nor hither thence. But he answered: I have five brethren: I pray that some one may go to warn them, that they come not into this flame. And Abraham said to him: They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. To that he answered: Lord, unless one rise up again, they will not believe. Abraham said to him: If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe, if one rise again. And these words our Lord and Master confirmed by examples of mighty works: for when they said to him: Who hath come hither from thence, that we may believe him? he answered: Bring hither the dead whom ye have. And when they had brought unto him a young man which was dead (Ps.-Mellitus: three dead corpses), he was waked up by him as one that sleepeth, and confirmed all his words.

But wherefore should I speak of my Lord, when at this present there are those whom in his name and in your presence and sight I have raised from the dead: in whose name ye have seen palsied men healed, lepers cleansed, blind men enlightened, and many delivered from evil spirits? But the riches of these mighty works they cannot have who have desired to have earthly wealth. Finally, when ye yourselves went unto the sick and called upon the name of Jesus Christ, they were healed: ye did drive out devils and restore light to the blind. Behold, this grace is taken from you, and ye are become wretched, who were mighty and great. And where as there was such fear of you upon the devils that at your bidding they left the men whom they possessed, now ye will be in fear of the devils. For he that loveth money is the servant of Mammon: and Mammon is the name of a devil who is set over carnal gains, and is the master of them that love the world. But even the lovers of the world do not possess riches, but are possessed of them. For it is out of reason that for one belly there should be laid up so much food as would suffice a thousand, and for one body so many garments as would furnish clothing for a thousand men. In vain, therefore, is that stored up which cometh not into use, and for whom it is kept, no man knoweth, as the Holy Ghost saith by the prophet: In vain is every man troubled who heapeth up riches and knoweth not for whom he gathereth them. Naked did our birth from women bring us into this light, destitute of food and drink: naked will the earth receive us which brought us forth. We possess in common the riches of the heaven, the brightness of the sun is equal for the rich and the poor, and likewise the light of the moon and the stars, the softness of the air and the drops of rain, and the gate of the church and the fount of sanctification and the forgiveness of sins, and the sharing in the altar, and the eating of the body and drinking of the blood of Christ, and the anointing of the chrism, and the grace of the giver, and the visitation of the Lord, and the pardon of sin: in all these the dispensing of the Creator is equal, without respect of persons. Neither doth the rich man use these gifts after one manner and the poor after another.

But wretched and unhappy is the man who would have something more than sufficeth him: for of this come heats of fevers rigours of cold, divers pains in all the members of the body, and he can neither be fed with food nor sated with drink, that covetousness may learn that money will not profit

it, which being laid up bringeth to the keepers thereof anxiety by day and night, and suffereth them not even for an hour to be quiet and secure. For while they guard their houses against thieves, till their estate, ply the plough, pay taxes, build storehouses, strive for gain, try to baffle the attacks of the strong, and to strip the weak, exercise their wrath on whom they can, and hardly bear it from others, shrink not from playing at tables and from public shows, fear not to defile or to be defiled, suddenly do they depart out of this world, naked, bearing only their own sins with them, for which they shall suffer eternal punishment.

XVII. While the apostle was thus speaking, behold there was brought to him by his mother, who was a widow, a young man who thirty days before had first married a vvife. And the people which were waiting upon the burial came with the widowed mother and cast themselves at the apostle's feet all together with groans, weeping, and mourning, and besought him that in the name of his God, as he had done with Drusiana, so he would raise up this young man also. And there was so great weeping of them all that the apostle himself could hardly refrain from crying and tears. He cast himself down, therefore, in prayer, and wept a long time: and rising from prayer spread out his hands to heaven, and for a long space prayed within himself. And when he had so done thrice, he commanded the body which was swathed to be loosed, and said: Thou youth Stacteus, who for love of thy flesh hast quickly lost thy soul: thou youth which knewest not thy creator nor perceivedst the Saviour of men, and wast ignorant of thy true friend, and therefore didst fall into the snare of the worst enemy: behold, I have poured out tears and prayers unto my Lord for thine ignorance, that thou mayest rise from the dead, the bands of death being loosed, and declare unto these two, to Atticus and Eugenius, how great glory they have lost, and how great punishment they have incurred. Then Stacteus arose and worshipped the apostle, and began to reproach his disciples, saying: I beheld your angels vweeping, and the angels of Satan rejoicing at your overthrow. For now in a little time ye have lost the kingdom that was prepared for you, and the dwellingplaces builded of shining stones, full of joy, of feasting and delights, full of everlasting life and eternal light: and have gotten yourselves places of darkness, full of dragons, of roaring flames, of torments, and punishments unsurpassable, of pains and anguish, fear and horrible trembling. Ye have lost the places full of unfading flowers, shining, full of the sounds of instruments of music (organs), and have gotten on the other hand places wherein roaring and howling and mourning ceaseth not day nor night. Nothing else remaineth for you save to ask the apostle of the Lord that like as he hath raised me to life, he would raise you also from death unto salvation and bring back your souls which now are blotted out of the book of life.

XVIII. Then both he that had been raised and all the people together with Atticus and Eugenius, cast themselves at the apostle's feet and besought him to intercede for them with the Lord. Unto whom the holy apostle gave this answer: that for thirty days they should offer penitence to God, and in that space pray especially that the rods of gold might return to their nature and likewise the stones return to the meanness wherein they were made. And it came to pass that after thirty days were accomplished, and neither the rods were turncd into wood nor the gems into pebbles, Atticus and Eugenius came and said to the apostle: Thou hast always taught mercy, and preached forgiveness, and bidden that one man should spare another. And if God willeth that a man should forgive a man, how much more shall he, as he is God, both forgive and spare men. We are confounded for our sin: and whereas we have cried with our eyes which lusted after the world, we do now repent with eyes that weep. We pray thee, Lord, we pray thee, apostle of God, show in deed that mercy which in word

thou hast always promised. Then the holy John said unto them as they wept and repented, and all interceded for them likewise: Our Lord God used these words when he spake concerning sinners: I will not the death of a sinner, but I will rather that he be converted and live. For when the Lord Jesus Christ taught us concerning the penitent, he said: Verily I say unto you, there is great joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth and turneth himself from his sins: and there is more joy over him than over ninety and nine which have not sinned. Wherefore I would have you know that the Lord accepteth the repentance of these men. And he turned unto Atticus and Eugenius and said: Go, carry back the rods unto the wood whence ye took them, for now are they returned to their own nature, and the stones unto the sea-shore, for they are become common stones as they were before. And when this was accomplished, they received again the grace which they had lost, so that again they cast out devils as before time and healed the sick and enlightened the blind, and daily the Lord did many mighty works by their means.

The Homily on the Beatitudes by Augustine

In 393, Saint Augustine wrote his *Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount*. In this edifying treatise, he begins with the weighty proclamation that “anyone who piously and earnestly ponders the Sermon on the Mount — as we read in the Gospel according to Mathew — I believe he will find therein... the perfect standard of the Christian Life.” And indeed, prayerful contemplation on Christ’s Sermon will reveal that it possesses the divine principles of justice leading to a deep understanding of the way in which we ought to live in order to answer Christ’s call to “be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

The Beatitudes are the centerpiece of the Sermon on the Mount and throughout the life of the Church they have been central to Catholic moral theology. However, in these strange times the glass through which we see darkly has become so warped by artificial light that we now often perceive an inversion of Christ’s moral truths. Disordered society has attempted to transform the Beatitudes into moral platitudes. The modern tendency is to project them as calls to social reform, an external concern with lifting the poor and seeking a worldly peace.

Viewed as external precepts, the Beatitudes may well better our society by a degree or two, but such a gain can only be superficial and temporary. As St. Ambrose reminds us, “our own evil inclinations are far more dangerous than any external enemies.” The Beatitudes are meant to be directed inward towards our internal poverty and the attainment of spiritual peace as preparation for the spiritual combat necessary to save our souls and to colonize the heavenly country.

In the body of St. Augustine’s lesser known works we find Sermon 53 on the Beatitudes. With this little known homily St. Augustine can begin to help us to recover an accurate understanding of the Beatitudes as the solemn blessings that embody the spiritual character of Christ’s Kingdom; for the Beatitudes exemplify the features that describe the heavenly dispositions leading to our sanctification. Their simplicity, truth and beauty in moral theology are unsurpassed.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” To be poor in spirit is not to be materially impoverished, but to be humble. St. Augustine explains that “whoever is puffed up is not poor in spirit.” The poor in spirit are not weak; they are strong enough to be detached from the

material riches of this world. The kingdom of heaven is on high but as is said in Mathew 23:12, "he that humbles himself shall be exalted." St. Leo the Great further elucidates the maxim: "blessed, therefore, is poverty which is not possessed with a love of temporal things, and does not seek to be increased with the riches of the world, but is eager to amass heavenly possessions."

"Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth". The Greek word for meek has a twofold meaning at once as strong as iron, yet as gentle as a feather. Jesus describes meekness as being "wise as serpents and gentle as doves." St. Francis de Sales further elucidates meekness when he says "there is nothing as strong as true meekness, there is nothing as gentle as true strength." One who is truly meek will possess the earth, "if you are not meek, it will possess you." St. Augustine notes that the earth refers to the heavenly kingdom and in another sense, self-possession ordered to Christ that unifies and integrates a community of souls.

"Blessed are they who mourn for they shall be comforted." St. Augustine cautions us against an improper understanding of mourning. Jesus does not bless every form of sorrow. Despair is sorrow without hope. Self-pity is a most dangerous form of morning. What of "those who mourn according to the flesh? They have troublesome and frightening consolations." Mourning is the expression of inner discontent, of the gap between desire and satisfaction, in other words for suffering. We are to mourn for our sins and the sins of others. Our "true consolation will be that which gives comfort that will never be lost."

"Blessed are those who thirst and hunger for justice, for they shall be satisfied." If we hunger for the things of this world we will end in starvation. We ought to hunger for justice, the Bread of Life who is Christ. He tells us in John 6:41, "I am the bread that has come down from heaven." We ought to thirst for the living water of which our Lord said "whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst." St. Augustine advises us to "pant after the drink of the thirsty as well, for with Thee is the fountain of Life." Christ being the all-encompassing truth and justice is our food and drink, we ought to hunger and thirst for Him.

"Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy." St. Augustine reminds us here of the truth that we are beggars at Gods door and someone is begging from us. He entreats us to remember that "as you treat your beggar, so will God treat his." He exhorts: "Out of your own fullness fill an empty man, so that your own emptiness may be filled from the fullness of God." To him that shows mercy, mercy will be shown. The holy appeal to show mercy is well illustrated by the parable of the Good Samaritan.

"Blessed are the pure of heart for they shall see God." St. Augustine explains that "the eyes by which God is seen are within the heart." As if he is speaking to our age he admonishes, "how foolish then are those who try to find God through the use of their bodily eyes!" We must walk by faith not by sight. The purification of our hearts is the true end of our love which will allow us to see God clearly. The brightness of the true light will not be able to be seen by the unclean sight: and that which is joy to minds that are clean, will be a punishment to those that are tarnished. St. Augustine explains, "A simple heart is a heart that is pure; and, just as the light which surrounds us cannot be seen except through eyes that are clear, so neither is God seen unless that through which He can be seen is pure."

"Blessed are the peacemakers for they are the children of God." St. Augustine clarifies that "where there is no contention, there is perfect peace. And because nothing can contend against God, the children of God are peacemakers." The Peacemakers of God are the opposite of the peacemakers of the world, for the men of the world cry "peace peace when there is no peace." St. Augustine explains that "man is unable to rule over the lower things unless he in turn submits to the rule of a higher being. And this is the peace promised on earth to men of good will." God's peace is only possible when everything is in its proper order and oriented to Him.

Finally, *"Blessed are YOU when men revile YOU and persecute YOU and utter all kinds of evil against YOU falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad for YOUR reward is great in Heaven, for so men persecuted the Prophets before YOU."* The first seven Beatitudes are free will choices on our part; the eighth Beatitude is done to us in consequence of these choices. We are to suffer the eighth Beatitude as we perfect the practice of the first seven.

After Jesus proclaims the Beatitudes, the rest of the Sermon on the Mount illustrates the effects manifested by the precepts of the perfect moral law. The Beatitudes are the heavenly norms for which we must strive to conform ourselves by cooperating with the graces gifted by the Holy Spirit. Christ presents the Beatitudes to us in their proper order from the lowest to the highest. The first step of the climb on this stairway to heaven is humility leading upwards through the rest of the Beatitudes towards the final end of wisdom. The Beatitudes embody the properly ordered mystical hierarchy of the rise to sanctity.

The splendor of the Beatitudes lived out completely is no less than the ascent to full communion with the saints. St. Thomas refines the moral end of St. Augustine's ethic by explaining that "to possess God in full in the beatific vision is to have our powers fully realized, fully perfected, and to find them at rest, in perfect happiness for all eternity." Here in the Gospel of Mathew is gifted to us the perfect standard of Christian living. Allow St. Augustine to bring us to a deeper and properly ordered understanding of our Lord's call to the beatific vision.

The Letter of Ignatius to the Ephesians

Chapter 1. Praise of the Ephesians

I have become acquainted with your name, much-beloved in God, which you have acquired by the habit of righteousness, according to the faith and love in Jesus Christ our Saviour. Being the followers of God, and stirring up yourselves by the blood of God, you have perfectly accomplished the work which was befitting to you. For, on hearing that I came bound from Syria for the common name and hope, trusting through your prayers to be permitted to fight with beasts at Rome, that so by martyrdom I may indeed become the disciple of Him who gave Himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God, Ephesians 5:2 [you hastened to see me]. I received, therefore, your whole multitude in the name of God, through Onesimus, a man of inexpressible love, and your bishop in the flesh, whom I pray you by Jesus Christ to love, and that you would all seek to be like him. And blessed be He who has granted unto you, being worthy, to obtain such an excellent bishop.

Chapter 2. Congratulations and entreaties

As to my fellow-servant Burrhus, your deacon in regard to God and blessed in all things, I beg that he may continue longer, both for your honour and that of your bishop. And Crocus also, worthy both of God and you, whom I have received as the manifestation of your love, has in all things refreshed 1 Corinthians 16:18, etc. me, as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ shall also refresh 1 Corinthians 16:18, etc. him; together with Onesimus, and Burrhus, and Euplus, and Fronto, by means of whom, I have, as to love, beheld all of you. May I always have joy of you, if indeed I be worthy of it. It is therefore befitting that you should in every way glorify Jesus Christ, who has glorified you, that by a unanimous obedience you may be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment, and may all speak the same thing concerning the same thing, 1 Corinthians 1:10 and that, being subject to the bishop and the presbytery, you may in all respects be sanctified.

Chapter 3. Exhortations to unity

I do not issue orders to you, as if I were some great person. For though I am bound for the name [of Christ], I am not yet perfect in Jesus Christ. For now I begin to be a disciple, and I speak to you as fellow-disciples with me. For it was needful for me to have been stirred up by you in faith, exhortation, patience, and long-suffering. But inasmuch as love suffers me not to be silent in regard to you, I have therefore taken upon me first to exhort you that you would all run together in accordance with the will of God. For even Jesus Christ, our inseparable life, is the [manifested] will of the Father; as also bishops, settled everywhere to the utmost bounds [of the earth], are so by the will of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 4. The same continued

Wherefore it is fitting that you should run together in accordance with the will of your bishop, which thing also you do. For your justly renowned presbytery, worthy of God, is fitted as exactly to the bishop as the strings are to the harp. Therefore in your concord and harmonious love, Jesus Christ is sung. And man by man, become a choir, that being harmonious in love, and taking up the song of God in unison, you may with one voice sing to the Father through Jesus Christ, so that He may both hear you, and perceive by your works that you are indeed the members of His Son. It is profitable, therefore, that you should live in an unblameable unity, that thus you may always enjoy communion with God.

Chapter 5. The praise of unity

For if I in this brief space of time, have enjoyed such fellowship with your bishop — I mean not of a mere human, but of a spiritual nature — how much more do I reckon you happy who are so joined to him as the Church is to Jesus Christ, and as Jesus Christ is to the Father, that so all things may agree in unity! Let no man deceive himself: if any one be not within the altar, he is deprived of the bread of God. For if the prayer of one or two possesses Matthew 18:19 such power, how much more that of the bishop and the whole Church! He, therefore, that does not assemble with the Church, has even by this manifested his pride, and condemned himself. For it is written, God resists the proud. Let us be careful, then, not to set ourselves in opposition to the bishop, in order that we may be subject to God.

Chapter 6. Have respect to the bishop as to Christ Himself

Now the more any one sees the bishop keeping silence, the more ought he to revere him. For we ought to receive every one whom the Master of the house sends to be over His household, Matthew 24:45 as we would do Him that sent him. It is manifest, therefore, that we should look upon the bishop even as we would upon the Lord Himself. And indeed Onesimus himself greatly commends your good order in God, that you all live according to the truth, and that no sect has any dwelling-place among you. Nor, indeed, do you hearken to any one rather than to Jesus Christ speaking in truth.

Chapter 7. Beware of false teachers

For some are in the habit of carrying about the name [of Jesus Christ] in wicked guile, while yet they practise things unworthy of God, whom you must flee as you would wild beasts. For they are ravening dogs, who bite secretly, against whom you must be on your guard, inasmuch as they are men who can scarcely be cured. There is one Physician who is possessed both of flesh and spirit; both made and not made; God existing in flesh; true life in death; both of Mary and of God; first passible and then impassible — even Jesus Christ our Lord.

Chapter 8. Renewed praise of the Ephesians

Let not then any one deceive you, as indeed you are not deceived, inasmuch as you are wholly devoted to God. For since there is no strife raging among you which might distress you, you are certainly living in accordance with God's will. I am far inferior to you, and require to be sanctified by your Church of Ephesus, so renowned throughout the world. They that are carnal cannot do those things which are spiritual, nor they that are spiritual the things which are carnal; even as faith cannot do the works of unbelief, nor unbelief the works of faith. But even those things which you do according to the flesh are spiritual; for you do all things in Jesus Christ.

Chapter 9. You have given no heed to false teachers

Nevertheless, I have heard of some who have passed on from this to you, having false doctrine, whom you did not allow to sow among you, but stopped your ears, that you might not receive those things which were sown by them, as being stones 1 Peter 2:5 of the temple of the Father, prepared for the building of God the Father, and drawn up on high by the instrument of Jesus Christ, which is the cross, John 12:32 making use of the Holy Spirit as a rope, while your faith was the means by which you ascended, and your love the way which led up to God. You, therefore, as well as all your fellow-travellers, are God-bearers, temple-bearers, Christ-bearers, bearers of holiness, adorned in all respects with the commandments of Jesus Christ, in whom also I exult that I have been thought worthy, by means of this Epistle, to converse and rejoice with you, because with respect to your Christian life you love nothing but God only.

Chapter 10. Exhortations to prayer, humility, etc

And pray without ceasing on behalf of other men. For there is in them hope of repentance that they may attain to God. See, then, that they be instructed by your works, if in no other way. Be meek in response to their wrath, humble in opposition to their boasting: to their blasphemies return your prayers; in contrast to their error, be steadfast Colossians 1:23 in the faith; and for their cruelty, manifest your gentleness. While we take care not to imitate their conduct, let us be found their brethren in all true kindness; and let us seek to be followers of the Lord (who ever

more unjustly treated, more destitute, more condemned?), that so no plant of the devil may be found in you, but you may remain in all holiness and sobriety in Jesus Christ, both with respect to the flesh and spirit.

Chapter 11. An exhortation to fear God, etc

The last times have come upon us. Let us therefore be of a reverent spirit, and fear the long-suffering of God, that it tend not to our condemnation. For let us either stand in awe of the wrath to come, or show regard for the grace which is at present displayed — one of two things. Only [in one way or another] let us be found in Christ Jesus unto the true life. Apart from Him, let nothing attract you, for whom I bear about these bonds, these spiritual jewels, by which may I arise through your prayers, of which I entreat I may always be a partaker, that I may be found in the lot of the Christians of Ephesus, who have always been of the same mind with the apostles through the power of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 12. Praise of the Ephesians

I know both who I am, and to whom I write. I am a condemned man, you have been the objects of mercy; I am subject to danger, you are established in safety. You are the persons through whom those pass that are cut off for the sake of God. You are initiated into the mysteries of the Gospel with Paul, the holy, the martyred, the deservedly most happy, at whose feet may I be found, when I shall attain to God; who in all his Epistles makes mention of you in Christ Jesus.

Chapter 13. Meet together frequently for the worship of God

Take heed, then, often to come together to give thanks to God, and show forth His praise. For when you assemble frequently in the same place, the powers of Satan are destroyed, and the destruction at which he aims is prevented by the unity of your faith. Nothing is more precious than peace, by which all war, both in heaven and earth, is brought to an end.

Chapter 14. Exhortations to faith and love

None of these things is hid from you, if you perfectly possess that faith and love towards Christ Jesus 1 Timothy 1:14 which are the beginning and the end of life. For the beginning is faith, and the end is love. 1 Timothy 1:5 Now these two, being inseparably connected together, are of God, while all other things which are requisite for a holy life follow after them. No man [truly] making a profession of faith sins; 1 John 3:7 nor does he that possesses love hate any one. The tree is made manifest by its fruit; Matthew 12:33 so those that profess themselves to be Christians shall be recognised by their conduct. For there is not now a demand for mere profession, but that a man be found continuing in the power of faith to the end.

Chapter 15. Exhortation to confess Christ by silence as well as speech

It is better for a man to be silent and be [a Christian], than to talk and not to be one. It is good to teach, if he who speaks also acts. There is then one Teacher, who spoke and it was done; while even those things which He did in silence are worthy of the Father. He who possesses the word of Jesus, is truly able to hear even His very silence, that he may be perfect, and may both act as he speaks, and be recognised by his silence. There is nothing which is hid from God, but our very secrets are near to Him. Let us therefore do all things as those who have Him dwelling in us, that we may be His

temples, 1 Corinthians 6:19 and He may be in us as our God, which indeed He is, and will manifest Himself before our faces. Wherefore we justly love Him.

Chapter 16. The fate of false teachers

Do not err, my brethren. James 1:16 Those that corrupt families shall not inherit the kingdom of God. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 If, then, those who do this as respects the flesh have suffered death, how much more shall this be the case with any one who corrupts by wicked doctrine the faith of God, for which Jesus Christ was crucified! Such an one becoming defiled [in this way], shall go away into everlasting fire, and so shall every one that hearkens unto him.

Chapter 17. Beware of false doctrines

For this end did the Lord allow the ointment to be poured upon His head, John 12:7 that He might breathe immortality into His Church. Be not anointed with the bad odour of the doctrine of the prince of this world; let him not lead you away captive from the life which is set before you. And why are we not all prudent, since we have received the knowledge of God, which is Jesus Christ? Why do we foolishly perish, not recognising the gift which the Lord has of a truth sent to us?

Chapter 18. The glory of the cross

Let my spirit be counted as nothing for the sake of the cross, which is a stumbling-block 1 Corinthians 1:18 to those that do not believe, but to us salvation and life eternal. Where is the wise man? Where the disputer? 1 Corinthians 1:20 Where is the boasting of those who are styled prudent? For our God, Jesus Christ, was, according to the appointment of God, conceived in the womb by Mary, of the seed of David, but by the Holy Ghost. He was born and baptized, that by His passion He might purify the water.

Chapter 19. Three celebrated mysteries

Now the virginity of Mary was hidden from the prince of this world, as was also her offspring, and the death of the Lord; three mysteries of renown, which were wrought in silence by God. How, then, was He manifested to the world? A star shone forth in heaven above all the other stars, the light of which was inexpressible, while its novelty struck men with astonishment. And all the rest of the stars, with the sun and moon, formed a chorus to this star, and its light was exceedingly great above them all. And there was agitation felt as to whence this new spectacle came, so unlike to everything else [in the heavens]. Hence every kind of magic was destroyed, and every bond of wickedness disappeared; ignorance was removed, and the old kingdom abolished, God Himself being manifested in human form for the renewal of eternal life. And now that took a beginning which had been prepared by God. Henceforth all things were in a state of tumult, because He meditated the abolition of death.

Chapter 20. Promise of another letter

If Jesus Christ shall graciously permit me through your prayers, and if it be His will, I shall, in a second little work which I will write to you, make further manifest to you [the nature of] the dispensation of which I have begun [to treat], with respect to the new man, Jesus Christ, in His faith and in His love, in His suffering and in His resurrection. Especially [will I do this] if the Lord make known to me that you come together man by man in common through grace,

individually, in one faith, and in Jesus Christ, who was of the seed of David according to the flesh, being both the Son of man and the Son of God, so that you obey the bishop and the presbytery with an undivided mind, breaking one and the same bread, which is the medicine of immortality, and the antidote to prevent us from dying, but [which causes] that we should live for ever in Jesus Christ.

Chapter 21. Conclusion

My soul be for yours and theirs whom, for the honour of God, you have sent to Smyrna; whence also I write to you, giving thanks unto the Lord, and loving Polycarp even as I do you. Remember me, as Jesus Christ also remembered you. Pray for the Church which is in Syria, whence I am led bound to Rome, being the last of the faithful who are there, even as I have been thought worthy to be chosen to show forth the honour of God. Farewell in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ, our common hope.

The Prayer of Ephrem the Syrian

O Lord and Master of my life!

Take from me the spirit of sloth,
faint-heartedness, lust of power, and idle talk.

But give rather the spirit of chastity,
humility, patience, and love to Thy servant.

Yea, Lord and King! Grant me to see my own errors
and not to judge my brother,
for Thou art blessed unto ages of ages. Amen.

The Treatise on the Trinity by Tertullian

Tertullian is often portrayed as a prescient figure who accurately anticipated the Nicene consensus about the Trinity. But when he is examined against the background of his immediate predecessors, he falls into place as a typical second-century Logos theologian. He drew especially from Theophilus of Antioch, Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus of Lyons. At the same time, Tertullian did introduce some important innovations. His trinitarian language of 'substance' and 'person', rooted in Stoic metaphysics, offered the church a new way to be monotheistic while retaining the full deity and consubstantiality of the Word. Tertullian also significantly developed the concept of a divine *oikonomia*, God's plan to create and redeem the world. The Son and Spirit are emissaries of the Father's will—not ontologically inferior to him, yet ranked lower in the way that the sent are always subordinate to the sender. For this reason, Tertullian denied that a Father/Son relationship was eternal within the Trinity, seeing it rather as a new development emerging from God's plan to make the world. Such temporal paternity and filiation distances Tertullian from the eventual Nicene consensus, which accepted instead the eternal generation theory of Origen. While Tertullian did propose some important terms that would gain traction among the Nicene fathers, he was also marked by a subordinationist tendency that had affinities with Arianism. Tertullian's most accurate

anticipation of Nicaea was his insistence on three co-eternal and consubstantial Persons. Historical theologians need to start admitting that Tertullian was a far cry from being fully Nicene. Rather, he offered a clever but still imperfect half-step toward what would become official orthodoxy.

The Sabbath in Ethiopia (see the book attached)

The Hymn of the Redeemer

1 I will sing of my Redeemer
and his wondrous love to me;
on the cruel cross he suffered,
from the curse to set me free.
Sing, O sing of my Redeemer!
With his blood he purchased me;
on the cross he sealed my pardon,
paid the debt, and made me free.

2 I will tell the wondrous story,
how my lost estate to save,
in his boundless love and mercy,
he the ransom freely gave.
I will praise my dear Redeemer,
his triumphant power I'll tell:
how the victory he gives me
over sin and death and hell.

3 I will sing of my Redeemer
and his heavenly love for me;
he from death to life has brought me,
Son of God, with him to be.
Sing, O sing of my Redeemer!
With his blood he purchased me;
on the cross he sealed my pardon,
paid the debt, and made me free.

The Ethiopian Song of the Angels

The merciful, humble, compassionate and obedient, who praise the Lord for eternity, Archangel Saint Michael is the intercessor and mediator for humans by the Lord's mercy upon us. (Enoch 6:5, 12:5,10:12)

The miraculous work of this angel is numerous. Here are some stories we find in holy scriptures. The city of Alexandria had a great temple which Queen Cleopatra, the daughter of Ptolemy, King of Egypt, had built in the name of the star Zuhā (Venus), and they celebrated a festival in its honor on the twelfth day of the month of Sane/June/. There was in that temple a great brass idol which was exceedingly awesome, and its name was Zuhā (Venus). They used to offer up many sacrifices on the day of the festival and continued to revere that idol until the days of the archiepiscopate of Archbishop Alexander, that is to say for three hundred years and more.

When Abba Alexander was appointed Archbishop of Alexandria, the righteous Emperor Constantine reigned, and the True Christian Faith spread abroad. Abba Alexander wanted to smash that idol, but some worthless men of the city prevented him, and they said to him, "We are in the habit of celebrating a festival in honor of this idol. Behold, fifteen archbishops have preceded thee [here], and they did not alter our custom." Abba Alexander rebuked them severely, and he explained the matter to them, and said, "This idol can do neither evil nor good, but those who celebrate the festivals of idols worship Satans." Abba Alexander also said to them, "If you will hearken to my advice, let me arrange this festival for you as it ought to have been in olden times. That is to say, let us smash this idol, [re]consecrate the temple, turn it into a Church in the name of the Saint Michael, the Archangel and we will arrange this festival in his honor. Let the altar be re-dedicated to God Most High; let the poor; the needy; the wretched, eat the oxen and sheep which the priests slay; and the Archangel Michael shall intercede on your behalf with our Lord Jesus Christ."

The good counsel pleased them for they yielded to his wishes and they made the temple a Church in the name of the Archangel Michael. That temple became known as the "Church of Caesarea," and it continued to stand until the Muslims reigned in Egypt. Then they destroyed it. This festival was established by order, and all the people of the districts [in Egypt] celebrated it in honor of the glorious Archangel Michael to his grade, above all the angels, to his greatness and the archangel performed many miracles among which is the following: –

There was a certain man who feared God and who used to celebrate the commemoration of the glorious Archangel Michael on the twelfth day of each month, especially during the months of Hedar/November and Sane/June.

A cruel rich man also lived among his neighbors. He used to hate that God-fearing man when he celebrated the festival of the glorious Angel, and even laugh at him. When the days of the God-fearing man had come to an end, and the time of his death, when he would rest from the labor of this fleeting world, drew nigh, he commanded his wife to be merciful, and to celebrate the commemoration of that Archangel Michael, especially the festivals which fell on the twelfth day of Hedar and on the twelfth day of Sane. Now at the time of the death of the God-fearing man, his wife was with child and after the man died she buried him. At that time the woman was near her time to bring forth childbirth. Being in very great pain, she prayed, "O Michael, Angel of God, have compassion upon me, and entreat God on my behalf so that He may deliver me from the tribulation in which I am on this day; for with you there is great grace with God."

When she said these words, the house was filled with full of light, and forthwith she was relieved of her pains. So, she brought forth a child whose appearance was Godly. The Angel of God, Archangel Michael came down from heaven, blessed the child and said, "Thus said God: This child shall inherit the goods of the rich man who has no sympathy, all his possessions and all his lands." At

that moment the rich man was looking out from the window upon the house of the woman, and he heard the voice of Michael, the angel of God, saying, "This child shall inherit the money of the rich man." Then great sorrow came upon him, and he sought for a pretext for killing the child; but God protected him through the intercession of the Archangel Michael.

At the age of ten, his mother's finished her money, and the rich man, with small sympathy in him, found his opportunity against the woman. He said to her, "Give me your son, and let him minister to me. I will feed and clothe him. I will give you twenty dinars in gold." When the woman heard these words from the rich man, she rejoiced on account of her poverty. The rich man gave her twenty dinars in gold and she gave him her son. Having taken him, the rich man rejoiced with a great joy and he said in his heart, "Behold, what I have desired is fulfilled for me." Then he made a wooden box as long as the boy's height and he forced the boy into the box. He fastened the cover over him and carried the box to the river. He then cast it into the water. He also cast the key of the box into the river. By the Will of God, the box floated on the surface of the river until it came to the quay of a certain city, which was not far from the river.

There was a certain shepherd who was watching and tending his flocks near the river. When he saw the box in the river, he dragged it out and carried it into his house. He was thinking by what means he would open the box. As he was thinking, God put the thought into his heart that to go to the river; straightway he went and found a man catching fish. The shepherd said to him, "Cast your net into the river in my name, and I will give you the price of the fish which shall be caught"; The fisherman did as the shepherd told him. A great fish came out from the net, and the shepherd gave him the price thereof; taking it he went to his house, and killed the fish to broil it, that he and his household might eat. Having slit open the belly of the fish he found a key inside it, and he thought for himself, "Perhaps this is the key of the box." Having inserted the key into the keyhole of the box, the box opened quickly, and the shepherd marveled for he found inside it the boy whom the rich man wanted to kill.

When he saw the boy he rejoiced with a great joy! He called him "Bahran" because he found him in the river. The boy became as a son to him. Now the distance of the city wherein the boy was born, from that wherein the shepherd lived, was a journey of ten days. After many days the rich man in whom there was no sympathy wished to go and sojourn with the shepherd; when the sun was about to set, he said to the shepherd, "Peradventure you have a place wherein we can lodge until to-morrow; if you have I will pay you your charge." The shepherd brought the rich man into his house, and he called the young man by his name of "Bahran." When the rich man heard this name he asked the shepherd, saying, "Is this your son?" The shepherd said to him, "Yes, I found this young man when he was a little boy in a box in the river. I took him and reared him as my son."

The cruel rich man heard this and was shocked. He knew that the young man was the boy whom he had thrown into the river to kill. On the morrow the rich man wished to depart, and he had devious plan. He then said to the shepherd, "I want you to give me your son so that I may send him with a message to my house in the city, because I have forgotten something which is in my house; The payment of twenty dinars of gold which I should give to him I will give to you." The shepherd rejoiced because of the gold he received. So, he called the young man and said to him, "O my son Bahran, come that this honorable man may send you to his house on some business concerning his house; return home in peace." The young man said to him, "Willingly, O my father, whatsoever you

command me I will do." Then straightway the rich man wrote a letter to his steward, saying, "When you have read this letter kill the bearer of it, whose name is 'Bahran,' and cast his body into a pit. Let no one know about this until I come in peace." He wrote on the letter a certain sign which they had agreed upon, and which none but only the two of them knew. He sealed the letter and gave it to Bahran. He also gave money needed for the journey and the young man departed.

As he was journeying along the road, he was about half-way between the two cities; behold the Angel of God, Michael, the Archangel, came to him, riding upon a horse in the form of a soldier of the emperor; and he said to Bahran, "What do you have with you?" He said to him, "I have a letter with me from a rich man who was sent to a rich man's house in the city." The Angel of God, the Glorious Saint Michael, said to him, "Show me the letter," Bahran being afraid of him gave him the letter. The Angel blew on the paper, and erased everything it. Archangel Michael then wrote on the paper with his own hand saying, "Behold, I the rich man have sent to you the bearer of this letter whose name is Bahran. As soon as you have read this letter marry him my daughter. I have given him all the goods in my house and all my lands. Do not wait until I come back, for I shall tarry on my journey. Let him do what he wishes in my house, for I have given him authority over all my goods and over my house. Here is the sign which is between you and me, O my steward." The Angel of God Archangel Michael sealed the letter, gave it to Bahran and said to him, "Go to the house of the rich man, and when you have arrived at his house, give this letter to his steward. Do not tell him that I met you on the road and that I have changed the contents of this letter." Bahran said to him, "Yes, my lord, everything which you have commanded me I will do."

Bahran went on until he arrived at that city, and enquired for the house of the rich man. He gave his letter to his steward. When the steward had read it, he understood the contents thereof; he recognized the private mark and he knew that it was true. Forthwith they made a great marriage-feast for Bahran and the daughter of the rich man. They made them get married in the Church, before the sanctuary of God and they had joyful time of marriage for forty days. Towards the end of the marriage-feast, the rich man returned to his city. When he heard the sound of the song singing and rejoicings, he asked, saying, "What is this sound which I hear?" Certain of the men said to him, "Your letter came by the hand of a young man called Bahran, and as you did command that your daughter should be married to him, they gave her to that young man whose name is Bahran. Behold they have been rejoicing in the marriage-feast forty days and forty nights. They have given him all your money, house, menservants, handmaidens and all your possessions, according to what you did command in your letter." When the rich man heard these words, he cried out at the top of his voice, fell down and died. Straightway Satans took his soul into the deepest Hades. The young man inherited all his money even as God the Most High had commanded.

Bahran celebrated the commemoration of the glorious Angel of God Archangel Michael, on the twelfth day of each month. He knew that it was he who had appeared to him breathing on the letter, erased what was written therein and wrote other message instead. After this he built a beautiful Church in the name of the glorious Angel Michael, the Archangel. He painted a picture of him in it in front of the sanctuary, and through this picture many signs and wonders were made manifest. The sick was healed. Bahran was appointed priest of that Church, and he ministered therein until the day of his death. His mother and his son inherited everlasting life through the intercession of the glorious and Archangel, Saint Michael.

On the day of the resurrection, this glorious Angel bowed before the throne of God, and said, "I beg and entreat your compassion, O my God, I your servant and messenger, to make known to me all those who celebrate my commemoration upon earth, through your righteous promise, for you are merciful and compassionate." God answered and said to him, "O Michael, chief of the faithful hosts of heaven, behold, I command you to lift up upon thy wing of fire as many men as you are able to carry upon it, three times." When Saint Michael heard this, he rejoiced with happiness. He lifted up upon his wing three times as many as he could of the men who celebrated his commemoration upon earth and carry them through the river of fire. There were thousands of thousands and tens of thousands of tens of thousands of souls in hell. No one could number them except God Himself. Therefore, O beloved, it is meet that we should strive and should celebrate the commemoration of the glorious Archangel Michael, as well as our ability, even if it is only to give a cup of cold water in his name, as our Lord and Savior Jesus taught in His Holy Gospel.

Let us ask for mercy from God through the intercession of the Archangel Saint Michael, that He may deliver us from the net of Satan, the accursed and may put far away from us all pain (or, sickness) the plague, may increase the fruits of our lands in His mercy, may forgive our sins, may give rest to the souls of the dead, may bring back in safety those of our fathers and brethren who are on a journey, may set peace in our midst, may strengthen us in the True Faith to our last breath.

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

"We give thanks to You! Every soul and heart is lifted up to You, undisturbed name, honored with the name 'God' and praised with the name 'Father', for to everyone and everything (comes) the fatherly kindness and affection and love, and any teaching there may be that is sweet and plain, giving us mind, speech, (and) knowledge: mind, so that we may understand You, speech, so that we may expound You, knowledge, so that we may know You. We rejoice, having been illuminated by Your knowledge. We rejoice because You have shown us Yourself. We rejoice because while we were in (the) body, You have made us divine through Your knowledge.

"The thanksgiving of the man who attains to You is one thing: that we know You. We have known You, intellectual light. Life of life, we have known You. Womb of every creature, we have known You. Womb pregnant with the nature of the Father, we have known You. Eternal permanence of the begetting Father, thus have we worshiped Your goodness. There is one petition that we ask: we would be preserved in knowledge. And there is one protection that we desire: that we not stumble in this kind of life."

When they had said these things in the prayer, they embraced each other and they went to eat their holy food, which has no blood in it.

The Ethiopian Book of the Passion

The Ethiopian Gospel Book contains Passion scenes that may be based on real places in Jerusalem. The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church also has a Passion Week ritual.

The Ethiopian Gospel Book

- The Ethiopian Gospel Book contains Passion scenes that may be based on real places in Jerusalem.
- The book's Passion scenes may include the Holy Sepulcher, which is the setting for the Resurrection.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church's Passion Week

- During Passion Week, priests wear black vestments and cover sacred objects with black cloth.
- Priests spray myrrh in the church instead of incense to symbolize the death of Jesus.
- Men and women stay in church from early morning until the hour of Jesus' death.
- Priests and elders fast by not eating bread or drinking water for three days.
- Holy Saturday is known as "kidame Su'ur" in Amharic, which means "unobserved".

The Passion of Jesus is also described in the four canonical gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

The Prayer of Manasseh (Expanded Version)

¹O Lord Almighty,
 God of our ancestors,
 of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob
 and of their righteous offspring,
²you who made heaven and earth
 with all their order,
³who shackled the sea by your word of command,
 who confined the deep
 and sealed it with your terrible and glorious name,
⁴at whom all things shudder
 and tremble before your power,
⁵for your glorious splendor cannot be borne,
 and the wrath of your threat to sinners is unendurable;
⁶yet immeasurable and unsearchable
 is your promised mercy,
⁷for you are the Lord Most High,
 of great compassion, long-suffering, and very merciful,
 and you relent at human suffering.
 O Lord, according to your great goodness
 you have promised repentance and forgiveness
 to those who have sinned against you,
 and in the multitude of your mercies
 you have appointed repentance for sinners,

so that they may be saved.^[a]

⁸Therefore you, O Lord, God of the righteous,
have not appointed repentance for the righteous,
for Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, who did not sin against you,
but you have appointed repentance for me, who am a sinner.

Confession of Sins

⁶For the sins I have committed are more in number than the sand of the sea;
my transgressions are multiplied, O Lord, they are multiplied!
I am not worthy to look up and see the height of heaven
because of the multitude of my iniquities.

¹⁰I am weighted down with many an iron fetter,
so that I am rejected^[b] because of my sins,
and I have no relief,
for I have provoked your wrath
and have done what is evil in your sight,
setting up abominations and multiplying offenses.

Supplication for Pardon

¹¹And now I bend the knee of my heart,
implore you for your kindness.

¹²I have sinned, O Lord, I have sinned,
and I acknowledge my transgressions.

¹³I earnestly implore you,
forgive me, O Lord, forgive me!
Do not destroy me with my transgressions!
Do not be angry with me forever or store up evil for me;
do not condemn me to the depths of the earth.

For you, O Lord, are the God of those who repent,
¹⁴and in me you will manifest your goodness,
for, unworthy as I am, you will save me according to your great mercy,
¹⁵and I will praise you continually all the days of my life.

For all the host of heaven sings your praise,
and yours is the glory forever. Amen.

The Testament of Gad

Chapter 1

1:1 "A copy of the testament of Gad, concerning what he said to his sons in the one hundred twenty-seventh year of his life, saying,"

1:2 "I was Jacob's ninth son; among the shepherds I was brave."

1:3 "I guarded the flock at night, and when the lion came, the wolf, the leopard, the bear or any other wild animal attacked the flock, I pursued it, seized it by the foot with my hand, crushed and

blinded it, and hurled it a distance of twelve hundred feet."

1:4 "Now Joseph was tending the flocks with me for about thirty days, and since he was delicate, he became faint from the heat, and went back to Hebron to his father."

1:5 "He made Joseph lie down close to him because he loved him."

1:6 "And Joseph said to his father, the sons of Zilpah and Bilhah are killing the best animals and eating them against the advice of Judah and Reuben."

1:7 "He saw that I had set free a lamb from the mouth of a bear, which I then killed, but that I had killed the lamb when I was saddened to see that it was too weak to live; and we had eaten it."

1:8 "This he told our father. On this matter I bore a grudge against Joseph until the day he was sold into Egypt;"

1:9 "The spirit of hatred was in me because we had eaten the newborn of the flocks without Judah. And whatever Joseph told our father, he believed him."

Chapter 2

2:1 "I now confess my sin, children, that frequently I wanted to kill him; to the depth of my soul I hated him and any inner feeling of mercy toward him was completely absent."

2:2 "Because of his dreams my hatred toward him increased and I wanted to gobble him from among the living as an ox gobbles up grass from the ground."

2:3 "For this reason Judah and I sold him to the Ishmaelites for thirty pieces of gold; we hid ten pieces and showed only the twenty to our brothers."

2:4 "Thus it was through greed that our plot to kill him was carried out."

2:5 "But the God of my fathers rescued him from my hands so that I might not perform a lawless deed in Israel."

Chapter 3

3:1 "And now children, listen to the words of truth: to perform justice and every law of the Most High; not to be led astray by the spirit of hatred because it is evil beyond all human deeds."

3:2 "Whatever anyone does, he who hates is revolted; if he fears the Lord and hopes for good things, the hater has no love for him."

3:3 "The hater disparages truth, envies the successful person, relishes slander, loves arrogance, because hatred blinds his soul. It was in this way that I regarded Joseph."

Chapter 4

4:1 "Beware, my children, of those who hate, because it leads to lawlessness against the Lord himself."

4:2 "Hatred does not want to hear repeated his commands concerning love of neighbor, and thus it sins against God."

4:3 "For if a brother makes a false step, immediately it wants to spread the tale to everyone, and is eager to have him condemned for it, punished, and executed."

4:4 "If the hater is a slave, he conspires against his master, and whenever difficulty arises it plots how he might be killed."

4:5 "Hatred collaborates with envy, when it sees or hears about the prosperity of those who do well, it is perpetually peevish."

4:6 "Just as love wants to bring the dead back to life and to recall those under sentence of death, so

hate wants to kill the living and does not wish to preserve alive those who have committed the slightest sin."

4:7 "For among all men the spirit of hatred works by Satan through human frailty for the death of mankind; but the spirit of love works by the Law of God through forbearance for the salvation of mankind."

Chapter 5

5:1 "Hatred is evil, since it continually consorts with lying, speaking against the truth; it makes small things big, turns light into darkness, says that the sweet is bitter, teaches slander, conflict, violence, and all manner of greed; it fills the heart with diabolical venom."

5:2 "I tell you this, my children, from experience, so that you might escape hatred and cling to love of the Lord."

5:3 "Righteousness expels hatred; humility kills envy. For the person who is just and humble is ashamed to commit an injustice, not because someone else will pass judgment on him but out of his own heart, because the Lord considers his inner deliberations."

5:4 "He will not denounce a fellow man, since fear/reverence of the Most High overcomes hatred."

5:5 "Being concerned not to arouse the Lord's anger, he is completely unwilling to wrong anyone, even in his thoughts."

5:6 "I understood this at the last, after I had repented concerning Joseph,"

5:7 "For according to God's truth, repentance destroys disobedience, puts darkness to flight, illumines the vision, furnishes knowledge for the soul, and guides the deliberative powers to salvation."

5:8 "What it has not learned from human agency, it understands through repentance."

5:9 "For God brought on me a disease of the liver, and if it had not been for the prayers of Jacob, my father, he would shortly have summoned from me my spirit."

5:10 "For by whatever human capacity anyone transgresses, by that he is also chastised."

5:11 "Since my anger was merciless in opposition to Joseph, through this anger of mine I suffered mercilessly, and was brought under judgment for eleven months, as long as I had had it in for Joseph, until he was sold."

Chapter 6

6:1 "Now, my children, each of you love his brother. Drive hatred out of your hearts. Love one another in deed and word and inward thoughts."

6:2 "For when I stood before my father I would speak peaceable about Joseph, but when I went out, the spirit of hatred darkened my mind and aroused my soul to kill him."

6:3 "Love one another from the heart, therefore, and if anyone sins against you, speak to him in peace. Expel the venom of hatred, and do not harbor deceit in your heart. If anyone confesses and repents, forgive him."

6:4 "If anyone denies his guilt, do not be contentious with him, otherwise he may start cursing, and you would be sinning doubly."

6:5 "In a dispute do not let an outsider hear your secrets, since out of hatred for you he may become your enemy, and commit a great sin against you. He may talk to you frequently but treacherously, or be much concerned with you, but for an evil end, having absorbed from you the venom."

6:6 "Even if he denies it and acts disgracefully out of a sense of guilt, be quiet and do not become upset. For he who denies will repent, and avoid offending you again; indeed he will honor you, will respect you and be at peace."

6:7 "But even if he is devoid of shame and persists in his wickedness, forgive him from the heart and leave vengeance to God."

Chapter 7

7:1 "If anyone prospers more than you, do not be aggrieved, but pray for him that he may prosper completely, for this is what is precisely to your advantage."

7:2 "And if he becomes even more exalted, do not be envious, but remember that all humanity dies. Offer praise to the Lord who provides good and beneficial things for all mankind."

7:3 "Search out the Lord's judgments, and thus you shall gain an inheritance and your mind will be at rest."

7:4 "Even if someone becomes rich by evil schemes, as did Esau, your father's brother, do not be jealous; wait for the Lord to set the limits."

7:5 "For if he takes away the things obtained by evil means, those who repent receive forgiveness, and the impenitent one receives eternal punishment."

7:6 "The man who is poor but free from envy, who is grateful to the Lord for everything, is richer than all, because he does not love the foolish things that are a temptation common to mankind."

7:7 "Drive hatred away from your souls, and love one another in uprightness of heart."

Chapter 8

8:1 "Tell these things to your children as well, so that they will honor Judah and Levi, because from them the Lord will raise up a Savior for Israel."

8:2 "I know that at the end your children will depart from them and will live in all manner of wickedness and evil-doing and corruption in the sight of the Lord."

8:3 "Then after he had been silent for a brief time he said again to them, My children, obey your father. Bury me near my fathers."

8:4 "He drew up his feet and fell asleep in peace. And after five years they took him up and buried him in Hebron with his fathers."

The Vision of Isaiah (Additional Fragments)

The whole message of the Bible can be summed up in three basic words: God has spoken. This is the foundation of the Christian faith.

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. (Isaiah c:1 RSV)

The men who speak for God whom we are to study in this series of messages are the Old Testament prophets. One of the most important passages in the Bible for the church today is found in the opening statement of the Letter to the Hebrews,

In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son. (Hebrews 1:1-2)

The whole message of the Bible can be summed up in three basic words which convey the substance of this passage: God has spoken. This is the foundation of the Christian faith. When the apostolic writer says that God has spoken, he means something more than the fact that God speaks in nature. The Bible teaches us that there is a general revelation of God in nature, in history, and in the conscience of man. "The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork" (Ps. 19:1). God has not left Himself without witness. There is a revelation of God in nature and man.

But when the writer of Hebrews says, "God hath spoken through the prophets," he is thinking of a more direct revelation of God. It is apparent that the Bible means that this is to be taken quite literally. When the Bible says that God speaks or that God has spoken or that God says, it means that He speaks in words.

This basic Christian concept of the origin of the knowledge of God has been widely repudiated in the church today. It was lost in the nineteenth century when men rejected revelation altogether and relied on reason alone. It was partially recovered in the early part of the twentieth century in what was known as the Crisis Theology. New theologians came into the church who saw that reason alone was not enough. Therefore they began to speak once more about revelation, but they gave their own sophisticated definition of it. They made a distinction between revelation as the communication of truth, which they called propositional revelation and rejected, and revelation as the self-disclosure of God. This has proved to be an utterly inadequate representation of the Biblical doctrine of revelation. It must be said, therefore, that when the Bible says "God has spoken," it means something more than the revelation of God in nature and something more than a nonverbal, ambiguous disclosure of God. The statement that God has spoken means that revelation is the communication of truth.

I have carefully chosen the tense of the verb in the main title of this series, Men Who Speak for God. This is to emphasize the fact that the word God spoke to the prophets is the living Word. It is alive today. We have the infallible record of the word which God spoke through the prophets and in Jesus Christ His Son, and this is why we call the Bible the infallible Word of God. This is a point made by Peter in his second letter:

For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For when he received honor and glory from God the Father and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," we heard this voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. And we have the prophetic word made more sure. You will do well to pay attention to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by the impulse of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. (2 Peter 1:1c-21)

Our first study in this series of messages on the prophets takes us to chapter 6 of the prophecy of Isaiah, which contains one of the most exalted passages in the whole Bible. The chapter can be divided into two parts: first, the account of Isaiah's vision of God, and second, the response he made to the vision.

The sixth chapter of the Book of Isaiah opens with a magnificent vision:

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple. (Isaiah c:1)

The reference to the death of Uzziah is more than a date in history. Uzziah was a great king who reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem. This was a time of prosperity and military power exceeded only by the reign of Solomon, but Uzziah died and now his young son Jotham sat on the throne. These were days of great anxiety, and what Isaiah means when he says that he saw the Lord high and lifted up in the year that King Uzziah died is that he saw something more in this than a succession of kings. He saw in the vision that neither Uzziah nor Jotham was the true king of Israel; the true King of Israel was the Lord God of hosts who sat on the throne.

In these troubled days when men's hearts fail them for fear, when nation rises against nation, when violence and conflict increases within our own nation, we need to remember that the living God is on the throne. He has not abdicated. I learned this lesson well when I was a seminary student in the days of the great depression. The year that I graduated the banks were closed. I had hoped to do graduate work, but all scholarships were wiped out. It was doubtful whether many of us would even get a church to preach in. About that time a man moved into town who started a new restaurant with simple food, simple furnishings, and low prices. The students flocked there. It was about the only place we could afford to eat, but what impresses me most now about those days is the cash register. Just above the line that registered the cash sales, there was a cardboard sign, "God is still on the throne." That simple statement of faith helped bring me through a very difficult time in my life, and in the lives of many others.

Isaiah's vision of the living God on the throne teaches us some very important things about God. **The first is the reality of God.** Isaiah said, "My eyes have seen the king, the Lord of Hosts." God is not merely a word or a concept or a symbol. When the Bible speaks about God it speaks about the living God. In this vision Isaiah saw the reality of the whole invisible, spiritual world. In this materialistic age, we must remember that reality is greater than that which we can see or touch or handle. There is more to reality than can be measured by sense perception. Heaven is real, God is real, and the angels are real.

The Bible teaches us that God is the creator of all things, visible and invisible. This vision of God discloses what we usually call the invisible world—invisible only to our natural senses. Do you remember the story of Elisha, the great prophet who was trapped in Dothan by the Syrian army? Early in the morning his servant rose up and looked at all the hills surrounding Dothan. They were filled with Syrian chariots. The city was completely encircled by the enemy; and in consternation and panic the young man ran to his master and said, "What shall we do?" Elisha was not even disturbed. He said quietly, "Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." Then the prophet prayed and said, "Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes that he may see." The Bible says that "the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha" (2 Kings 6:17).

Before we can really see God, grasp the reality of God, something must happen to us. Our ears, our eyes, our sight, all our perceptions must be attuned to God. Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."

The second thing we learn from Isaiah's vision of God is the majesty of God. He saw the Lord high and lifted up and His train filled the temple. Here we have the revelation of the transcendent greatness of God. He is altogether other than man. God says,

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. (Isaiah 55:8-9)

God created the world without our aid or our counsel, and He is the ruler of heaven and earth.

The third point to which our attention is directed in the vision is the holiness of God. Above the throne "stood the seraphim; each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew" (Isa. 1:2). They sang antiphonally, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory" (v. 3). This is the only place in the Bible where seraphim are mentioned. They are apparently God's highest created beings. The Hebrew word seraph refers to something that is burning and dazzling. This emphasizes the holiness of God. If the highest of the created beings, who have never sinned, had to cover their faces when they stood around the throne of God, what must be said of sinful men? The Bible teaches us that holiness is the fundamental attribute of God. It refers both to moral purity and separation from all that is evil. God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.

The fourth point of emphasis in the vision is the glory of God. Not only the temple but the whole earth is full of His glory. The vision of the holiness and glory of God is intended to teach us that we can approach Him only with reverence. We are to give unto the Lord the glory due to His name. The great sin of our age is that we have given to man the glory due only to God, and now our confidence in man is being shaken. We talk about the credibility gap. We do not trust each other. This is because we have put man in the place of God. We must go back to the right order. To give unto the Lord the glory due to His name is to recognize God as God – sovereign, holy, righteous, the one with whom we have to do. The first commandment is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God."

Having examined the vision of God that came to Isaiah in the temple, let us now observe the response he made to the vision. There are three parts to the response. There is first an overwhelming sense of unworthiness. This vision of the holiness and majesty of God stunned the prophet. He said,

Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts! (Isaiah 6:5)

Here we learn one of the important lessons of the Bible. It is only the true knowledge of God that brings men to a sense of sin and unworthiness. When Peter saw that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, he fell down at His feet and said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke 5:8). Until we see God in His holiness, we will never see ourselves as guilty, sinful men and women. It is the knowledge of God that produces in man the consciousness of sin, a consciousness which is generally lacking in our day.

This is the reason it is so difficult to preach the gospel. When we preach the wonderful message of salvation, that God freely forgives our sins, that He accepts us in Jesus Christ as His children so that we can call God Father, it makes no impression on the modern man. This is because, being

ignorant of God, he is ignorant of himself; and in this ignorance he goes on his way to destruction and death. This is what Jesus meant when He said, "They that are whole have no need of a physician." The church must once more pattern its preaching and teaching of the gospel after the prophets and apostles. Jesus said, "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Only those who are conscious of their sin and guilt have an ear for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Observe next that after Isaiah's confession of sin comes the purging or cleaning from sin. This is how it is described:

Then ffeew one of the seraphim to me, having in his hand a burning coal which he had taken with tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin forgiven." (Isaiah 6:6-7)

This is the good news of the gospel. The confession of sin is followed immediately by the forgiveness of sin:

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

The third part of the response to the vision is the call to consecration. After confession and cleansing comes consecration. Isaiah heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" Then I said, 'Here am I! Send me!'" Cleansed and forgiven, he was ready to serve. We must remember that cleansing always comes before consecration. We cannot enter into the service of the Lord until we have been cleansed from our sins. The great Puritan pastor Richard Baxter said, "A holy calling never saved an unholy man." Salvation is by grace alone. It can never be merited or earned. Many people who have been in the church all their lives still have a feeling that if they do good for God, He will do good for them. This is the wrong order. We must first confess our sins and be cleansed from them. The guilt must be pardoned. We must become the children of God by faith, and then in that position and from that position we can serve Him.

So cleansed and consecrated, this young prophet of God went out to preach the message of salvation. The substance of his message is found in chapter 55 of his book. I can think of no better way to close this message than by repeating to you the great gospel invitation of this evangelical prophet:

Ho, every one who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Harken diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in fatness. (Isaiah 55:1-2)

So I ask you out there in the world living it up while you can, finding no satisfaction or peace or contentment: Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread? Come to Jesus Christ who is the Bread of life. In Him you will find life and peace and joy.

The Song of Miriam

15 Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the Lord:

I will sing to the Lord, for an overflowing victory!

Horse and rider he threw into the sea!

²The Lord is my strength and my power;^[a]
he has become my salvation.

This is my God, whom I will praise,
the God of my ancestors, whom I will acclaim.

³The Lord is a warrior;
the Lord is his name.

⁴Pharaoh's chariots and his army he hurled into the sea;
his elite captains were sunk in the Reed Sea.^[b]

⁵The deep sea covered them;
they sank into the deep waters like a stone.

⁶Your strong hand, Lord, is dominant in power;
your strong hand, Lord, shatters the enemy!

⁷With your great surge you overthrow your opponents;
you send out your hot anger; it burns them up like straw.

⁸With the breath of your nostrils the waters swelled up,
the floods surged up in a great wave;
the deep waters foamed in the depths of the sea.

⁹The enemy said, "I'll pursue, I'll overtake,
I'll divide the spoils of war.
I'll be overfilled with them.
I'll draw my sword; my hand will destroy them."

¹⁰You blew with your wind; the sea covered over them.
They sank like lead in the towering waters.

¹¹Who is like you among the gods, Lord?
Who is like you, foremost in holiness,
worthy of highest praise, doing awesome deeds?

¹²You raised your strong hand;
earth swallowed them up.

¹³With your great loyalty you led the people you rescued;
with your power you guided them to your sanctuary.

¹⁴The peoples heard, they shook in terror;
horror grabbed hold of Philistia's inhabitants.

¹⁵Then Edom's tribal chiefs were terrified;
panic grabbed hold of Moab's rulers;
all of Canaan's inhabitants melted in fear.

¹⁶Terror and fear came over them;
because of your great power,
they were as still as a stone

until your people, Lord, passed by,
until the people you made your own passed by.

¹⁷ You brought them in and planted them on your own mountain,
the place, Lord, that you made your home,
the sanctuary, Lord, that your hand created.

¹⁸ The Lord will rule forever and always.

¹⁶ When Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and cavalry went into the sea, the Lord brought back the waters of the sea over them. But the Israelites walked through the sea on dry ground.

Miriam's victory song

²⁰ Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand. All the women followed her playing tambourines and dancing. ²¹ Miriam sang the refrain back to them:

Sing to the Lord, for an overflowing victory!
Horse and rider he threw into the sea!

Turning bitter water sweet

²² Then Moses had Israel leave the Reed Sea^[c] and go out into the Shur desert. They traveled for three days in the desert and found no water. ²³ When they came to Marah, they couldn't drink Marah's water because it was bitter. That's why it was called Marah.^[d] ²⁴ The people complained against Moses, "What will we drink?" ²⁵ Moses cried out to the Lord, and the Lord pointed out a tree to him. He threw it into the water, and the water became sweet.

The Lord made a regulation and a ruling there, and there he tested them. ²⁶ The Lord said, "If you are careful to obey the Lord your God, do what God thinks is right, pay attention to his commandments, and keep all of his regulations, then I won't bring on you any of the diseases that I brought on the Egyptians. I am the Lord who heals you."

²⁷ Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees. They camped there by the water.

The Prophecy of Elijah

About a hundred years had passed in ancient Israel since the time of King David, who had set a high standard of faithfulness and integrity in serving the one true God. Now a wicked king named Ahab did more to provoke God to anger than all the kings of Israel who had come before him (1 Kings 16:33). The date was around 870 B.C.

The apostasy during Ahab's reign was the result of many years of corrupt kings and increasing evil, until wickedness filled the land. A majority of the people had yielded to Satan and his demons through their worship of the Canaanite gods Baal and Ashtoreth.

Still, God had declared that there were 7,000 persons in Israel who had not worshipped Baal during that very wicked time (1 Kings 19:18).

Earlier, God had sent warnings and waited patiently for His people to separate themselves from the pagan influences that surrounded them and to return to true worship (1 Kings 14:6-16). Now God was going to bring a severe judgment on the nation to stir them to action.

God explains, "Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7). To announce the punishment and warn the nation to change its ways, God sent a messenger, Elijah the prophet.

Elijah meaning

Elijah's name means "Yahweh is God" (*New Bible Dictionary*) or "The Lord Is My God" (*NKJV Study Bible*). He is called Elias in the New Testament in the King James Version, based on the Greek version of his name.

Elijah stops the rain (his first miracle)

Elijah is first mentioned in Scripture when he declares to King Ahab that a severe drought would begin immediately to test Israel and its leadership. "Elijah ... said to Ahab, 'As the LORD God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word'" (1 Kings 17:1).

Withholding rain for 3½ years was the first miracle God did through the prophet. This would bring severe famine throughout the kingdom. The purpose of this punishment was to bring the nation to repentance of its idolatry. Although unpleasant at the time, Elijah likely understood the potentially good effects of such punishment if Israel would repent of its sins.

God always determines the magnitude and duration of punishment that He brings; and in this case, He moved Elijah to pray for an end of the rain and later for it to begin again.

Elijah the man of faith

God appointed this man of the desert regions to go before kings, bringing the message of warning and repentance.

Elijah the Tishbite, of Gilead, was a human being just like any of us—a man of similar hopes and dreams, weaknesses and shortcomings, but also a man of deep faith in God. Elijah was a bold, direct-to-the-point prophet of God. By speaking the prophecies of God, he made fierce enemies, but his enemies could not overpower him.

The apostle James would later speak of Elijah's faith saying, "Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit" (James 5:17-18).

The call of Elijah

Like many of the prophets, Elijah did not seek to be God's messenger. Instead, God chose him for the job.

Once called, Elijah did not hesitate to take on his mission, even though it appeared that his life would be threatened by the wicked king. Elijah set out at once for the capital city of Samaria to deliver the announcement to King Ahab.

Then God sent Elijah into hiding as the drought dried up the streams and withered the crops of the nation (1 Kings 17:7-15; 1 Kings 18:1). First God miraculously fed him by the Brook Cherith.

Elijah and the widow

Then God told Elijah, "Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you" (1 Kings 17:9). This was a surprising turn, since Sidon was a Baal-worshipping area, and because Elijah was hated by another woman from Sidon, Queen Jezebel.

You can read the fascinating story of how the widow's bin of flour and jar of oil were miraculously multiplied, and how Elijah prayed for God to resurrect her son in 1 Kings 17:10-24).

Elijah and Ahab

Meanwhile, the prophets of Baal were humiliated since they couldn't invoke their pagan god to end the drought and bring the needed rain upon the land. King Ahab and his officials were furious with Elijah, thinking that he was the cause of so much suffering in Israel; and they hunted for Elijah far into foreign lands (1 Kings 18:10).

Finally, the prophet was directed by God to appear before King Ahab again. "Then it happened, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said to him, 'Is that you, O troubler of Israel?' And he answered, 'I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD and have followed the Baals'" (1 Kings 18:17-19).

Showdown at Mount Carmel: Elijah and the prophets of Baal

Elijah's greatest public miracle involved a contest with the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah on Mount Carmel. Elijah invited these false prophets and all Israel to a demonstration to show that Baal had no power at all against the God of Israel. The outcome would demonstrate who served the true God (1 Kings 18:19-40).

Elijah's greatest public miracle involved a contest with the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah on Mount Carmel. To show God's power, Elijah told the large crowd, "I alone am left a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men" (1 Kings 18:22). Elijah continued, "How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him" (1 Kings 18:21). God would give convincing proof that day that He was Israel's only true God.

So the contest commenced. Throughout the day, the false prophets called on their god to send down fire and consume an animal sacrifice—but to no avail.

At the end of the day, Elijah called on Israel's God to send fire to swallow up the sacrifice prepared for Him. God responded to Elijah's prayer. In a moment thousands witnessed the fire from heaven consume the carcass, all the water in the trench and all the wet wood, burning up even the stones!

Elijah exposed the deception of the false prophets of Baal and at last the hearts of the Israelites were convinced that only Israel's God could do this miracle. Elijah then ordered that the false prophets be executed (1 Kings 18:36-40). Then God's Spirit moved Elijah to pray that it would rain; and the rains came, ending the terrible drought (1 Kings 18:42-45; James 5:18).

(Learn more about what God says about false prophets in the article "False Prophets." To understand how and why God works through His prophets, read the article "Prophets of the Bible.")

Elijah and Jezebel

When the false prophets of Baal were dead, Elijah came under a death threat by Jezebel, the wicked wife of King Ahab. As Israel's queen, she brought the worship of her god Baal into the nation, influencing King Ahab to worship Baal and set up idols in Israel (1 Kings 16:31; 1 Kings 21:25-26). God's prophets who bring messages of warning are often hated and accused of actually being the cause of such suffering. Jezebel and the false prophets of Baal hated Elijah, and they spared no effort to catch him.

In a moment of human weakness Elijah was deeply discouraged, but it wasn't long before God reassured Elijah and sent him back again to face King Ahab. Elijah was to deliver the message that Ahab and Jezebel would both die a humiliating death because of all the wicked deeds they refused to repent of (1 Kings 21:20-24).

Elijah and Elisha

God used Elijah to train his successor, Elisha. Elijah "found Elisha busily engaged in plowing. Coming on him suddenly, Elijah threw his mantle over Elisha, a symbol of Elisha's call to the prophetic office" (*Zondervan NIV Bible Commentary*, note on 1 Kings 19:19-20).

Elisha stayed with Elijah faithfully until the time God divided the Jordan and then took Elijah away with a chariot of fire (2 Kings 2:8-11; for more on what happened to Elijah, see "Are Enoch and Elijah in Heaven?").

History is being repeated

The world today still has its Ahabs and Jezebels. The present age also has its idolatry, though it is more subtle than that of Elijah's day.

The shrines of pagan worship may not be as visible in a basically Christian-professing society, and there may be very few carved images that people actually worship, yet millions are following after the gods of this world. Today's idols can be riches, fame, pleasure and the pleasant-sounding fables that occupy the hearts and minds of many who are unwilling and disinterested in learning about God.

End-time Elijah

Sometimes prophecies can have multiple fulfillments. Bible prophecy seems to point to another Elijah-like work that will arise at the end of this age before the coming time of God's great wrath upon the earth. The prophet Malachi declared, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD" (Malachi 4:5-6).

Was John the Baptist Elijah?

After the transfiguration where three disciples saw Moses and Elijah in a vision, they asked Jesus, "Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" (Matthew 17:10). Jesus explained that John the Baptist was one fulfillment of the Elijah prophecy (verses 11-13).

Similar to the way John the Baptist came "in the spirit and power of Elijah" (Luke 1:17), an end-time fulfillment will feature a commission much like the one of the first Elijah. Similar to the way John the Baptist came "in the spirit and power of Elijah" (Luke 1:17), an end-time fulfillment will feature a commission much like the one of the first Elijah. Scripture indicates that an Elijah-like message to repent and obey God will be preached by the Church of God (Matthew 24:14; 28:19-20).

What God wants today

We can learn about the message of the final Elijah by studying the mission of John the Baptist. Gabriel brought a message from God that a prophet was coming to announce that Jesus was the Christ, the long-awaited Messiah. John the Baptist was that prophet, and Jesus declared that John was an Elijah-like figure, in addition to one who would come later (Matthew 11:14; Matthew 17:12).

An angel declared of John's mission: "And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He will also go before Him [Jesus] in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:16-17).

The messages of Elijah and the other prophets of the Old Testament played an important role in the establishment of the New Testament Church. Paul told Church members of the first century that they were part of the household of God that had "been built on the foundation of the apostles and *prophets*, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone" (Ephesians 2:20, emphasis added).

At the time of the end, just before the great and dreadful day of God's wrath, the world will again be given the same message that was preached by Elijah the prophet. As noted, Malachi 4:5-6 seems to indicate that an Elijah-like work will be done before Christ's return.

Two witnesses

As the world enters this time of judgment, two witnesses will be given power to stop rainfall for 3½ years—this time over all nations.

Christ says, "And I will give power to My two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. ... These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire" (Revelation 11:3, 6).

God will take no pleasure in sending these judgments, and disobedient nations will need to be reminded of God's purpose for them: "'Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?' says the Lord GOD, 'and not that he should turn from his ways and live?'" (Ezekiel 18:23; see also Ezekiel 33:11).

The message of the two witnesses will again be like that of Elijah. It will be a call to repentance and of preparing a people for Christ's second coming. Be sure to read more on the role of these two prophets in the article "Two Witnesses."

Elijah is considered one of the most important prophets of the Old Testament. He faithfully carried out God's mission in the face of danger and hardship. His was a singular voice of "one crying in the wilderness" to rebuke sin in the land and to expose the false prophets and false religions of his day.

In Elijah's day a revival of true worship was begun. Be sure to read the article "Elisha the Prophet" to see how God continued the course He had for His people through the next prophet sent to Israel. Elijah's whole life was devoted to the work of restoring true worship in Israel. His admonition that God's people faithfully serve Him with their whole hearts remains important for us today.

The Book of the Patriarchs

The following twelve books are biographies written between 107 and 137 B.C. They are a forceful exposition, showing how a Pharisee with a rare gift of writing secured publicity by using the names of the greatest men of ancient times. "There were intellectual giants in those days" and the Twelve Patriarchs were the Intellectual Giants!

Each is here made to tell his life story. When he is on his deathbed he calls all his children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren about him, and proceeds without reservation to lay bare his experiences for the moral guidance of his hearers. If he fell into sin he tells all about it and then counsels them not to err as he did. If he was virtuous, he shows what rewards were his.

When you look beyond the unvarnished--almost brutally frank--passages of the text, you will discern a remarkable attestation of the expectations of the Messiah which existed a hundred years before Christ. And there is another element of rare value in this strange series. As Dr. R. H. Charles says in his scholarly work on the Pseudepigrapha: its ethical teaching "has achieved a real immortality by influencing the thought and diction of the writers of the New Testament, and even those of our Lord. This ethical teaching, which is very much higher and purer than that of the Old Testament, is yet its true spiritual child and helps to bridge the chasm that divides the ethics of the Old and New Testaments."

The instances of the influence of these writings on the New Testament are notable in the Sermon on the Mount which reflects the spirit and even uses phrases from these Testaments. St. Paul appears to have borrowed so freely that it seems as though he must have carried a copy of the Testaments with him on his travels.

Thus, the reader has before him in these pages what is at once striking for its blunt primitive style and valuable as some of the actual source books of the Bible.

The Lament of Rachel

A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more.” Matthew 2:18

I have to confess that for many years this verse, stuck as it is in the middle of Matthew’s reportage on the wise men and King Herod’s slaughter of the infants in Bethlehem, left me wondering what the great apostle was thinking. Bible students have long understood that Matthew wrote his gospel, at least in part, to show his Jewish audience the many ways in which Jesus fulfilled Old Testament messianic prophecies. But how do Rachel’s tears fit into this, apart from the fact that all mothers cry when their children die. Really, on the surface it doesn’t even read like a prophecy.

Most of the time even a casual, modern reader can see the connections Matthew makes between events in Jesus’ life and Old Testament prophecy. For instance, when Matthew quotes Isaiah 7:14 and points out that Jesus’ virgin birth was long prophesied (Mat. 1:22-23), most people can instantly see the connection. But to many readers, connecting Herod’s slaughter of the little boys in Bethlehem to Rachel’s lament in Jeremiah 31:15 is a bridge too far. It can feel, and certainly for too long it felt to me, as if Matthew was trying too hard to find fulfilled prophecy.

I could not have been more wrong. Rachel weeping for her children was exactly the right reference to remind knowledgeable Jews of the significance of this historical event in light of Jesus’ fulfillment of messianic prophecy. Once again, what appears at first glance to be a mistake turns out to be yet one more proof that the Bible is a perfect work, and that it reaches a level of perfection not achieved by any other artifact presently to be found on planet Earth.

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Before I explain Rachel weeping for her children, let’s remind ourselves of the context in which the reference is found. At the beginning of Matthew 2, wise men from the east arrived asking to see “he who is born king of the Jews.” They claimed to have seen a star signifying such a birth, and now they want to see the infant king. Needless to say, the entire city was troubled by their arrival, but most especially King Herod, whose claim on the throne was entirely dependent upon Roman backing, along with the Jewish “deep state” that had so far colluded with Herod to maintain a balance of power and wealth distinctly tilted in their favour.

A hurried meeting of the Sanhedrin is called, and Herod is informed that Biblical prophecy would put a newborn Jewish king, if such a person even existed, in Bethlehem, some five miles south of Jerusalem (Micah 5:2). Herod, thinking quickly, asks the wise men to find the newborn king and bring him word of his location. Ostensibly Herod wants to worship him too. But the wise men, having found and worshipped the baby Jesus, are warned in a dream not to report anything to Herod, and so they return to their homeland by another route.

Never prone to trust anyone too far, Herod soon smelled a plot. He realized the wise men weren’t coming back and he would have to deal with this new claimant to the throne his way, which was light years away from anything you could call sportsmanship. Herod was already a monstrous murderer, so adding another 10-15 dead children to his record (all the boys under two in Bethlehem)

didn't bother him. But what would have bothered him, had he ever found out, was that his plan failed miserably. In that slaughter he added greatly to his sins, and at the same time failed to achieve his goal. Joseph was warned in a dream what would happen, and even though Herod acted quickly, he was too late. Jesus and his earthly parents were already on their way to Egypt.

This, then, is the story behind today's inquiry, and the question is, how does Jeremiah's statement about Rachel weeping for her children serve as a prophecy for it?

First, let's deal with Rachel herself. If you've read Genesis you probably already know that Rachel was Jacob's second, and favourite wife. Jacob's love for Rachel was so much greater that Gen. 29:31 says he "hated" his first wife Leah. However, God stepped in and redressed the imbalance by giving Leah six sons while keeping Rachel barren. Rachel became so frustrated by her childlessness that she cried out to Jacob, "Give me children, or I shall die" (Gen. 30:1). But for a long while no children came. Rachel had to watch as both hers and Leah's concubines had two children apiece, with each of them adding insult to the injury she so deeply felt. Finally, Rachel gave birth to Joseph, who became Jacob's favourite son because he came from Jacob's favourite wife. Later Rachel had a second son, Benjamin. But in delivering him, Rachel died. Thus, a frustrated desire for children will forever be connected with Rachel.

Then a merciful God stepped in to redress the imbalance between Leah's joy and Rachel's frustration. Over the next several centuries Joseph and Benjamin would come to represent all of Israel. Joseph, because his sons Ephraim and Manasseh had so many descendants, they came to stand in for all of Israel (the ten northern tribes) in many Bible passages—especially those found in the Psalms and the prophets. Benjamin, on the other hand, came to stand in for the two southern tribes, although the tribe of Judah was much larger. You can see this phenomenon in a single verse if you check out Ps. 80:2, but it also turns up in many other places. It's ironic, but Rachel, the wife who had the fewest children by far, became known among the 12 tribes as the mother of Israel.

"Rachel embodied several contradictions, among them, she who had the fewest children came to stand in as the mother of all Jacob's descendants."

Rachel embodied several contradictions, among them, she who had the fewest children came to stand in as the mother of all Jacob's descendants. That ought to have made her happy. But, of course, she could not know how her reputation would fare after her death. She was characteristically seen, then, as grieving, mostly over the children she never had. Thus, Jeremiah let Rachel weep for the nation as it was carried away into exile in 586 B.C.

Thus says the Lord: "A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more" (Jer. 31:15)

Why Ramah? Because that was the place where all of Judah was herded together for their trek into exile. And why was Rachel singled out at this point? Because she had undergone a similar experience in her personal life. As she lay dying, she named her second son Ben-oni, son of my sorrow. Only after her death did Jacob change it to Benjamin, son of my right hand. Rachel grieved because she had no idea how important her sons would become, just as all of Judah and Benjamin

grieved on their way to Babylonian exile, never thinking they and their children would return in triumph some 70 years later, just as God had promised.

Just to be clear, let me say it another way. Rachel grieved over her lack of children because she feared that the Messianic line would die out, or that her children would play no part in it. Centuries later (nearly a thousand years later) Jeremiah recorded that all of Judah grieved because they feared the Messianic line would be endangered again by their Babylonian exile. Their grief was so much like Rachel's that in his prophecy Jeremiah let hers stand in for the sorrow he observed firsthand.

Matthew saw the same phenomenon when Herod killed all the baby boys in Bethlehem. There was great sorrow and frustration once Herod's soldiers had done their dirty work. And for those in the know, the death of those male children could have looked like the death of Israel's Messianic hope. Certainly, had the wise men received word of Herod's rampage without knowing of Jesus' escape, they might have lost all hope. No wonder, then, that Matthew would seize upon Rachel's lamentation as a prophecy of the sorrow that engulfed Bethlehem when all the little boys were slaughtered. Proof that Matthew was right to do so is found in Jeremiah 31:16 and 17, the two verses that follow immediately after Rachel's tears are recorded.

Thus says the Lord: "keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears, for there is a reward for your work, declares the Lord, and they shall come back from the land of the enemy. There is hope for your future, declares the Lord, and your children shall come back to their own country" (Jer. 31:16-17).

These are words of hope. Admittedly, these words were first uttered to give God's people a hope that their exile would end, and they would come back to the promised land. But why could not the whole prophecy apply to the families of Bethlehem, to give them a hope that their children had not died in vain and that through Messiah Jesus there would someday be a grand eternal reunion. Now there's a Merry Christmas for you, even if it is bathed in blood.

The Hymns of Abba Takla Haymanot

Täklä-Haymanot, Saint, established the earliest monastery in Šäwa and thus opened a new period of the evangelization of the Ethiopian region from the last quarter of the 13th century. The son of Säga-Zä-'Ab and 'Edzi'e-Haräya, he was born at Zoräre, in Selaleš, a district on the eastern edge of the Šäwan plateau, at a place today known as Etisa. He descended from a family of Christian immigrants who had settled in the region over ten generations earlier. The traditions about his life give a long clerical background to his family and his own father is said to have been a priest. According to hagiographical tradition, Täklä-Haymanot was born during a period which witnessed a strong resurgence of pagan activity in Šäwa, led by the legendary Motälamé, King of Damot.

Täklä-Haymanot appears to have received his early rudimentary education in Šäwa, probably from his own father and is said to have been made a deacon by *Abba Qérellos*. But a significant turning point in his religious career occurred when he decided to travel north and join the island monastery recently established by *Abba 'Iyäsus-Mo'a* at Lake Hayq. He received the monastic habit from 'Iyäsus-Mo'a, and spent about ten years studying the scriptures under the learned abbot of Däbrä Hayq. He then left for Tegré, apparently with the intention of making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. This he appears to have failed to do, but he settled at Däbrä Damo, 'Iyäsus-Mo'a's original school, under *Abba Yohanni*. Here he considerably increased his knowledge of the Scriptures and the traditions of the Church and acquired a great monastic prestige. A small group of followers seems to have begun gathering around him. After a sojourn of about twelve years in Tegré, Täklä-Haymanot returned to Šäwa via Hayq.

Despite the presence of small isolated Christian communities in the central plateau, Šäwa was still predominantly pagan at the time. On his return to the country of his birth, Täklä-Haymanot began to preach, moving about in this area. Many disciples joined him and he finally settled at Däbrä Asbo (known as Däbrä Libanos from the 15th century onwards) in Gerarya. Täklä-Haymanot's community soon developed into an important centre of Christian teaching, which was carried on by his disciples further afield in the regions to the south and west of Šäwa. Most of the monastic communities in Ethiopia derive their origin from him and are collectively known as the House of Täklä-Haymanot.

Because of his remarkable contributions as the "New Apostle" of Ethiopia, and particularly after the post-15th century emergence of Däbrä Libanos as a major politico-religious power, many apocryphal stories have been built around his name. Of these the most significant is his alleged role in the dynastical change of 1270, when the Zagwé were deposed and Yekuno-'Amlak ascended the throne.

The Miracles of the Ethiopian Saints

The Miracles of the Ethiopian Saints include stories of the miraculous deeds of Ethiopian saints, such as Saint Gäbrä Mämfäs Qeddus, Saint Takla Haymanot, and the Virgin Mary.

Saint Gäbrä Mämfäs Qeddus

- Born in Egypt, he lived in the wilderness for many years
- God covered his body with white hair to protect him from the elements
- Founded a monastery in Ethiopia and performed miracles

Saint Takla Haymanot

- Ethiopia's most famous saint
- One of the few saints whose birthday Christians celebrate
- Celebrated in foreign churches such as Egypt and Rome

The Virgin Mary

- The Tǝʾammərǝ Maryam is a collection of stories about the Virgin Mary's miracles, written in the Gǝʿəz language from the 1300s to the 1900s
- These stories are central to the daily life of many Ethiopians and Eritreans

The Miracle of the Black Leg

- A story about Saints Cosmas and Damian who miraculously transplanted the leg of an Ethiopian man onto a white man
- The story is from the 13th century Golden Legend by Jacobus da Varagine

The Ethiopian Book of Divine Wisdom

We can get an understanding of divine wisdom from the book of Proverbs. Ecclesiastes however is human wisdom - the wisdom of the man who lives "under the sun" ([Eccles 1:3](#)). The expression 'under the sun' comes often in Ecclesiastes, because its writer lived under the sun. Proverbs however demonstrates the wisdom of a man who lived above the sun. This is where we are called to live - in the heavenlies. Then why has God placed the book of Ecclesiastes in the Bible? The Bible describes human wisdom in order to show how much higher divine wisdom is than that. A large portion of the book of Job, consists of the speeches of three preachers who said much about God with their human wisdom, but which was mostly all wrong ([Job 42:7](#)). Yet God allowed their words to be recorded in Scripture. Ecclesiastes has been included in Scripture to show us that even the wisest man on earth can miss finding God when he depends on his human cleverness. Jesus once said, "I thank You, Father, that You have hidden these things from the clever and the intelligent, but You have revealed them unto babes" ([Mt. 11:25](#)). What do babes have that clever and intelligent people do not have? Humility. It is very difficult for a clever, intelligent person to be humble. It is not wrong to be intelligent, but it is certainly ungodly to be proud of one's intelligence. Proud men can never understand God's ways, no matter how intelligent they may be.

The Books of Ecclesiastes and Proverbs can be compared to the offerings of Cain and Abel. Cain's offering was a religious offering. Abel's was a spiritual offering. Throughout the ages, there has been a constant conflict between religious people and spiritual people. Saul was a religious person - a man of the head. But David was a spiritual person - a man of the heart. The Pharisees were religious. But Jesus was spiritual. Our brain is important. But it was created to be subservient to the heart and the Holy Spirit, even as Eve was created to submit to Adam. The streams of religiosity and spirituality that began with Cain and Abel, continued on with Nimrod and Abraham and ends with Babylon and Jerusalem in Revelation. We see a similar contrast between Ecclesiastes and Proverbs.

Ecclesiastes demonstrates how one can have a lot of knowledge and yet not be spiritual at all. The human wisdom that is found in psychology today has many good things in it. But it is not divine wisdom. And it is more dangerous when divine wisdom is mixed with human wisdom than if you had human wisdom all by itself. If someone wanted to poison you, he would mix a little bit of poison with a lot of milk. Things that are totally bad are easy to detect. But psychology has a lot of good in it

- and that is why it can be dangerous. It is not divine wisdom. Divine wisdom comes from the Scriptures alone. Many things that psychologists say who do not submit their minds to God's Word are wrong. If you follow them, you will go astray.

Ecclesiastes contains the words of a preacher (Eccles 1:1). Most preachers are interested only in preaching good sermons. And for that, they use only their heads. Therefore their sermons do not go to people's hearts - because it does not come from their own hearts. Proverbs doesn't deal with preaching but with practising. We must preach only what we have already practised. This is the difference between religiosity and spirituality. This was the difference between the Pharisees and Jesus. Jesus said, "The Pharisees say things but do not do them" (Matt.23:3). But He said there was nothing wrong with what they taught. The Pharisees were the fundamentalists of their time. But they did not live what they preached in the pulpit.

With Jesus it was different: "Jesus (first) did and then taught" (Acts.1:1). He did not practice what He preached, but He preached what He had already practised. He practised for thirty before He preached. That is true godliness.

The Ethiopian Psalms of Praise

The Ethiopian Psalter is a collection of psalms and other songs from the Old and New Testaments, including hymns to Mary and praise to God. The Ethiopian Psalter is written in Ge'ez, a syllabic script, on parchment pages.

What is included in the Ethiopian Psalter?

- **Psalms:** Psalms 1–151
- **Biblical canticles:** Including the First Song of Moses, Second Song of Moses, and Third Song of Moses
- **Songs of the prophets:** Including the Song of Hannah, Song of Jonah, Song of Habakkuk, and Song of Isaiah
- **Songs of Mary:** Including the Song of Our Lady Mary, or the Magnificat, and Weddase Maryam
- **Other songs:** Including the Prayer of Hezekiah, Prayer of Manasseh, and First, Second, and Third Songs of the Three Youths in the Furnace

How are Ethiopian Psalters used?

- Ethiopian Psalters are used for private devotion and liturgical use.
- The binding structures of Ethiopian Psalters are similar to early Christian codices from the fourth to seventh centuries.
- Ethiopian Psalters are a product of a living scribal culture that has survived from Antiquity until today.

The Story of the Ethiopian Cross

The Ethiopian cross is a symbol of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and a key part of the spread of Christianity in Ethiopia. The cross's origins can be traced back to early Christianity and the conversion of King Ezana in the 4th century.

History

- Christianity may have arrived in Ethiopia in the first century.
- The cross was used on coins minted after King Ezana's conversion.
- The Nine Saints may have introduced Christianity to Ethiopia in the 5th and 6th centuries.

Types of crosses

- **Processional crosses:** Large, ornate crosses carried on poles during religious ceremonies. They are often decorated with gemstones and intricate designs.
- **Pendant crosses:** Silver crosses worn around the neck.
- **Hand crosses:** Crosses held by priests or suspended from a cord around the neck.
- **Prayer staffs:** Used to mark the rhythm of sacred dances and to provide support during long church services.

Significance

- The cross is a symbol of triumph and health.
- The cross is a spiritual emblem of the community.
- The cross is a symbol of the Christian faith.
- The cross is a symbol of the promise of salvation.
- The cross is a symbol of the mysteries of baptism and the Eucharist.

The Apocalypse of the Twelve Apostles

The Apocalypse of the Twelve Apostles is a part of the Gospel of the Twelve Apostles, a Syriac text that summarizes the canonical gospels and the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles. The Apocalypse of the Twelve Apostles is made up of three apocalypses.

What does the Apocalypse of the Twelve Apostles include?

- The Apocalypse of the Twelve Apostles includes visions of church leaders being handed over to oppressive peoples
- The Apocalypse of the Twelve Apostles includes visions of the destruction of Jerusalem

- The Apocalypse of the Twelve Apostles includes visions of a ruler who reorganizes the people and leads them into war
- The Apocalypse of the Twelve Apostles includes visions of a ruler who constructs the third temple
- The Apocalypse of the Twelve Apostles includes visions of a ruler who brings peace and prosperity to the land

The Acts of Philip

Introduction

No such suspicion of unorthodoxy as -rightly or wrongly- attaches to four out of the Five Acts, affects the Acts of Philip. If grotesque, it is yet a Catholic novel. In form it follows Thomas, for it is divided into separate Acts, of which the manuscripts mention fifteen: we have Acts i-ix and from xv to the end, including the Martyrdom, which last, as usual, was current separately and exists in many recensions.

One Act -the second- and the Martyrdom were first edited by Tischendorf. Batiffol printed the remainder in 1890, and Bonnet using more manuscripts, gives the final edition in his *Acta Apost. Apocr.* ii. 1. Besides the Greek text, there is a single Act extant only in Syriac, edited by Wright, which, so far as its general character goes, might well have formed part of the Greek Acts: but it is difficult to fit it into the framework.

An analysis, with translations of the more interesting passages, will suffice for these Acts, and for the rest of their class.

I. When he came out of Galilee and raised the dead man.

1 When he was come out of Galilee, a widow was carrying out her only son to burial. Philip asked her about her grief: I have spent in vain much money on the gods, Ares, Apollo, Hermes, Artemis, Zeus, Athena, the Sun and Moon, and I think they are asleep as far as I am concerned. And I consulted a diviner to no purpose.

2 The apostle said: Thou hast suffered nothing strange, mother, for thus doth the devil deceive men. Assuage thy grief and I will raise thy son in the name of Jesus.

3 She said: It seems it were better for me not to marry, and to eat nothing but bread and water. Philip: You are right. Chastity is especially dear to God.

4 She said: I believe in Jesus whom thou preachest. He raised her son, who sat up and said: Whence is this light? and how comes it that an angel came and opened the prison of judgement where I was shut up? where I saw such torments as the tongue of man cannot describe.

5 So all were baptized. And the youth followed the apostle.

II. When he went unto Greece of Athens (!)

6 When he entered into the city of Athens which is called Hellas, 300 philosophers gathered and said: Let us go and see what his wisdom is, for they say of the wise men of Asia that their wisdom is great. For they supposed Philip to be a philosopher: he travelled only in a cloak and an undergarment. So they assembled and looked into their books, lest he should get the better of them.

7 They said: If you have anything new to tell us, let us hear it, for we need nothing else but only to hear some new thing.

8 Philip: Then you must cast away the old man. The Lord said: Ye cannot put new wine into old bottles. I am glad to hear that you desire something new, for my Lord's teaching is new.

9 The philosophers: Who is thy Lord? Philip: Jesus Christ.

10 They: This is a new name to us. Give us three days to look into it.

11 They consulted, and said: Perhaps it will be best to send for the high priest of the Jews to discuss it with him.

12 So they wrote: The philosophers of Greece to Ananias the great high priest of the Jews at Jerusalem -and stated the case.

13 On reading the letter Ananias rent his clothes and said: Is that deceiver in Athens also? And Mansemat, that is, Satan entered into him. (This is another form of Mastema, the name of Satan in Jubilees and elsewhere.) And he consulted with the lawyers and Pharisees, and they said: Arm thyself and take 500 men and go and at all costs destroy Philip.

14 So he came in the high-priestly garments with great pomp and he and the philosophers went to Philip's lodging, and he came out, and Ananias said: Thou sorcerer and wizard, I know thee, that thy master the deceiver at Jerusalem called thee son of thunder; did not Judaea suffice you, but must you come here to deceive? Philip said: May the veil of unbelief be taken from thee, and thou learn who is the deceiver, thou or I.

15 Ananias' address: how Jesus destroyed the law and allowed all meats -was crucified, the disciples stole his body, and did many wonders, and were cast out of Jerusalem, and now go all about the world deceiving every one, like this Philip. But I will take him to Jerusalem, for the king Archelaus seeketh him to kill him.

16 The people were not moved. Philip said: I will appeal to my God.

17 Ananias ran at him to smite him, his hand withered and he was blinded, and so were his 500 men: they cursed him, and prayed Philip for help.

18 Philip's prayer: O weak nature . . . O bitter sea. Come, Jesu, the holy light -thou overlookest us not when we cry to thee....

19 Ananias to Philip: Thinkest thou to turn us from the traditions of our fathers, and the God of the manna in the wilderness, and Moses, to follow the Nazarene, Jesus? Philip: I will ask my God to

manifest himself to thee and to these -perchance thou wilt believe: but if not, a wonder shall befall thee. And he prayed God to send his Son.

20 The heavens opened and Jesus appeared in glory, his face seven times brighter than the sun, and his raiment whiter than snow. All the idols of Athens fell, and the devils in them fled crying out. Philip said: Hearest thou not the devils, and believest thou not him that is here? Ananias: I have no God save him that gave the manna in the wilderness.

21 Jesus went up into heaven, and there was a great earthquake, and the people fled to the apostle, crying for mercy.

22 Philip: There is no envy in us, and the grace of Christ shall restore your sight, but first let the high priest see. A voice from heaven: Philip, once son of thunder but now of meekness whatsoever thou askest my Father he will do for thee. The people were afraid at the voice. In the name of Christ, Philip made Ananias see. He said: How great is the art magic of Jesus! this Philip in a moment (or for a little) hath blinded me and in a moment restored my sight! I cannot be convinced by witchcraft. The 500 asked Philip to give back their sight that they might slay the unbelieving Ananias.

23 Philip: Render not evil for evil. To Ananias: There shall be a great sign shown in thee. Ananias: I know that thou art a sorcerer and disciple of Jesus; thou canst not bewitch me. Philip to Jesus: Zabarthan, sabathabat, bramanouch, come quickly! The earth opened and swallowed Ananias to the knees. He cried: This is real magic, that the earth clave when Philip threatened it in Hebrew -and there are hooks below pulling at my legs to make me believe, but I will not, for I know his witchcraft from Jerusalem.

24 Philip, to the earth: Take him to the middle. And he sank further and said: One foot is frozen and the other hot -but I will not believe. The people wanted to stone him, but Philip checked them: This is for your salvation; if he repent, I will bring him up, but if not, he shall be swallowed into the deep.

25 He spread out his hand in the air over the 500, and their eyes were opened and they praised God. Philip, to Ananias: Confess now with a pure heart that Jesus is Lord, that thou mayest be saved like these. But he laughed at him.

26 Seeing him obstinate, Philip said to the earth: Open and swallow him to the neck. 27 And one of the first men of the city came and said: A devil has attacked my son, saying: As thou hast let a stranger come to the city, who destroys our idols what can I do but kill thine only son? and he has suffocated him help me, for I also believe.

28 Bring me thy son. And he ran, calling to his son, and bade the servants bring him: he was 23 years old. Philip seeing him grieved, and said to Ananias: This is through your folly: if I raise him will you believe? Ananias: I know you will raise him by your magic, but I will not believe. Philip was wroth and said: Catathema (cursed thing), go down into the abyss in the sight of all. And he was swallowed up: but the high-priestly robe flew away from him, and therefore no man knows where it is from that day.

Philip raised the lad and drove away the devil.

29 The people cried out, believing in God, and the 500 were baptized. And Philip stayed two years at Athens, and founded a church and ordained a bishop and a presbyter, and departed to Parthia to preach.

III. Done in Parthia by Philip.

80 When Philip came to Parthia he found in a city the apostle Peter with disciples, and said: I pray you strengthen me, that I may go and preach like you. 31 And they prayed for him.

32 And John was there also, and said to Philip: Andrew is gone to Achaia and Thrace, and Thomas to India and the wicked flesh-eaters, and Matthew to the savage troglodytes. And do thou not be slack, for Jesus is with thee. And they let him depart.

33 And he came to the sea in the borders of the Candaci and found a ship going to Azotus, and agreed with the sailors for four staters, and sailed. A great wind came, and they began to cast out the tackle and say farewell to each other and lament.

34 Philip consoled them: Not even the ship shall be lost. He went up on the prow and said: Sea, sea, Jesus Christ by me his servant bids thee still thy wrath. There was calm, and the sailors thanked him and asked to become servants of Jesus. 35 And he instructed them to forsake the cares of this life. 36 And they believed, and Philip landed and baptized them all.

IV. Of the daughter of Nicocleides, whom he healed at Azotus.

37 There was great commotion in Azotus because of Philip's miracles, and many came and were healed, and devils were cast out and cried out against him. And people said divers things of him, some that he was good, and others that he was a wizard, and separated husbands and wives and preached chastity.

38 Evening came on and all dispersed. Philip sought a lodging, and went to the warehouses of one Nicocleides, a recorder (registrar), friend of the king, where many strangers lodged.

39 He stood in a corner and prayed for blessing and healing on the house.

40 Charitine, daughter of Nicocleides, heard him and wept all night. She had a sore disease in her eye. In the morning she went to her father and said: I can no longer bear the taunts of my companions about my eye. He said: What can I do? have I not called in Leucius the king's physician and Elides the queen's eunuch and Solgia her attendant. She: I know it, but there is a strange physician come here last night: call him.

41 He went to the warehouses and found Philip: Art thou the physician lately come? Philip: Jesus is my physician. I will come with thee. They found the daughter weeping. 42 After reassuring words she fell at his feet: I sprinkle my chamber with pure water and lay my linen garments under thy feet, help me, for I know thou canst. To her father: Let us bring him in, and let him see my disease.

43 Philip comforted and instructed them, and bade her rise and put her right hand on her face and say: In the name of Jesus Christ let my eye be healed. And it was. 44 And both believed and were baptized, and a number of servants. And Charitine put on male attire and followed Philip.

V. Done in the city Nicatera; and of Ireus.

45 Philip had in mind to go to Nicaterra, a city of Greece, and many disciples accompanied him, and he taught continually. 46 And when he arrived there was great stir: What shall we do for his teaching will prevail . . . he separates husbands and wives. Let us cast him out before he begins to preach and our wives are deceived.

17 There were Jews, too, who spoke against him; but a chief of them, Ireus, said: Do not use force; let us test his teaching.

48 Ireus was wealthy. He was a just man and desired quietly to foil their counsel. He went to Philip and greeted him. And Philip saw there was no guile in him, and promised him salvation, for having stood up for him.

49 Ireus was surprised at his knowing this. Philip exhorted him to faith and constancy. 50 Ireus: Lodge at my house. Philip: First cleanse it. Ireus: How? Philip: Do no wrong, and leave thy wife. And he went home.

51 His wife said: I hear you foiled the counsel of the Jews about a strange sorcerer. Ireus: Would that we might be worthy to have him lodge here. She: I will not have him here, for he separates husbands and wives. I will go home to my parents and take my dowry and servants; four years I have been your wife and never contradicted you.

52 Ireus mildly: Have patience, and you also will believe. She: Rise, eat, drink and be merry, for you cannot deceive me. Ireus: How can I eat while the man of God is hungry? Put away this folly: he is a man of God, of mildness and grace. 53 She: Is his God like those of this city, of gold, fixed in the temple? Ireus: No, but in heaven, almighty: the gods of this city are made by ungodly men. She: Bring him, that I may see the god in him. 54 He went to meet Philip, who told him what had passed, and Ireus was amazed at his knowledge, but asked him not to publish the reproach of his wife. 55 Philip's companions urged him to accept the refuge provided: and Ireus was glad. Philip consented to come, and followed Ireus. 56 The rulers and people saw it and determined not to allow it. Ireus arriving at his gate cried to the porter to open. Philip entered saying: Peace be to this house. Ireus found that his wife was in her chamber and went and asked her to come, and put off her gay robes. But she was angry and said: No one of the house has ever seen my face, and shall I show it to a stranger?

57 So he went out and set fine gilt chairs for Philip and the rest. But he said: Take them away. Ireus: Do not grieve me. Philip: I grieve no one, but I have no use for gold, which passes away, Cc. 58 Ireus: Can I be saved? for my former sins trouble me Philip: Yes, Jesus is able to save you. And what of your wife who just now said to you: Depart from me, Cc. ? Ireus, surprised went to his wife and said: Come and see a man who has told me what passed between you and me. She was scornful, and said: What is to become of our children if we have to give up all our worldly wealth? 59 Artemela his daughter was listening. and said: If my father and mother are to enter a new life, may I not share it? She was very beautiful. Her mother Nerkela told her to rise and put off her gold-woven dress. Ireus said to Nerkela: Let us go out and see Philip [it seems Nerkela was converted, but the text does not show this clearly]. 60 The women changed their attire for a sober one, and they all went out. And when they saw Philip, he shone with a great light, so that they were afraid. 61 But he saw it, and returned to his former likeness: and Nerkela asked pardon of him and made him welcome. 62, 63 And they professed belief and were instructed and baptized.

VI. In Nicatera, a city of Greece.

64 The Jews and heathens were displeased at Ireus' conversion, 65 and sent seven men to his house. A handmaid told him of them; he came out smiling and asked their errand. 'The whole city wishes to see you.' He followed them. 66 And the assembly were surprised at his modest garb. One Onesimus asked him to explain about the sorcerer Philip. 67 Ireus: Why am I examined thus? do not trouble Philip. 68 But they said: Away with him. And Ireus went home and met Philip, who said: Are you afraid? No, he said. 69 The people now came with staves, crying out: Give us the deceiver. 70 Philip came forth and they took him to the assembly to scourge him, and said: Bind him hand and foot. 71 Ireus ran up the steps and cried: You shall not. But they would not hear, and Ireus pulled Philip away from them. 72 Philip said: If I choose, I can blind you; Aristarchus, son of Plegenes, a chief of the Jews, said: Do not be in a hurry to blind us: I know you can; but let us discuss I am powerful, and if I let the people, they will stone you; 73 And he caught Philip by the beard; he was rather angry, because of the people, and said: Your hand and your ears and your right eye shall suffer for threatening me and insulting God. 74 His eye became hollow as if absent, his ears pained him, his right hand dangled useless. He cried out for mercy. 75 They all said: Heal our chief. 76 Philip told Ireus to go sign him with the cross and heal him in Jesus' name, which was done, and he asked pardon and indulgence and leave to discuss the matter. And the people said: We will judge of it. 77 Philip smiled and bade him speak first. He said: Do you receive the prophets or no? Philip: Because of your unbelief there is need of the prophets. Aristarchus: It is written: Who shall declare thy might, O God? and, No man can know thy glory; and, Thy glory hath filled the earth; and, The Lord is judge of quick and dead; and God is a consuming fire and shall burn up his enemies on every side; and, One God hath made all these things. How then say you that Mary bore Jesus? . . . But you will say that he is the power and wisdom of God who was with him when he made the world. I do not deny that the first Scripture says: Let us make man. 78 Philip smiled and said: Harken all: Isaiah said, Behold my servant (child) whom I have chosen.....And of the cross: He was led as a sheep to the slaughter And again: I gave my back to the scourger..... And another: I spread out my hands to a disobedient people. And: I was found of them that sought me not..... And David saith: Thou art my son.....And of his resurrection and Judas: Lord, why are they increased that trouble me And again David: I foresaw the Lord always before me..... But David is dead. Take also of the twelve prophets: Say unto the daughter of Sion..... And: Out of Egypt have I called my son.

79 Aristarchus said: This Jesus is called Christ. Isaiah: Thus saith the Lord unto Christ my lord The Jews said: You are arguing for Christ. The people and rulers acclaimed Philip and said he should be received.

80 A bier was brought with a dead man, only son of a rich man: and with it ten slaves who were to be burnt with the corpse. The people said: Here is a great contest for the Christians. If theirs be God he will raise him and we will believe, and burn our idols. 81 Philip said to the parents: What will you do if I raise him? 'What you will.' The slaves made signs to him to remember them. There was this evil law of burning slaves, and sometimes even men's wives. 82 Philip said: Give me these slaves. Yes, and any more that you will.' He said to Aristarchus: Come, O Jew, raise him. And he touched his face and spat much on him and pulled his hand: in vain, and retired in confusion. 83 Nereus the father said: Raise my son and I will fight the Jews. Philip: If you will not promise not to hurt them, I will not raise him. Nerus: As you will. 84 Philip went to the bier and prayed, and breath entered into the lad

Theophilus, and he opened his eyes and looked on Philip. A second time Philip said: Young man, in the name of Jesus Christ who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arise. And he leapt from the bier. All cried: One is the God of Philip . . . and the slaves were made free. All believed. 86 Philip taught, baptized, destroyed idols, ordained, gave canons and rules.

VII. Of Nerkela (and) Ireus at Nicatera.

87 Nerkela and Artemela were blessed by Philip. 88 Ireus and Nereus consulted about building a church, and agreed to build it on Nereus' land. 89 Only the Jews were discontented and decided to withdraw. 90 Philip came to the new building and addressed the people, 91 and made Ireus bishop and prayed over him, and announced that he was going away. 92 All wept, but he consoled them. 93 They loaded camels with provisions and accompanied him 20 stadia. He dismissed them and would only take five loaves. They all saluted him thrice, and fell on their faces and prayed for his blessing, and watched him out of sight, and returned to the city.

VIII. Wherein the kid and the leopard in the wilderness believed

94 It came to pass when the Saviour divided the apostles and each went forth according to his lot, that it fell to Philip to go to the country of the Greeks: and he thought it hard, and wept. And Mariamne his sister (it was she that made ready the bread and salt at the breaking of bread, but Martha was she that ministered to the multitudes and laboured much) seeing it, went to Jesus and said: Lord, seest thou not how my brother is vexed? 95 And he said: I know, thou chosen among women; but go with him and encourage him, for I know that he is a wrathful and rash man, and if we let him go alone he will bring many retributions on men. But lo, I will send Bartholomew and John to suffer hardships in the same city, because of the much wickedness of them that dwell there; for they worship the viper, the mother of snakes. And do thou change thy woman's aspect and go with Philip. And to Philip he said: Why art thou fearful? for I am always with thee.

96 So they all set out for the land of the Ophiani; and when they came to the wilderness of dragons, lo, a great leopard came out of a wood on the hill, and ran and cast himself at their feet and spoke with human voice: I worship you, servants of the divine greatness and apostles of the only-begotten Son of God; command me to speak perfectly. 97 And Philip said: In the name of Jesus Christ, speak. And the leopard took perfect speech and said: Hear me Philip, groomsman of the divine word. Last night I passed through the flocks of goats over against the mount of the she-dragon, the mother of snakes, and seized a kid, and when I went into the wood to eat, after I had wounded it, it took a human voice and wept like a little child, saying to me: O leopard, put off thy fierce heart and the beast like part of thy nature, and put on mildness, for the apostles of the divine greatness are about to pass through this desert, to accomplish perfectly the promise of the glory of the only-begotten Son of God. At these words of the kid I was perplexed, and gradually my heart was changed, and my fierceness turned to mildness, and I did not eat it. And as I listened to its words, I lifted up my eyes and saw you coming, and knew that ye were the servants of the good God. So I left the kid and came to worship you. And now I beseech thee to give me liberty to go with thee everywhere and put off my beastlike nature.

98 And Philip said: Where is the kid? And he said: It is cast down under the oak opposite. Philip said to Bartholomew: Let us go and see him that was smitten, healed, and healing the smiter. And at Philip's bidding the leopard guided them to where the kid lay. 99 Philip and Bartholomew said: Now

know we of a truth that there is none that surpasseth thy compassion, O Jesu lover of man; for thou preventest us and dost convince us by these creatures to believe more and earnestly fulfil our trust. Now therefore, Lord Jesu Christ, come and grant life and breath and secure footing (existence ?) to these creatures, that they may forsake their nature of beast and cattle and come unto tameness, and no longer eat flesh, nor the kid the food of cattle; but that men's hearts may be given them, and they may follow us wherever we go, and eat what we eat, to thy glory, and speak after the manner of men, glorifying thy name.

100 And in that hour the leopard and kid rose up and lifted up their forefeet and said: We glorify and bless thee that hast visited and remembered us in this desert, and changed our beastlike and wild nature into tameness, and granted us the divine word, and put in us a tongue and sense to speak and praise thy name, for great is thy glory. 101 And they fell and worshipped Philip and Bartholomew and Mariamne; and all set out together praising God.

IX. Of the dragon that was slain.

102 They journeyed five days, and one morning after the midnight prayers a sudden wind arose, great and dark (misty), and out of it ran a great smoky (misty) dragon, with a black back, and a belly like coals of brass in sparkles of fire, and a body over 100 cubits long, and a multitude of snakes and their young followed it, and the desert quaked for a long distance. 103 And Philip said: Now is the time to remember the Lord's words: Fear nothing, neither persecution, nor the serpents of that land, nor the dark dragon. Let us stand fast and his power will fail; and pray and sprinkle the air from the cup and the smoke will scatter. 104 So they took the cup and prayed: Thou that sheddest dew on all pyres and bridlest darkness, putting a bit into the dragon's mouth, bringing to nought his anger, turning back the wickedness of the enemy and plunging him into his own fire, shutting his doors and stopping the exits and buffeting his pride: come and be with us in this desert, for we run by thy will and at thy bidding. 105 And he said: Now stand and raise your hands, with the cup you hold, and sprinkle the air in the form of the cross. 106 And there was as a flash of lightning which blinded the dragon and its brood; and they were withered up; and the rays of the sun entered the holes and broke the eggs. But the apostles closed their eyes, unable to face the lightning, and remained unhurt.

It does not seem as if much could have intervened between this Act and the Martyrdom, except perhaps the conversion of some people in the snake-city. However, the manuscripts give a title thus:

Out of the Travels of Philip the Apostle: from the fifteenth Act to the end, wherein is the Martyrdom.

107 (Introductory.) In the days of Trajan, after the Martyrdom of Simon, son of Clopas, bishop of Jerusalem, successor to James, Philip the apostle was preaching through all the cities of Lydia and Asia. 108 And he came to the city Ophioryme (Snake street), which is called Hierapolis of Asia, and was received by Stachys, a believer. And with him were Bartholomew, one of the Seventy, and his sister Mariamne, and their disciples. And they assembled at Stachys' house. 109 And Mariamne sat and listened to Philip discoursing. 110-112 He spoke of the snares of the dragon, who has 'no shape' in creation, and is recognized and shunned by beasts and birds. 113 For the men of the place worshipped the snake and had images of it, and called Hierapolis Ophioryme. And many were converted. 114 And Nicanora the proconsul's wife believed, she was diseased, especially in her

eyes, and had been healed. She now came in a silver litter. 115 And Mariamne said in Hebrew: Alikaman, ikasame, marmari, iachaman, mastranan, achaman, which means: O daughter of the father, my lady, who wast given as a pledge to the serpent, Christ is come to thee (and much more). 116 And Nicanora said: I am a Hebrew, speak to me in my fathers' tongue. I heard of your preaching and was healed. 117 And they prayed for her. 118 But her tyrant husband came and said: How is this? who has healed you? 119 And she said: Depart from me, and lead a chaste and sober life. 120 And he dragged her by the hair and threatened to kill her. And the apostles were arrested, 121 and scourged and dragged to the temple, 122 and shut up in it (with the leopard and the kid. These are omitted in the principal text, but constantly occur in another recension: rightly, of course). 123 The people and priests came and demanded vengeance on the sorcerers. 124 The proconsul was afraid of his wife, for he had been almost blinded by a wonderful light when he looked through the window at her when praying. 125 They stripped and searched the apostles for charms, and pierced Philip's ankles and thighs and hung him head downward, and Bartholomew they hung naked by the hair. 126 And they smiled on each other, as not being tormented. But Mariamne on being stripped became like an ark of glass full of light and fire and every one ran away. 127 And Philip and Bartholomew talked in Hebrew, and Philip said: Shall we call down fire from heaven? 128 And now John arrived, and asked what was happening, and the people told him. 129 And he was taken to the place. Philip said to Bartholomew in Hebrew: Here is John the son of Barega (or, he that is in Barek), that is (or, where is) the living water. And John said: The mystery of him that hanged between the heaven and the earth be with you.

130 Then John addressed the people, warning them against the serpent. Inter alia: When all matter was wrought and spread out throughout the system of heaven, the works of God entreated God that they might see his glory: and when they saw it, their desire became gall and bitterness, and the earth became the storehouse of that which went astray, and the result and the superfluity of the creation was gathered together and became like an egg: and the serpent was born.

131 The people said: We took you for a fellow citizen, but you are in league with these men. The priests are going to wring out your blood and mix it with wine and give it to the Viper. When they came to take John their hands were paralysed. John said to Philip: Let us not render evil for evil. Philip said: I shall endure it no longer. 132 The three others dissuaded him; but he said: Abalo, arimouni, douthael, tharseleen, nachaoth, aeidounaph, teleteloein, which is (after many invocations descriptive of God): let the deep open and swallow these men: yea, Sabaoth. 133 It opened and the whole place was swallowed, about 7,000 men, save where the apostles were. And their voices came up, crying for mercy and saying: Lo, the cross enlighteneth us. And a voice was heard: I will have mercy on you in my cross of light. 134 But Stachys and his house, and Nicanora and 50 others, and 100 virgins remained safe. 135 Jesus appeared and rebuked Philip. 136 But he defended himself. 137 And the Lord said: Since you have been unforgiving and wrathful, you shall indeed die in glory and be taken by angels to paradise, but shall remain outside it forty days, in fear of the flaming sword, and then I will send Michael and he shall let you in. And Bartholomew shall go to Lycaonia and be crucified there, and Mariamne's body shall be laid up in the river Jordan. And I shall bring back those who have been swallowed up. 138 And he drew a cross in the air, reaching down into the abyss, and it was filled with light, and the cross was like a ladder. And Jesus called the people, and they all came up, save the proconsul and the Viper And seeing the apostles they mourned and repented. 139 And Philip, still hanging, spoke to them and told them of his offense

140 And some ran to take him down: but he refused and spoke to them..... " Be not grieved that I hang thus, for I bear the form (type) of the first man, who was brought upon earth head downwards, and again by the tree of the cross made alive from the death of his transgression. And now do I fulfil the precept. For the Lord said to me: Unless ye make that which is beneath to be above, and the left to be right (and the right left), ye shall not enter into my kingdom. Be like me in this: for all the world is turned the wrong way, and every soul that is in it." 141 Further he spoke to them of the incarnation, 142 and bade them loose Bartholomew, and told him and Mariamne of their destiny. Build a church in the place where I die, and let the leopard and kid be there, and let Nicanora look after them till they die, and then bury them at the church gate: and let your peace be in the house of Stachys: and he exhorted them to purity. "Therefore our brother Peter fled from every place where a woman was: and further, he had offense given by reason of his own daughter. And he prayed the Lord, and she had a palsy of the side that she might not be led astray." 143 Bury me not in linen like the Lord, but in papyrus, and pray for me forty days. Where my blood is dropping a vine will grow, and ye shall use the wine of it for the cup: and partake of it on the third day. 144 And he prayed the Lord to receive him, and protect him against all enemies. "Let not their dark air cover me, that I may pass the waters of fire and all the abyss. Clothe me in thy glorious robe and thy seal of light that ever shineth, until I have passed by all the rulers of the world and the evil dragon that opposeth us." 145 And he died. 146 And they buried him as he directed. And a heavenly voice said he had received the crown.

147 After three days the vine grew Up. And they made the offering daily for forty days, and built the church and made Stachys bishop. And all the city believed. 148 And at the end of forty days the Saviour appeared in the form of Philip and told Bartholomew and Mariamne that he had entered paradise, and bade them go their ways. And Bartholomew went to Lycaonia and Mariamne to Jordan, and Stachys and the brethren abode where they were.

The narrative of the Act preserved in Syriac is this.

Philip, at Jerusalem, had a vision of Jesus, who commanded him to go to the city of Carthage, ' which is in Azotus ', and drive out the ruler of Satan, and preach the kingdom. He said: I know not Latin or Greek, and the people there do not know Aramaic. Jesus said: Did I not create Adam and give him speech? Go, and I will be with thee.

He went to Samaria, thence to Caesarea, and to the harbour and found a ship waiting for a wind. Asked to take Philip to Carthage, the captain said: Do not annoy me, we have waited twenty days: fetch your baggage and perhaps we shall get a wind, for you look like a servant of God. Philip: I have none; tell the passengers to come on board..... Let us pray for a fair wind. Turning to the west he commanded the angel of peace who has charm of fair winds to send a wind to take him to Carthage in a single day.

On board was a Jew, Ananias, who blasphemed (sotto voce, it seems) and said: May Adonai recompense thee, and the Christ on whom thou callest, who is become dust and lies in Jerusalem, while thou livest and ledest ignorant men astray by his name.

A wind came and filled the sail. The Jew rose to help to hoist the sail, and an angel bound him by the great toes and hung him head down on the top of the sail. The ship flew onward and the Jew cried out. Philip said: You shall not come down till you confess. He confessed his secret blasphemy.

Philip: Dost thou now believe? Ananias confessed belief in a speech in which he enumerated Christ's (God's) mighty acts from creation to the deliverance of Susanna. Philip asked that he might be pardoned, and the angel brought him down. And the 495 men on the ship feared.

They looked up and saw the pharos of Carthage, and said; Can this be true? O fools, said Ananias, did ye not see what befell me for unbelief? If he commands that city in Christ's name, it will take all its inhabitants and go and stop in Egypt. The ship came into harbour. Philip dismissed the passengers, and stayed on board to confirm the captain.

On the Sunday he went up to the city to drive out Satan, and as he entered the gates, signed himself with the cross. He saw a black man on a throne with two serpents about his loins, and eyes like coals of fire, and flame coming from his mouth, there was a smell of smoke, and black men in troops were on his right and left. When Philip crossed himself the ruler fell backward and all his troops. Philip said: Fall, and rise not The ruler said: Why curse me? I do not abide here, but my troops wander over the earth and come to me at the third hour of the day, but they do not touch a disciple of Jesus. Woe is me! whither can I go? In all the four quarters of the world his gospel is preached. I am completely overthrown.

The whole city heard him, but saw him not. Philip bade him go, and he took his throne and his troops and flew away bewailing till they came to Babel, and he settled there. The whole city was in fear and Philip bade them leave their idols and turn to God, They praised God, and Philip went back to the ship. On the Sabbath the Jews assembled in their synagogue and summoned Ananias, and asked if his adventures were true. He signed himself with the cross and said: It is true, and God forbid I should renounce Jesus the Christ. He then addressed them in a long and very abusive speech (modelled more or less on that of Stephen), enumerating all their wicked acts. Then arose Joshua, the son of Nun, and ye sought to kill him with deadly poison.. Isaiah the prophet, and ye sawed him with a saw of boxwood Ezekiel, and ye dragged him by his feet until his brains were dashed out Habakkuk, and through your sins he went astray from his prophetic office.' His face was like an angel. A priest arose and kicked him, and he died, and they buried him in the synagogue.

Next day Philip in the ship prayed and asked that Ananias might be delivered from the Jews. God commanded the earth and it gave a passage like a water-pipe, and conveyed Ananias to the bottom of the sea, and a dolphin bore up the body. Philip saw it, and after reassuring the people, bade it take the body back till he should go and convict the murderers.

Next day Philip went to the governor and got him to assemble all the Jews, and sit in judgement. Philip, to the Jews: Where is Ananias? They: Are we his keeper? Philip: Well are you called children of Cain, for, Cc. Tell me where he is, and I will ask pardon for you. Jews: We have said we do not know. Philip: Do not lie. Jews: If the spirit were in you, you would know that we do not lie. Philip: If he is found with you, what do you deserve? Jews: Death from God and Caesar. Philip: Swear to me. They swore they knew nothing.

He looked and saw a man leading a sick ox to sell. He said to it: I command thee, go to the synagogue and call Ananias to rise and come and put these men to shame. The ox dragged his owner along and ran and called Ananias. He rose and laid hold of the ox with his right hand, and they came to Philip and prostrated themselves. Philip said: Whence comest thou? Ananias said: From the synagogue of these Jews, who murdered me for confessing Jesus: do me justice. Philip:

The Lord has commanded us not to render evil for evil. The ox said: Order me and I will kill these men with my horns. Philip: Hurt no man, but go and serve thy master, and the Lord will heal thee. They went home in peace.

The governor said: These Jews deserve death. Philip: I am not come to kill but to give life. The Jews' mouths were closed.

Ananias spoke to the Jews and Philip also: but they did not ask pardon, so they were cast out. Three thousand Gentiles and fifteen hundred Jews believed; the unbelievers left the city, and before sunset an angel slew forty of the Jewish priests for shedding innocent blood: and all who saw it confessed and worshipped.

It is not clear, in the present state of our texts, where this episode could be fitted in to the Greek Acts. The Third Act, which has a voyage to Azotus, seems a possible place. But a glance at the Greek Acts shows that in spite of the appearance of method imparted by a division into Acts, there is no coherence at all in them, until we get to the city of the snake.

The first Act cannot have begun so abruptly as it now does. The second is equally abrupt in its introduction. The third is linked to it by the mention of Parthia, but there is great inconsequence in it, for it presupposes that Philip has done nothing as yet. The fourth is linked to the third by the scene, Azotus. The fifth, sixth, and seventh, at Niatera, are wholly detached from what has gone before, and with the ninth we make a fresh start.

The Gospel of Truth (Expanded)

The gospel of truth is joy to those who have received from the Father of truth the gift of knowing him by the power of the Logos, who has come from the Pleroma and who is in the thought and the mind of the Father; he it is who is called "the Savior," since that is the name of the work which he must do for the redemption of those who have not known the Father. For the name of the gospel is the manifestation of hope, since that is the discovery of those who seek him, because the All sought him from whom it had come forth. You see, the All had been inside of him, that illimitable, inconceivable one, who is better than every thought.

This ignorance of the Father brought about terror and fear. And terror became dense like a fog, that no one was able to see. Because of this, error became strong. But it worked on its hylic substance vainly, because it did not know the truth. It was in a fashioned form while it was preparing, in power and in beauty, the equivalent of truth. This then, was not a humiliation for him, that illimitable, inconceivable one. For they were as nothing, this terror and this forgetfulness and this figure of falsehood, whereas this established truth is unchanging, unperturbed and completely beautiful.

For this reason, do not take error too seriously. Thus, since it had no root, it was in a fog as regards the Father, engaged in preparing works and forgetfulnesses and fears in order, by these means, to beguile those of the middle and to make them captive. The forgetfulness of error was not revealed. It did not become light beside the Father. Forgetfulness did not exist with the Father, although it existed because of him. What exists in him is knowledge, which was revealed so that forgetfulness might be destroyed and that they might know the Father, Since forgetfulness existed because they

did not know the Father, if they then come to know the Father, from that moment on forgetfulness will cease to exist.

That is the gospel of him whom they seek, which he has revealed to the perfect through the mercies of the Father as the hidden mystery, Jesus the Christ. Through him he enlightened those who were in darkness because of forgetfulness. He enlightened them and gave them a path. And that path is the truth which he taught them. For this reason error was angry with him, so it persecuted him. It was distressed by him, so it made him powerless. He was nailed to a cross. He became a fruit of the knowledge of the Father. He did not, however, destroy them because they ate of it. He rather caused those who ate of it to be joyful because of this discovery.

And as for him, them he found in himself, and him they found in themselves, that illimitable, inconceivable one, that perfect Father who made the all, in whom the All is, and whom the All lacks, since he retained in himself their perfection, which he had not given to the all. The Father was not jealous. What jealousy, indeed, is there between him and his members? For, even if the Aeon had received their perfection, they would not have been able to approach the perfection of the Father, because he retained their perfection in himself, giving it to them as a way to return to him and as a knowledge unique in perfection. He is the one who set the All in order and in whom the All existed and whom the All lacked. As one of whom some have no knowledge, he desires that they know him and that they love him. For what is it that the All lacked, if not the knowledge of the Father?

He became a guide, quiet and in leisure. In the middle of a school he came and spoke the Word, as a teacher. Those who were wise in their own estimation came to put him to the test. But he discredited them as empty-headed people. They hated him because they really were not wise men. After all these came also the little children, those who possess the knowledge of the Father. When they became strong they were taught the aspects of the Father's face. They came to know and they were known. They were glorified and they gave glory. In their heart, the living book of the Living was manifest, the book which was written in the thought and in the mind of the Father and, from before the foundation of the All, is in that incomprehensible part of him.

This is the book which no one found possible to take, since it was reserved for him who will take it and be slain. No one was able to be manifest from those who believed in salvation as long as that book had not appeared. For this reason, the compassionate, faithful Jesus was patient in his sufferings until he took that book, since he knew that his death meant life for many. Just as in the case of a will which has not yet been opened, for the fortune of the deceased master of the house is hidden, so also in the case of the All which had been hidden as long as the Father of the All was invisible and unique in himself, in whom every space has its source. For this reason Jesus appeared. He took that book as his own. He was nailed to a cross. He affixed the edict of the Father to the cross.

Oh, such great teaching! He abases himself even unto death, though he is clothed in eternal life. Having divested himself of these perishable rags, he clothed himself in incorruptibility, which no one could possibly take from him. Having entered into the empty territory of fears, he passed before those who were stripped by forgetfulness, being both knowledge and perfection, proclaiming the things that are in the heart of the Father, so that he became the wisdom of those who have received instruction. But those who are to be taught, the living who are inscribed in the book of the living, learn for themselves, receiving instructions from the Father, turning to him again.

Since the perfection of the All is in the Father, it is necessary for the All to ascend to him. Therefore, if one has knowledge, he gets what belongs to him and draws it to himself. For he who is ignorant, is deficient, and it is a great deficiency, since he lacks that which will make him perfect. Since the perfection of the All is in the Father, it is necessary for the All to ascend to him and for each one to get the things which are his. He registered them first, having prepared them to be given to those who came from him.

Those whose name he knew first were called last, so that the one who has knowledge is he whose name the Father has pronounced. For he whose name has not been spoken is ignorant. Indeed, how shall one hear if his name has not been uttered? For he who remains ignorant until the end is a creature of forgetfulness and will perish with it. If this is not so, why have these wretches no name, why do they have no sound? Hence, if one has knowledge, he is from above. If he is called, he hears, he replies, and he turns toward him who called him and he ascends to him and he knows what he is called. Since he has knowledge, he does the will of him who called him. He desires to please him and he finds rest. He receives a certain name. He who thus is going to have knowledge knows whence he came and whither he is going. He knows it as a person who, having become intoxicated, has turned from his drunkenness and having come to himself, has restored what is his own.

He has turned many from error. He went before them to their own places, from which they departed when they erred because of the depth of him who surrounds every place, whereas there is nothing which surrounds him. It was a great wonder that they were in the Father without knowing him and that they were able to leave on their own, since they were not able to contain him and know him in whom they were, for indeed his will had not come forth from him. For he revealed it as a knowledge with which all its emanations agree, namely, the knowledge of the living book which he revealed to the Aeons at last as his letters, displaying to them that these are not merely vowels nor consonants, so that one may read them and think of something void of meaning; on the contrary, they are letters which convey the truth. They are pronounced only when they are known. Each letter is a perfect truth like a perfect book, for they are letters written by the hand of the unity, since the Father wrote them for the Aeons, so that they by means of his letters might come to know the Father.

While his wisdom mediates on the logos, and since his teaching expresses it, his knowledge has been revealed. His honor is a crown upon it. Since his joy agrees with it, his glory exalted it. It has revealed his image. It has obtained his rest. His love took bodily form around it. His trust embraced it. Thus the logos of the Father goes forth into the All, being the fruit of his heart and expression of his will. It supports the All. It chooses and also takes the form of the All, purifying it, and causing it to return to the Father and to the Mother, Jesus of the utmost sweetness. The Father opens his bosom, but his bosom is the Holy Spirit. He reveals his hidden self which is his son, so that through the compassion of the Father the Aeons may know him, end their wearying search for the Father and rest themselves in him, knowing that this is rest. After he had filled what was incomplete, he did away with form. The form of it is the world, that which it served. For where there is envy and strife, there is an incompleteness; but where there is unity, there is completeness. Since this incompleteness came about because they did not know the Father, so when they know the Father, incompleteness, from that moment on, will cease to exist. As one's ignorance disappears when he gains knowledge, and as darkness disappears when light appears, so also incompleteness is eliminated by completeness. Certainly, from that moment on, form is no longer manifest, but will

be dissolved in fusion with unity. For now their works lie scattered. In time unity will make the spaces complete. By means of unity each one will understand itself. By means of knowledge it will purify itself of diversity with a view towards unity, devouring matter within itself like fire and darkness by light, death by life.

Certainly, if these things have happened to each one of us, it is fitting for us, surely, to think about the All so that the house may be holy and silent for unity. Like people who have moved from a neighborhood, if they have some dishes around which are not good, they usually break them. Nevertheless the householder does not suffer a loss, but rejoices, for in the place of these defective dishes there are those which are completely perfect. For this is the judgement which has come from above and which has judged every person, a drawn two-edged sword cutting on this side and that. When it appeared, I mean, the Logos, who is in the heart of those who pronounce it - it was not merely a sound but it has become a body - a great disturbance occurred among the dishes, for some were emptied, others filled: some were provided for, others were removed; some were purified, still others were broken. All the spaces were shaken and disturbed for they had no composure nor stability. Error was disturbed not knowing what it should do. It was troubled; it lamented, it was beside itself because it did not know anything. When knowledge, which is its abolishment, approached it with all its emanations, error is empty, since there is nothing in it. Truth appeared; all its emanations recognized it. They actually greeted the Father with a power which is complete and which joins them with the Father. For each one loves truth because truth is the mouth of the Father. His tongue is the Holy Spirit, who joins him to truth attaching him to the mouth of the Father by his tongue at the time he shall receive the Holy Spirit.

This is the manifestation of the Father and his revelation to his Aeons. He revealed his hidden self and explained it. For who is it who exists if it is not the Father himself? All the spaces are his emanations. They knew that they stem from him as children from a perfect man. They knew that they had not yet received form nor had they yet received a name, every one of which the Father produces. If they at that time receive form of his knowledge, though they are truly in him, they do not know him. But the Father is perfect. He knows every space which is within him. If he pleases, he reveals anyone whom he desires by giving him a form and by giving him a name; and he does give him a name and cause him to come into being. Those who do not yet exist are ignorant of him who created them. I do not say, then, that those who do not yet exist are nothing. But they are in him who will desire that they exist when he pleases, like the event which is going to happen. On the one hand, he knows, before anything is revealed, what he will produce. On the other hand, the fruit which has not yet been revealed does not know anything, nor is it anything either. Thus each space which, on its part, is in the Father comes from the existent one, who, on his part, has established it from the nonexistent. [...] he who does not exist at all, will never exist.

What, then, is that which he wants him to think? "I am like the shadows and phantoms of the night." When morning comes, this one knows that the fear which he had experienced was nothing. Thus they were ignorant of the Father; he is the one whom they did not see. Since there had been fear and confusion and a lack of confidence and doublemindedness and division, there were many illusions which were conceived by him, the foregoing, as well as empty ignorance - as if they were fast asleep and found themselves a prey to troubled dreams. Either there is a place to which they flee, or they lack strength as they come, having pursued unspecified things. Either they are involved in inflicting blows, or they themselves receive bruises. Either they are falling from high places, or

they fly off through the air, though they have no wings at all. Other times, it is as if certain people were trying to kill them, even though there is no one pursuing them; or, they themselves are killing those beside them, for they are stained by their blood. Until the moment when they who are passing through all these things - I mean they who have experienced all these confusions - awake, they see nothing because the dreams were nothing. It is thus that they who cast ignorance from them as sleep do not consider it to be anything, nor regard its properties to be something real, but they renounce them like a dream in the night and they consider the knowledge of the Father to be the dawn. It is thus that each one has acted, as if he were asleep, during the time when he was ignorant and thus he comes to understand, as if he were awakening. And happy is the man who comes to himself and awakens. Indeed, blessed is he who has opened the eyes of the blind.

And the Spirit came to him in haste when it raised him. Having given its hand to the one lying prone on the ground, it placed him firmly on his feet, for he had not yet stood up. He gave them the means of knowing the knowledge of the Father and the revelation of his son. For when they saw it and listened to it, he permitted them to take a taste of and to smell and to grasp the beloved son.

He appeared, informing them of the Father, the illimitable one. He inspired them with that which is in the mind, while doing his will. Many received the light and turned towards him. But material men were alien to him and did not discern his appearance nor recognize him. For he came in the likeness of flesh and nothing blocked his way because it was incorruptible and unrestrainable. Moreover, while saying new things, speaking about what is in the heart of the Father, he proclaimed the faultless word. Light spoke through his mouth, and his voice brought forth life. He gave them thought and understanding and mercy and salvation and the Spirit of strength derived from the limitlessness of the Father and sweetness. He caused punishments and scourgings to cease, for it was they which caused many in need of mercy to astray from him in error and in chains - and he mightily destroyed them and derided them with knowledge. He became a path for those who went astray and knowledge to those who were ignorant, a discovery for those who sought, and a support for those who tremble, a purity for those who were defiled.

He is the shepherd who left behind the ninety-nine sheep which had not strayed and went in search of that one which was lost. He rejoiced when he had found it. For ninety-nine is a number of the left hand, which holds it. The moment he finds the one, however, the whole number is transferred to the right hand. Thus it is with him who lacks the one, that is, the entire right hand which attracts that in which it is deficient, seizes it from the left side and transfers it to the right. In this way, then, the number becomes one hundred. This number signifies the Father.

He labored even on the Sabbath for the sheep which he found fallen into the pit. He saved the life of that sheep, bringing it up from the pit in order that you may understand fully what that Sabbath is, you who possess full understanding. It is a day in which it is not fitting that salvation be idle, so that you may speak of that heavenly day which has no night and of the sun which does not set because it is perfect. Say then in your heart that you are this perfect day and that in you the light which does not fail dwells.

Speak concerning the truth to those who seek it and of knowledge to those who, in their error, have committed sin. Make sure-footed those who stumble and stretch forth your hands to the sick. Nourish the hungry and set at ease those who are troubled. Foster men who love. Raise up and awaken those who sleep. For you are this understanding which encourages. If the strong follow this

course, they are even stronger. Turn your attention to yourselves. Do not be concerned with other things, namely, that which you have cast forth from yourselves, that which you have dismissed. Do not return to them to eat them. Do not be moth-eaten. Do not be worm-eaten, for you have already shaken it off. Do not be a place of the devil, for you have already destroyed him. Do not strengthen your last obstacles, because that is reprehensible. For the lawless one is nothing. He harms himself more than the law. For that one does his works because he is a lawless person. But this one, because he is a righteous person, does his works among others. Do the will of the Father, then, for you are from him.

For the Father is sweet and his will is good. He knows the things that are yours, so that you may rest yourselves in them. For by the fruits one knows the things that are yours, that they are the children of the Father, and one knows his aroma, that you originate from the grace of his countenance. For this reason, the Father loved his aroma; and it manifests itself in every place; and when it is mixed with matter, he gives his aroma to the light; and into his rest he causes it to ascend in every form and in every sound. For there are no nostrils which smell the aroma, but it is the Spirit which possesses the sense of smell and it draws it for itself to itself and sinks into the aroma of the Father. He is, indeed, the place for it, and he takes it to the place from which it has come, in the first aroma which is cold. It is something in a psychic form, resembling cold water which is [...] since it is in soil which is not hard, of which those who see it think, "It is earth." Afterwards, it becomes soft again. If a breath is taken, it is usually hot. The cold aromas, then, are from the division. For this reason, God came and destroyed the division and he brought the hot Pleroma of love, so that the cold may not return, but the unity of the Perfect Thought prevail.

This is the word of the Gospel of the finding of the Pleroma for those who wait for the salvation which comes from above. When their hope, for which they are waiting, is waiting - they whose likeness is the light in which there is no shadow, then at that time the Pleroma is about to come. The deficiency of matter, however, is not because of the limitlessness of the Father who comes at the time of the deficiency. And yet no one is able to say that the incorruptible One will come in this manner. But the depth of the Father is increasing, and the thought of error is not with him. It is a matter of falling down and a matter of being readily set upright at the finding of that one who has come to him who will turn back.

For this turning back is called "repentance". For this reason, incorruption has breathed. It followed him who has sinned in order that he may find rest. For forgiveness is that which remains for the light in the deficiency, the word of the pleroma. For the physician hurries to the place in which there is sickness, because that is the desire which he has. The sick man is in a deficient condition, but he does not hide himself because the physician possesses that which he lacks. In this manner the deficiency is filled by the Pleroma, which has no deficiency, which has given itself out in order to fill the one who is deficient, so that grace may take him, then, from the area which is deficient and has no grace. Because of this a diminishing occurred in the place which there is no grace, the area where the one who is small, who is deficient, is taken hold of.

He revealed himself as a Pleroma, i.e., the finding of the light of truth which has shined towards him, because he is unchangeable. For this reason, they who have been troubled speak about Christ in their midst so that they may receive a return and he may anoint them with the ointment. The ointment is the pity of the Father, who will have mercy on them. But those whom he has anointed

are those who are perfect. For the filled vessels are those which are customarily used for anointing. But when an anointing is finished, the vessel is usually empty, and the cause of its deficiency is the consumption of its ointment. For then a breath is drawn only through the power which he has. But the one who is without deficiency - one does not trust anyone beside him nor does one pour anything out. But that which is the deficient is filled again by the perfect Father. He is good. He knows his plantings because he is the one who has planted them in his Paradise. And his Paradise is his place of rest.

This is the perfection in the thought of the Father and these are the words of his reflection. Each one of his words is the work of his will alone, in the revelation of his Logos. Since they were in the depth of his mind, the Logos, who was the first to come forth, caused them to appear, along with an intellect which speaks the unique word by means of a silent grace. It was called "thought," since they were in it before becoming manifest. It happened, then, that it was the first to come forth - at the moment pleasing to the will of him who desired it; and it is in the will that the Father is at rest and with which he is pleased. Nothing happens without him, nor does anything occur without the will of the Father. But his will is incomprehensible. His will is his mark, but no one can know it, nor is it possible for them to concentrate on it in order to possess it. But that which he wishes takes place at the moment he wishes it - even if the view does not please anyone: it is God`s will. For the Father knows the beginning of them all as well as their end. For when their end arrives, he will question them to their faces. The end, you see, is the recognition of him who is hidden, that is, the Father, from whom the beginning came forth and to whom will return all who have come from him. For they were made manifest for the glory and the joy of his name.

And the name of the Father is the Son. It is he who, in the beginning, gave a name to him who came forth from him - he is the same one - and he begat him for a son. He gave him his name which belonged to him - he, the Father, who possesses everything which exists around him. He possesses the name; he has the son. It is possible for them to see him. The name, however, is invisible, for it alone is the mystery of the invisible about to come to ears completely filled with it through the Father`s agency. Moreover, as for the Father, his name is not pronounced, but it is revealed through a son. Thus, then, the name is great.

Who, then, has been able to pronounce a name for him, this great name, except him alone to whom the name belongs and the sons of the name in whom the name of the Father is at rest, and who themselves in turn are at rest in his name, since the Father has no beginning? It is he alone who engendered it for himself as a name in the beginning before he had created the Aeons, that the name of the Father should be over their heads as a lord - that is, the real name, which is secure by his authority and by his perfect power. For the name is not drawn from lexicons nor is his name derived from common name-giving, But it is invisible. He gave a name to himself alone, because he alone saw it and because he alone was capable of giving himself a name. For he who does not exist has no name. For what name would one give him who did not exist? Nevertheless, he who exists also with his name and he alone knows it, and to him alone the Father gave a name. The Son is his name. He did not, therefore, keep it secretly hidden, but the son came into existence. He himself gave a name to him. The name, then, is that of the Father, just as the name of the Father is the Son. For otherwise, where would compassion find a name - outside of the Father? But someone will probably say to his companion, "Who would give a name to someone who existed before himself, as if, indeed, children did not receive their name from one of those who gave them birth?"

Above all, then, it is fitting for us to think this point over: What is the name? It is the real name. It is, indeed, the name which came from the Father, for it is he who owns the name. He did not, you see, get the name on loan, as in the case of others because of the form in which each one of them is going to be created. This, then, is the authoritative name. There is no one else to whom he has given it. But it remained unnamed, unuttered, `till the moment when he, who is perfect, pronounced it himself; and it was he alone who was able to pronounce his name and to see it. When it pleased him, then, that his son should be his pronounced name and when he gave this name to him, he who has come from the depth spoke of his secrets, because he knew that the Father was absolute goodness. For this reason, indeed, he sent this particular one in order that he might speak concerning the place and his place of rest from which he had come forth, and that he might glorify the Pleroma, the greatness of his name and the sweetness of his Father.

Each one will speak concerning the place from which he has come forth, and to the region from which he received his essential being, he will hasten to return once again. And he want from that place - the place where he was - because he tasted of that place, as he was nourished and grew. And his own place of rest is his Pleroma. All the emanations from the Father, therefore, are Pleromas, and all his emanations have their roots in the one who caused them all to grow from himself. He appointed a limit. They, then, became manifest individually in order that they might be in their own thought, for that place to which they extend their thoughts is their root, which lifts them upward through all heights to the Father. They reach his head, which is rest for them, and they remain there near to it so that they say that they have participated in his face by means of embraces. But these of this kind were not manifest, because they have not risen above themselves. Neither have they been deprived of the glory of the Father nor have they thought of him as small, nor bitter, nor angry, but as absolutely good, unperturbed, sweet, knowing all the spaces before they came into existence and having no need of instruction. Such are they who possess from above something of this immeasurable greatness, as they strain towards that unique and perfect one who exists there for them. And they do not go down to Hades. They have neither envy nor moaning, nor is death in them. But they rest in him who rests, without wearying themselves or becoming involved in the search for truth. But, they, indeed, are the truth, and the Father is in them, and they are in the Father, since they are perfect, inseparable from him who is truly good. They lack nothing in any way, but they are given rest and are refreshed by the Spirit. And they listen to their root; they have leisure for themselves, they in whom he will find his root, and he will suffer no loss to his soul.

Such is the place of the blessed; this is their place. As for the rest, then, may they know, in their place, that it does not suit me, after having been in the place of rest to say anything more. But he is the one in whom I shall be in order to devote myself, at all times, to the Father of the All and the true brothers, those upon whom the love of the Father is lavished, and in whose midst nothing of him is lacking. It is they who manifest themselves truly since they are in that true and eternal life and speak of the perfect light filled with the seed of the Father, and which is in his heart and in the Pleroma, while his Spirit rejoices in it and glorifies him in whom it was, because the Father is good. And his children are perfect and worthy of his name, because he is the Father. Children of this kind are those whom he loves.

The Dialogue of Mary and the Archangel

The Angel Gabriel Comes to Mary

²⁶ Six months after Elizabeth had become pregnant, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a city in Galilee. ²⁷ The angel went to a virgin promised in marriage to a descendant of David named Joseph. The virgin's name was Mary.

²⁸ When the angel entered her home, he greeted her and said, "You are favored by the Lord! The Lord is with you."

²⁹ She was startled by what the angel said and tried to figure out what this greeting meant.

³⁰ The angel told her,

"Don't be afraid, Mary. You have found favor^[a] with God.

³¹ You will become pregnant, give birth to a son, and name him Jesus.

³² He will be a great man and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David.

³³ Your son will be king of Jacob's people forever, and his kingdom will never end."

³⁴ Mary asked the angel, "How can this be? I'm a virgin."

³⁵ The angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come to you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the holy child developing inside you will be called the Son of God.

³⁶ "Elizabeth, your relative, is six months pregnant with a son in her old age. People said she couldn't have a child. ³⁷ But nothing is impossible for God."

³⁸ Mary answered, "I am the Lord's servant. Let everything you've said happen to me."

Then the angel left her.

The Hymn of Sophia

We thus call upon the Holy Sophia, the supernal mother of our souls, and celestial bride of our spirits: Daughter of Infinite Light, born of enlightened love; merciful and compassionate, embodiment of perfect wisdom; begotten in Eternity, beyond time and space. With what words shall we praise Thee, or with what thought comprehend Thy majesty? Utterance must profane Thee; Silence itself can but bear witness to Thee. How shall we extol Thee? In what shall we shadow forth Thy great glory among us? And our Lady Sophia answers, saying: Ye shall dance, sing, feast, make music and love, all in my praise. For mine is the ecstasy of the spirit, and mine also joy on earth. Let my worship be in the heart that rejoiceth. wherefore let there be beauty and strength, power and compassion, honor and humility, mirth and reverence within you, now and for evermore.

Amen.

The Homily on Forgiveness by John Chrysostom

And be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you. Be therefore imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell.

The events which are past have greater force than those which are yet to come, and appear to be both more wonderful and more convincing. And hence accordingly Paul founds his exhortation upon the things which have already been done for us, inasmuch as they, on Christ's account, have a greater force. For to say, Forgive, and you shall be forgiven Matthew 6:14, and if you forgive not, you shall in nowise be forgiven Matthew 6:15 — this addressed to men of understanding, and men who believe in the things to come, is of great weight; but Paul appeals to the conscience not by these arguments only, but also by things already done for us. In the former way we may escape punishment, whereas in this latter we may have our share of some positive good. Thou imitatest Christ. This alone is enough to recommend virtue, that it is to imitate God. This is a higher principle than the other, for He makes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust. Matthew 5:45 Because he does not merely say that we are imitating God, but that we do so in those things wherein we receive ourselves such benefits. He would have us cherish the tender heart of fathers towards each other. For by heart, here, is meant lovingkindness and compassion. For inasmuch as it cannot be that, being men, we shall avoid either giving pain or suffering it, he does the next thing, he devises a remedy — that we should forgive one another. And yet there is no comparison. For if you indeed should at this moment forgive any one, he will forgive you again in return; whereas to God you have neither given nor forgiven anything. And thou indeed art forgiving a fellow-servant; whereas God is forgiving a servant, and an enemy, and one that hates Him.

Even as God, says he, also in Christ forgave you.

And this, moreover, contains a high allusion. Not simply, he would say, has He forgiven us, and at no risk or cost, but at the sacrifice of His Son; for that He might forgive you, He sacrificed the Son; whereas thou, oftentimes, even when you see pardon to be both without risk and without cost, yet dost not grant it.

Be therefore imitators of God as beloved children; and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us an offering and sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell.

That you may not then think it an act of necessity, hear how He says, that He gave Himself up. As your Master loved you, love thou your friend. Nay, but neither will you be able so to love; yet still do so as far as you are able. Oh, what can be more blessed than a sound like this! Tell me of royalty or whatever else you will, there is no comparison. Forgive another, and you are imitating God, you are made like God. It is more our duty to forgive trespasses than debts of money; for if you forgive debts, you have not imitated God; whereas if you shall forgive trespasses, you are imitating God. And yet how shall you be able to say, I am poor, and am not able to forgive it, that is, a debt, when you forgive not that which you are able to forgive, that is, a trespass? And surely thou dost not

deem that in this case there is any loss. Yea, is it not rather wealth, is it not abundance, is it not a plentiful store?

And behold yet another and a nobler incitement: — as beloved children, says he. You have yet another cogent reason to imitate Him, not only in that you have received such good at His hands, but also in that you are called His children. And since not all children imitate their fathers, but those which are beloved, therefore he says, as beloved children.

Ver. 2. Walk in love.

Behold, here, the groundwork of all! So then where this is, there is no wrath, no anger, no clamor, no railing, but all are done away. Accordingly he puts the chief point last. Whence were you made a child? Because you were forgiven. On the same ground on which you have had so vast a privilege vouch-safed you, on that selfsame ground forgive your neighbor. Tell me, I say, if you were in prison, and had ten thousand misdeeds to answer for, and some one were to bring you into the palace; or rather to pass over this argument, suppose thou were in a fever and in the agonies of death, and some one were to benefit you by some medicine, would you not value him more than all, yea and the very name of the medicine? For if we thus regard occasions and places by which we are benefited, even as our own souls, much more shall we the things themselves. Be a lover then of love; for by this are you saved, by this have you been made a son. And if you shall have it in your power to save another, will you not use the same remedy, and give the advice to all, Forgive, that you may be forgiven? Thus to incite one another, were the part of grateful, of generous, and noble spirits.

Even as Christ also, he adds, loved you.

You are only sparing friends, He enemies. So then far greater is that boon which comes from our Master. For how in our case is the even as preserved. Surely it is clear that it will be, by our doing good to our enemies.

And gave Himself up for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell.

Do you see that to suffer for one's enemies is a sweet-smelling savor, and an acceptable sacrifice? And if you shall die, then will you be indeed a sacrifice. This it is to imitate God.

Ver. 3. But fornication, and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as becomes saints.

He has spoken of the bitter passion, of wrath; he now comes to the lesser evil: for that lust is the lesser evil, hear how Moses also in the law says, first, You shall do no murder Exodus 20:13, which is the work of wrath, and then, You shall not commit adultery Exodus 20:14, which is of lust. For as bitterness, and clamor, and all malice, and railing, and the like, are the works of the passionate man, so likewise are fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, those of the lustful; since avarice and sensuality spring from the same passion. But just as in the former case he took away clamor as being the vehicle of anger, so now does he filthy talking and jesting as being the vehicle of lust; for he proceeds,

Ver. 4. Nor filthiness, nor foolish talking, or jesting, which are not befitting; but rather giving of thanks.

Have no witticisms, no obscenities, either in word or in deed, and you will quench the flame — let them not even be named, says he, among you, that is, let them not anywhere even make their appearance. This he says also in writing to the Corinthians. It is actually reported that there is fornication among you 1 Corinthians 5:1; as much as to say, Be all pure. For words are the way to acts. Then, that he may not appear a forbidding kind of person and austere, and a destroyer of playfulness, he goes on to add the reason, by saying, which are not befitting, which have nothing to do with us — but rather giving of thanks. What good is there in uttering a witticism? thou only raisest a laugh. Tell me, will the shoemaker ever busy himself about anything which does not belong to or *befit* his trade? Or will he purchase any tool of that kind? No, never. Because the things we do not need, are nothing to us.

Moral. Let there not be one idle word; for from idle words we fall also into foul words. The present is no season of loose merriment, but of mourning, of tribulation, and lamentation: and do you play the jester? What wrestler on entering the ring neglects the struggle with his adversary, and utters witticisms? The devil stands hard at hand, he is going about roaring 1 Peter 5:8 to catch you, he is moving everything, and turning everything against your life, and is scheming to force you from your retreat, he is grinding his teeth and bellowing, he is breathing fire against your salvation; and do you sit uttering witticisms, and talking folly, and uttering things which are not befitting. Full nobly then will you be able to overcome him! We are in sport, beloved. Would you know the life of the saints? Listen to what Paul says. By the space of three years I ceased not to admonish every one night and day with tears. Acts 20:31 And if so great was the zeal he exerted in behalf of them of Miletus and Ephesus, not making pleasant speeches, but introducing his admonition with tears, what should one say of the rest? But hearken again to what he says to the Corinthians. Out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears. 2 Corinthians 2:4 And again, Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I burn not? 2 Corinthians 11:29 And hearken again to what he says elsewhere, desiring every day, as one might say, to depart out of the world. For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan 2 Corinthians 5:4; and do you laugh and play? It is war-time, and are you handling the dancers' instruments? Look at the countenances of men in battle, their dark and contracted mien, their brow terrible and full of awe. Mark the stern eye, the heart eager and beating and throbbing, their spirit collected, and trembling and intensely anxious. All is good order, all is good discipline, all is silence in the camps of those who are arrayed against each other. They speak not, I do not say, an impertinent word, but they utter not a single sound. Now if they who have visible enemies, and who are in nowise injured by words, yet observe so great silence, do you who hast your warfare, and the chief of your warfare in words, do you leave this part naked and exposed? Or are you ignorant that it is here that we are most beset with snares? Are you amusing and enjoying yourself, and uttering witticisms and raising a laugh, and regarding the matter as a mere nothing? How many perjuries, how many injuries, how many filthy speeches have arisen from witticisms! But no, you will say, pleasantries are not like this. Yet hear how he excludes all kinds of jesting. It is a time now of war and fighting, of watch and guard, of arming and arraying ourselves. The time of laughter can have no place here; for that is of the world. Hear what Christ says: The world shall rejoice, but you shall be sorrowful. John 16:20 Christ was crucified for your ills, and do you laugh? He was buffeted, and endured so great sufferings because of your calamity, and the tempest that had overtaken you; and do you play the reveler? And how will you not then rather provoke Him?

But since the matter appears to some to be one of indifference, which moreover is difficult to be guarded against, let us discuss this point a little, to show you how vast an evil it is. For indeed this is a work of the devil, to make us disregard things indifferent. First of all then, even if it were indifferent, not even in that case were it right to disregard it, when one knows that the greatest evils are both produced and increased by it, and that it oftentimes terminates in fornication. However, that it is not even indifferent is evident from hence. Let us see then whence it is produced. Or rather, let us see what sort of a person a saint ought to be:— gentle, meek, sorrowful, mournful, contrite. The man then who deals in jests is no saint. Nay, were he even a Greek, such an one would be scorned. These are things allowed to those only who are on the stage. Where filthiness is, there also is jesting; where unseasonable laughter is, there also is jesting. Harken to what the Prophet says, Serve the Lord in fear, and rejoice with trembling. Psalm 2:11 Jestings renders the soul soft and indolent. It excites the soul unduly, and often it teems with acts of violence, and creates wars. But what more? In fine, have you not come to be among men? Then put away childish things. 1 Corinthians 13:11 Why, you will not allow your own servant in the market place to speak an impertinent word: and do you then, who sayest you are a servant of God, go uttering your witticisms in the public square? It is well if the soul that is sober be not stolen away; but one that is relaxed and dissolute, who cannot carry off? It will be its own murderer, and will stand in no need of the crafts or assaults of the devil.

But, moreover, in order to understand this, look too at the very name. It means the versatile man, the man of all complexions, the unstable, the pliable, the man that can be anything and everything. But far is this from those who are servants to the Rock. Such a character quickly turns and changes; for he must needs mimic both gesture and speech, and laugh and gait, and everything, aye, and such an one is obliged to invent jokes: for he needs this also. But far be this from a Christian, to play the buffoon. Farther, the man who plays the jester must of necessity incur the signal hatred of the objects of his random ridicule, whether they be present, or being absent hear of it.

If the thing is creditable, why is it left to mountebanks? What, do you make yourself a mountebank, and yet art not ashamed? Why is it ye permit not your gentlewomen to do so? Is it not that you set it down as a mark of an immodest, and not of a discreet character? Great are the evils that dwell in a soul given to jesting; great is the ruin and desolation. Its consistency is broken, the building is decayed, fear is banished, reverence is gone. A tongue you have, not that you may ridicule another man, but that you may give thanks unto God. Look at your merriment-makers, as they are called, those buffoons. These are your jesters. Banish from your souls, I entreat you, this graceless accomplishment. It is the business of parasites, of mountebanks, of dancers, of harlots; far be it from a generous, far be it from a highborn soul, aye, far too even from slaves. If there be any one who has lost respect, if there be any vile person, that man is also a jester. To many indeed the thing appears to be even a virtue, and this truly calls for our sorrow. Just as lust little by little drives headlong into fornication, so also does a turn for jesting. It seems to have a grace about it, yet there is nothing more graceless than this. For hear the Scripture which says, Before the thunder goes lightning, and before a shamefaced man shall go favor. Now there is nothing more shameless than the jester; so that his mouth is not full of favor, but of pain. Let us banish this custom from our tables. Yet are there some who teach it even to the poor! O monstrous! They make men in affliction play the jester. Why, where shall not this pest be found next? Already has it been brought into the Church itself. Already has it laid hold of the very Scriptures. Need I say anything to prove the

enormity of the evil? I am ashamed indeed, but still nevertheless I will speak; for I am desirous to show to what a length the mischief has advanced, that I may not appear to be trifling, or to be discoursing to you on some trifling subject; that even thus I may be enabled to withdraw you from this delusion. And let no one think that I am fabricating, but I will tell you what I have really heard. A certain person happened to be in company with one of those who pride themselves highly on their knowledge (now I know I shall excite a smile, but still I will say it notwithstanding); and when the platter was set before him, he said, Take and eat, children, lest your belly be angry! And again, others say, Woe unto you, Mammon, and to him that has you not; and many like enormities has jesting introduced; as when they say, Now is there no nativity. And this I say to show the enormity of this base temper; for these are the expressions of a soul destitute of all reverence. And are not these things enough to call down thunderbolts? And one might find many other such things which have been said by these men.

Wherefore, I entreat you, let us banish the custom universally, and speak those things which become us. Let not holy mouths utter the words of dishonorable and base men. For what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity, or what communion has light with darkness? 2 Corinthians 6:14 Happy will it be for us, if, having kept ourselves aloof from all such foul things, we be thus able to attain to the promised blessings; far indeed from dragging such a train after us, and sullyng the purity of our minds by so many. For the man who will play the jester will soon go on to be a railer, and the railer will go on to heap ten thousand other mischiefs on himself. When then we shall have disciplined these two faculties of the soul, anger and desire (vid. Plat. Phædr. cc. 25, 34), and have put them like well-broken horses under the yoke of reason, then let us set over them the mind as charioteer, that we may gain the prize of our high calling Philippians 3:14; which God grant that we may all attain, through Jesus Christ our Lord, with Whom, together with the Holy Ghost, be unto the Father, glory, might, and honor, now, and ever, and throughout all ages. Amen.

The Treatise on Prayer by Tertullian

The Spirit of God, and the Word of God, and the Reason of God — Word of Reason, and Reason and Spirit of Word — Jesus Christ our Lord, namely, who is both the one and the other, — has determined for us, the disciples of the New Testament, a new form of prayer; for in this particular also it was needful that new wine should be laid up in new skins, and a new breadth be sewn to a new garment. Besides, whatever had been in bygone days, has either been quite changed, as circumcision; or else supplemented, as the rest of the Law; or else fulfilled, as Prophecy; or else perfected, as faith itself. For the new grace of God has renewed all things from carnal unto spiritual, by superinducing the Gospel, the obliterator of the whole ancient bygone system; in which our Lord Jesus Christ has been approved as the Spirit of God, and the Word of God, and the Reason of God: the Spirit, by which He was mighty; the Word, by which He taught; the Reason, by which He came. So the prayer composed by Christ has been composed of three parts. In speech, by which *prayer* is enunciated, in spirit, by which alone it prevails, even John had taught his disciples to pray, but all John's doings were laid as groundwork for Christ, until, when He had increased — just as the same John used to fore-announce that it was needful that He should increase and himself decrease John 3:30 — the whole work of the forerunner passed over, together with his spirit itself, unto the Lord. Therefore, after what form of words John taught to pray is not extant, because earthly

things have given place to heavenly. He who is from the earth, says John, speaks earthly things; and He who is here from the heavens speaks those things which He has seen. John 3:31-32 And what is the Lord Christ's — as this method of praying is — *that* is *not* heavenly? And so, blessed *brethren*, let us consider His heavenly wisdom: first, touching the precept of praying secretly, whereby He exacted man's faith, that he should be confident that the sight and hearing of Almighty God are present beneath roofs, and extend even into the secret place; and required modesty in faith, that it should offer its religious homage to Him alone, whom it believed to see and to hear everywhere. Further, since wisdom succeeded in the following precept, let it in like manner appertain unto faith, and the modesty of faith, that we think not that the Lord must be approached with a train of words, who, we are certain, takes unsolicited foresight for His own. And yet that very brevity — and let this make for the third grade of wisdom — is supported on the substance of a great and blessed interpretation, and is as diffuse in meaning as it is compressed in words. For it has embraced not only the special duties of prayer, be it veneration of God or petition for man, but almost every discourse of the Lord, every record of *His* Discipline; so that, in fact, in the Prayer is comprised an epitome of the whole Gospel.

The Letter of Polycarp to the Smyrnaeans (Expanded)

INTRODUCTION

For background, The Epistle of Ignatius to Polycarp, and the Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians, (both available on The Seraphim Files) should be read in connection with this epistle from the Smyrnaeans about the martyrdom of Polycarp.

The Apostle John, author of the Gospel of John and Revelation, was a "pillar" of the church in Jerusalem, and later moved to Ephesus for the rest of his ministry. During the reign of the tyrannical Roman Emperor Domitian (A.D. 81-96), he was exiled to the nearby island of Patmos, where he wrote Revelation about A.D. 95. Upon the emperor's death he returned to Ephesus to resume his episcopacy and to write his Gospel about A.D. 96. The last remaining of the Twelve Apostles, John was nearly a hundred when he died about A.D. 96-100. (The Epistle of Ignatius to Polycarp was written within a decade of St. John's death.)

It was this last of the Twelve Apostles who ordained Polycarp bishop of Smyrna, a city north of Ephesus. When St. Ignatius passed through Smyrna on his way to martyrdom, Polycarp was perhaps no more than thirty-five. The Epistles of Ignatius were collected by Polycarp, a fact mentioned by Irenaeus, Origen, Eusebius, Jerome, Athanasius, Theodoret, and other ancients.

After a lifetime of exemplary ministry, Polycarp was martyred at the age of eighty-six. This Epistle of the Smyrnaeans is the first example of Christian Martyrology.

One Item of Commentary

In 3:2 and 9:2 appears the phrase "Away with the atheists." Roman persecutors called the Christians "atheists" because they refused to worship the Roman gods. In 9:2 Polycarp says "Away with the atheists" in irony, referring to the unbelieving Romans in the stadium.

In a similar vein, early Christians were also called "agnostics" in contrast to the Gnostics, who claimed direct knowledge of God. (An atheist is one who believes God does not exist; an agnostic is

one who doesn't know whether or not God exists.) The Christian religion is based on believing in revelation (faith), not on direct knowledge. Thus the startling (to modern ears) of St. Augustine to the effect that because he was an agnostic, he was a Christian!

Prologue

The church of God which sojourns (temporarily lives) at Smyrna to the Church of God which sojourns in Philomelium and to all the brotherhoods of the holy and universal Church sojourning in every place; mercy and peace and love from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ be multiplied.

1:1

We write unto you, brethren, an account of what befell those that suffered martyrdom and especially the blessed Polycarp, who stayed the persecution, having as it were set his seal upon it by his martyrdom. For nearly all the foregoing events came to pass that the Lord might show us once more an example of martyrdom which is conformable to the Gospel.

1:2

For he lingered that he might be delivered up, even as the Lord did, to the end that we too might be imitators of him, not looking only to that which concerns ourselves, but also to that which concerns our neighbors. For it is the office of true and steadfast love, not only to desire that oneself be saved, but all the brethren also.

2:1

Blessed therefore and noble are all the martyrdoms which have taken place according to the will of God (for it behooves us to be very scrupulous and to assign to God the power over all things).

2:2

For who could fail to admire their nobility and patient endurance and loyalty to the Master? Seeing that when they were so torn by lashes that even as far as the veins and arteries and inward mechanism of their flesh were visible, they endured patiently, so that the very bystanders had pity and wept; while they themselves reached such a pitch of bravery that none of them uttered a cry or a groan, thus showing to us all that at that hour the martyrs of Christ being tortured were absent from the flesh, or rather that the Lord was standing by and conversing with them.

2:3

And giving heed unto the grace of Christ they despised the tortures of this world, purchasing at the cost of one hour a release from eternal punishment. And they found the fire of their inhuman torturers cold: for they set before their eyes the escape from the eternal fire which is never quenched; while with the eyes of their heart they gazed upon the good things which are reserved for those that endure patiently, things which neither ear has heard nor eye has seen, neither have they entered into the heart of man, but were shown by the Lord to them, for they were no longer men but angels already.

2:4

And in like manner also those that were condemned to the wild beasts endured fearful punishments, being made to lie on sharp shells and buffeted with other forms of manifold tortures,

that the devil might, if possible, by the persistence of the punishment bring them to a denial; for he tried many wiles against them.

3:1

But thanks be to God; for He truly prevailed against all. For the right noble Germanicus encouraged their timorousness through the constancy which was in him; and he fought with the wild beasts in a signal way. For when the proconsul wished to prevail upon him and bade him have pity on his youth, he used violence and dragged the wild beast towards him, desiring the more speedily to obtain a release from their unrighteous and lawless life.

3:2

So after this all the multitude, marveling at the bravery of the God-beloved and God-fearing people of the Christians, raised a cry, "Away with the atheists; let search be made for Polycarp."

4:1

But one man, Quintus by name, a Phrygian newly arrived from Phrygia, when he saw the wild beasts, turned coward. He it was who had forced himself and some others to come forward of their own free will (and recant their faith). The proconsul by much entreaty persuaded this man to swear the oath and to offer incense. For this cause therefore, brethren, we praise not those who volunteer to recant, since the Gospel does not so teach us.

5:1

Now the glorious Polycarp at the first, when he heard it, so far from being dismayed, wanted to remain in town; but the greater part persuaded him to withdraw. So he withdrew to a farm not far distant from the city, and there he stayed with a few companions, doing nothing else night and day but praying for all men and for the churches throughout the world, for this was his constant habit.

5:2

And while praying he fell into a trance three days before his arrest, and he saw his pillow burning with fire. He turned and said to those that were with him: "It must needs be that I shall be burned alive."

6:1

Since those that were in search of him persisted, he departed to another farm. Immediately they who were in search of him came up, and not finding him, they seized two slave lads, one of whom confessed under torture;

6:2

for it was impossible for him to lie concealed, seeing that the very persons who betrayed him were people of his own household. And the captain of the police, who chanced to have the very name, being called Herod, was eager to bring him into the stadium, that he might fulfill his appointed lot, being made a partaker with Christ, while they -- his betrayers -- underwent the punishment of Judas himself.

7:1

So taking the lad with them, on the Friday about the supper hour, the police and horsemen went forth with their accustomed weapons, hurrying as against a robber. And coming up in a troop late in the evening, they found the man himself (Polycarp) in bed in an upper chamber in a certain cottage;

and though he might have departed from there to another place, he would not, saying, "The will of God be done."

7:2

So when he heard that they were come, he went down and conversed with them, the bystanders marveling at his age and his constancy, and wondering why there should be so much eagerness for the apprehension of an old man like him. At that, he immediately gave orders that a table should be spread for them to eat and drink at that hour, as much as they desired. And he persuaded them to grant him an hour so he might pray unmolested;

7:3

and on their consenting, he stood up and prayed, being so full of the grace of God, that for two hours he could not hold his peace, and those that heard were amazed, and many repented that they had come against such a venerable old man.

8:1

But when at length he brought his prayer to an end, after remembering all who at any time had come in his way, small and great, high and low, and all the universal Church throughout the world, the hour of departure being come, they seated him on a donkey and brought him into the city, it being a high Sabbath.

8:2

And he was met by Herod the captain of police and his father Nicetes, who also removed him to their carriage and tried to prevail upon him, seating themselves by his side and saying, "Why, what harm is there in saying, Caesar is Lord, and offering incense," with more to this effect, "and saving yourself?" But he at first gave them no answer. When however they persisted, he said, "I am not going to do what you counsel me."

8:3

Then they, failing to persuade him, uttered threatening words and made him dismount with speed, so that he bruised his shin, as he got down from the carriage. And without even turning round, he went on his way promptly and with speed, as if nothing had happened to him, being taken to the stadium; there being such a tumult in the stadium that no man's voice could be so much as heard.

9:1

But as Polycarp entered into the stadium, a voice came to him from heaven; "Be strong, Polycarp, and play the man." And no one saw the speaker, but those of our people who were present heard the voice. And at length, when he was brought up, there was a great tumult, for they heard that Polycarp had been apprehended.

9:2

When then he was brought before him, the proconsul asked whether he were the man. And on his confessing that he was, he tried to persuade him to a denial saying, "Have respect to your age," and other things in accordance therewith, as it is their habit to say, "Swear by the genius of Caesar; repent and say, 'Away with the atheists.'" Then Polycarp with solemn countenance looked upon the whole multitude of lawless heathen that were in the stadium, and waved his hand to them; and groaning and looking up to heaven he said, "Away with the atheists."

9:3

But when the magistrate pressed him hard and said, "Swear the oath, and I will release you; revile the Christ," Polycarp said, "Eighty-six years have I been His servant, and He has done me no wrong. How then can I blaspheme my King who saved me?"

10:1

But on his persisting again and saying, "Swear by the genius of Caesar," he answered, "If you suppose vainly that I will swear by the genius of Caesar, as you say, and feign that you are ignorant who I am, hear you plainly: I am a Christian. But if you would learn the doctrine of Christianity, assign a day and give me a hearing."

10:2

The proconsul said, "Prevail upon the people." But Polycarp said, "As for yourself, I should have held you worthy of discourse; for we have been taught to render, as is proper, to princes and authorities appointed by God such honor as does us no harm; but as for these, I do not hold them worthy, that I should defend myself before them."

11:1

Whereupon the proconsul said: "I have wild beasts here and I will throw you to them, except you repent." But he said, "Call for them, for the repentance from better to worse is a change not permitted to us; but it is a noble thing to change from that which is improper to righteousness."

11:2

Then he said to him again, "If you despise the wild beasts, I will cause you to be consumed by fire, unless you repent." But Polycarp said: "You threaten that fire which burns for a season and after a little while is quenched: for you are ignorant of the fire of the future judgment and eternal punishment, which is reserved for the ungodly. But why do you delay? Come, do what you will."

12:1

Saying these things and more besides, he was inspired with courage and joy, and his countenance was filled with grace, so that not only did it not drop in dismay at the things which were said to him, but on the contrary the proconsul was astounded and sent his own herald to proclaim three times in the midst of the stadium, "Polycarp has confessed himself to be a Christian."

12:2

When this was proclaimed by the herald, the whole multitude both of Gentiles and of Jews who dwelt in Smyrna cried out with ungovernable wrath and with a loud shout, "This is the teacher of Asia, the father of the Christians, the puller down of our gods, who teaches multitudes not to sacrifice nor worship." Saying these things, they shouted aloud and asked the Asiarch Philip to let a lion loose upon Polycarp. But he said that it was not lawful for him, since he had brought the sports to a close.

12:3

Then they thought fit to shout out with one accord that Polycarp should be burned alive. For it must needs be that the matter of the vision should be fulfilled, which was shown him concerning his pillow, when he saw it on fire while praying, and turning round he said prophetically to the faithful who were with him, "I must needs be burned alive."

13:1

These things then happened with so great speed, quicker than words could tell, the crowds immediately collected timber and sticks from the workshops and baths, and the Jews more especially assisted in this with zeal, as is their custom.

13:2

But when the pile was made ready, divesting himself of all his upper garments and loosing his belt, he endeavored also to take off his shoes, though not in the habit of doing this before, because all the faithful at all times vied eagerly who should soonest touch his flesh. For he had been treated with all honor for his holy life even before his gray hairs came.

13:3

Immediately then the instruments that were prepared for the pile were placed about him. As they were going likewise to nail him to the stake, he said: "Leave me as I am; for He that has granted me to endure the fire will grant me also to remain at the pyre unmoved, even without the security which you seek from the nails."

14:1

So they did not nail him, but tied him. Then he, placing his hands behind him and being bound to the stake, like a noble ram out of a great flock for an offering, a burnt sacrifice made ready and acceptable to God, looking up to heaven said: "O Lord God Almighty, the Father of Your beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ, through whom we have received the knowledge of You, the God of angels and powers and of all creation and of the whole race of the righteous, who live in Your presence;

14:2

I bless You because You have granted me this day and hour, that I might receive a portion amongst the number of martyrs in the cup of Your Christ unto resurrection of eternal life, both of soul and of body, in the incorruptibility of the Holy Spirit. May I be received among these in Your presence this day, as a rich and acceptable sacrifice, as You did prepare and reveal it beforehand, and have accomplished it, You that art the faithful and true God.

14:3

For this cause, yea and for all things, I praise You, I bless You, I glorify You, through the eternal and heavenly High-priest, Jesus Christ, Your beloved Son, through Whom, with Him and the Holy Spirit, be glory both now and ever and for the ages to come. Amen."

15:1

When he had offered up the Amen and finished his prayer, the firemen lighted the fire. And, a mighty flame flashing forth, we to whom it was given to see, saw a marvel, yea and we were preserved that we might relate to the rest what happened.

15:2

The fire, making the appearance of a vault, like the sail of a vessel filled by the wind, made a wall round about the body of the martyr; and it was there in the midst, not like flesh burning, but like a loaf in the oven or like gold and silver refined in a furnace. For we perceived such a fragrant smell, as if it were the wafted odor of frankincense or some other precious spice.

16:1

So at length the lawless men, seeing that his body could not be consumed by the fire, ordered an executioner to go up to him and stab him with a dagger. And when he had done this, there came forth [a dove and] a quantity of blood, so that it extinguished the fire; and all the multitude marveled that there should be so great a difference between the unbelievers and the elect.

16:2

In the number of these latter was this man, the glorious martyr Polycarp, who was found an apostolic and prophetic teacher in our own time, a bishop of the holy Church which is in Smyrna. For every word which he uttered from his mouth was accomplished and will be accomplished.

17:1

But the jealous and envious Evil One, the adversary of the family of the righteous, having seen the greatness of his martyrdom and his blameless life from the beginning, and how he was crowned with the crown of immortality and had won a reward which none could gainsay, managed that not even his poor body should be taken away by us, although many desired to do this and to touch his holy flesh.

17:2

So he put forward Nicetes, the father of Herod and brother of Alce, to plead with the magistrate not to give up his body, "lest," so it was said, "they should abandon the crucified one and begin to worship this man" -- this being done at the instigation and urgent entreaty of the Jews, who also watched when we were about to take it from the fire, not knowing that it will be impossible for us either to forsake at any time the Christ who suffered for the salvation of the whole world of those that are saved -- suffered though faultless for sinners -- nor to worship any other.

17:3

For Him, being the Son of God, we adore, but the martyrs as disciples and imitators of the Lord we cherish as they deserve for their matchless affection towards their own King and Teacher. May it be our lot also to be found partakers and fellow-disciples with them.

18:1

The centurion therefore, seeing the opposition raised on the part of the Jews, set him in the midst and burnt him after their custom.

18:2

And so we afterwards took up his bones which are more valuable than precious stones and finer than refined gold, and laid them in a suitable place;

18:3

where the Lord will permit us to gather ourselves together, as we are able, in gladness and joy, and to celebrate the anniversary of his martyrdom for the commemoration of those that have already fought in the contest, and for the training and preparation of those that shall do so hereafter.

19:1

So it befell the blessed Polycarp, who having with those from Philadelphia suffered martyrdom in Smyrna -- twelve in all -- is especially remembered more than the others by all men, so that he is talked of even by the heathen in every place: for he showed himself not only a notable teacher, but

also a distinguished martyr, whose martyrdom all desire to imitate, seeing that it was after the pattern of the Gospel of Christ.

19:2

Having by his endurance overcome the unrighteous ruler in the conflict and so received the crown of immortality, he rejoices in company with the Apostles and all righteous men, and glorifies the Almighty God and Father, and blesses our Lord Jesus Christ, the savior of our souls and helmsman of our bodies and shepherd of the universal Church which is throughout the world.

20:1

You indeed required that the things which happened should be shown unto you at greater length; but we for the present have certified you, as it were, in a summary through our brother Marcianus. When then you have informed yourselves of these things, send the letter likewise to the brethren which are farther off, that they also may glorify the Lord, who makes election from His own servants.

20:2

Now unto Him that is able to bring us all by His grace and bounty unto His eternal kingdom, through His only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, be glory, honor, power, and greatness for ever. Salute all the saints. They that are with us salute you, and Euarestus, who wrote the letter, with his whole house.

21:1

Now the blessed Polycarp was martyred on the second day of the first part of the month Xanthicus, on the seventh before the calends of March, on a great Sabbath, at the eighth hour. He was apprehended by Herod, when Philip of Tralles was high priest, in the proconsulship of Statius Quadratus, but in the reign of the Eternal King Jesus Christ. To Whom be the glory, honor, greatness, and eternal throne, from generation to generation. Amen.

22:1

We bid you God speed, brethren, while you walk by the word of Jesus Christ which is according to the Gospel; with Whom be glory to God for the salvation of His holy elect; even as the blessed Polycarp suffered martyrdom, in whose footsteps may it be our lot to be found in the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

22:2

This account Gaius copied from the papers of Irenaeus, a disciple of Polycarp. The same also lived with Irenaeus.

22:3

And I Socrates wrote it down in Corinth from the copy of Gaius. Grace be with all men.

22:4

And I Pionius again wrote it down from the aforementioned copy, having searched it out (for the blessed Polycarp showed me in a revelation, as I will declare in the sequel), gathering it together when it was now well nigh worn out by age, that the Lord Jesus Christ may gather me also with His elect into His heavenly kingdom; to Whom be the glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

(The three preceeding verses appear in the Moscow Manuscript as follows:)

22:2

This account Gaius copied from the papers of Irenaeus. The same lived with Irenaeus who had been a disciple of the holy Polycarp. For this Irenaeus, being in Rome at the time of the martyrdom of the bishop Polycarp, instructed many; and many most excellent and orthodox treatises by him are in circulation. In these he makes mention of Polycarp, saying that he was taught by him. And he ably refuted every heresy, and handed down the catholic rule of the Church just as he had received it from the saint. He mentions this fact also, that when Marcion, after whom the Marcionites are called, met the holy Polycarp on one occasion, and said "Recognize us, Polycarp," he said in reply to Marcion, "Yes indeed, I recognize the firstborn of Satan." The following statement also is made in the writings of Irenaeus, that on the very day and hour when Polycarp was martyred in Smyrna Irenaeus being in the city of the Romans heard a voice as of a trumpet saying, "Polycarp is martyred."

22:3

From these papers of Irenaeus then, as has been stated already, Gaius made a copy, and from the copy of Gaius, Isocrates made another in Corinth.

22:4

And I Pionius again wrote it down from the copy of Isocrates, having searched for it in obedience to a revelation of the holy Polycarp, gathering it together, when it was well nigh worn out by age, that the Lord Jesus Christ may gather me also with His elect into His heavenly kingdom; to Whom be the glory with the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

The Discourse on the Resurrection by Irenaeus

The preservation of our bodies is confirmed by the resurrection and ascension of Christ: the souls of the saints during the intermediate period are in a state of expectation of that time when they shall receive their perfect and consummated glory.

1. Since, again, some who are reckoned among the orthodox go beyond the pre-arranged plan for the exaltation of the just, and are ignorant of the methods by which they are disciplined beforehand for incorruption, they thus entertain heretical opinions. For the heretics, despising the handiwork of God, and not admitting the salvation of their flesh, while they also treat the promise of God contemptuously, and pass beyond God altogether in the sentiments they form, affirm that immediately upon their death they shall pass above the heavens and the Demiurge, and go to the Mother (Achamoth) or to that Father whom they have feigned. Those persons, therefore, who disallow a resurrection affecting the whole man (*universam reprobant resurrectionem*), and as far as in them lies remove it from the midst [of the Christian scheme], how can they be wondered at, if again they know nothing as to the plan of the resurrection? For they do not choose to understand, that if these things are as they say, the Lord Himself, in whom they profess to believe, did not rise again upon the third day; but immediately upon His expiring on the cross, undoubtedly departed on high, leaving His body to the earth. But the case was, that for three days He dwelt in the place where the dead were, as the prophet says concerning Him: And the Lord remembered His

dead saints who slept formerly in the land of sepulture; and He descended to them, to rescue and save them. And the Lord Himself says, As Jonas remained three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be in the heart of the earth. Matthew 12:40 Then also the apostle says, But when He ascended, what is it but that He also descended into the lower parts of the earth? Ephesians 4:9 This, too, David says when prophesying of Him, And you have delivered my soul from the nethermost hell; and on His rising again the third day, He said to Mary, who was the first to see and to worship Him, Touch Me not, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to the disciples, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and unto your Father.

2. If, then, the Lord observed the law of the dead, that He might become the first-begotten from the dead, and tarried until the third day in the lower parts of the earth; Ephesians 4:9 then afterwards rising in the flesh, so that He even showed the print of the nails to His disciples, He thus ascended to the Father;— [if all these things occurred, I say], how must these men not be put to confusion, who allege that the lower parts refer to this world of ours, but that their inner man, leaving the body here, ascends into the super-celestial place? For as the Lord went away in the midst of the shadow of death, where the souls of the dead were, yet afterwards arose in the body, and after the resurrection was taken up [into heaven], it is manifest that the souls of His disciples also, upon whose account the Lord underwent these things, shall go away into the invisible place allotted to them by God, and there remain until the resurrection, awaiting that event; then receiving their bodies, and rising in their entirety, that is bodily, just as the Lord arose, they shall come thus into the presence of God. For no disciple is above the Master, but every one that is perfect shall be as his Master. Luke 6:40 As our Master, therefore, did not at once depart, taking flight [to heaven], but awaited the time of His resurrection prescribed by the Father, which had been also shown forth through Jonas, and rising again after three days was taken up [to heaven]; so ought we also to await the time of our resurrection prescribed by God and foretold by the prophets, and so, rising, be taken up, as many as the Lord shall account worthy of this [privilege].

The Ethiopian Book of the Passion

The **Ethiopian Book of the Passion** refers to the rich collection of texts and traditions within the Ethiopian Orthodox Church that recount and meditate upon the Passion of Jesus Christ. While there may not be a singular text universally identified by this title, it likely encompasses the Ethiopian Church's unique liturgical writings, gospel narratives, and theological reflections on Christ's suffering, crucifixion, and resurrection.

The Passion in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tradition

In Ethiopian Christianity, the Passion of Christ is a central theme deeply woven into the fabric of worship, art, and theology. The account of Christ's suffering is celebrated with great reverence, particularly during the liturgical season of Lent (*Hudadi*) and Holy Week, leading to the climactic observance of Easter (*Fasika*).

Ethiopian liturgical texts and hymns often include vivid and detailed depictions of the events surrounding Christ's Passion. These writings not only recount the biblical narrative but also reflect the Church's unique theological and mystical interpretations.

Key Texts and Sources

1. **The Gospels in Ge'ez:** The Ethiopian Orthodox Bible includes detailed accounts of the Passion in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, with unique textual nuances in the Ge'ez translations.
2. **The *Homily of the Passion*:** Often attributed to early Church fathers or Ethiopian saints, this text elaborates on Christ's suffering and its salvific meaning. It includes meditative reflections on the betrayal, the trial, the crucifixion, and the resurrection.
3. **The Lamentations of the Virgin Mary (*Ta'amra Maryam*):** This devotional text contains accounts of the Virgin Mary's sorrow as she witnesses the suffering and death of her son, adding an emotional and maternal perspective to the Passion narrative.

Liturgical Practices

The Ethiopian Church integrates the Passion into its worship through readings, prayers, and chants. Holy Week is marked by somber observances, including processions, prostrations, and extended readings of the Passion narrative. The Church also uses symbolic art and icons to depict scenes such as the Last Supper, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection.

Cultural and Spiritual Impact

The Ethiopian Book of the Passion underscores the profound role of Christ's suffering in the faith of Ethiopian Christians. It inspires not only liturgical practices but also art, music, and personal devotion. Through its vivid and emotional portrayal of the Passion, it invites the faithful to meditate deeply on the sacrifice of Christ and its significance for humanity.

The Ethiopian Book of the Passion remains a testament to the spiritual depth and cultural richness of Ethiopia's Christian heritage, offering a unique perspective on the universal story of Christ's love and redemption.

The Song of the Martyrs

The Song of the Martyrs.^[a] ¹ Next in my vision, I saw the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with him were one hundred and forty-four thousand^[b] people who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. ² I heard a sound from heaven like that of a mighty torrent or a loud peal of thunder. It was like the sound of harpists playing their harps.

³ They were singing a new song^[c] before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn this song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been redeemed from the earth. ⁴ These are the ones who have not defiled themselves with women.^[d] They are virgins, and they follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They have been redeemed as the firstfruits of mankind for God and for the Lamb. ⁵ No lie was found on their lips. They are irreproachable.

The Nearness of the Judgment.^[e] ⁶ Then I saw another angel flying in midair, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to all those who live on the earth, to every nation, race, language, and people. ⁷ He said

in a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, for the time has come for his judgment. Worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water."

⁸ A second angel followed him, saying:

"Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great.
She has made all the nations drink
the wine of the wrath of her immorality."

⁶ A third angel followed them, crying out in a loud voice, "Anyone who worships the beast or its image and receives its mark on his forehead or hand ¹⁰ will also drink the wine of God's wrath, poured undiluted into the cup of his wrath.^[f] Such people will be tormented in burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. ¹¹ The smoke of their torment will rise forever and ever. There will be no respite day or night for those who worship the beast or its image or for those who receive the mark of its name."

¹² This demands patient endurance on the part of the saints who keep the commandments of God and remain faithful to Jesus.

¹³ Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed^[g] are those who die in the Lord from now on."

"Yes," says the Spirit, "they will find rest from their labors, for their deeds go with them."

¹⁴ **One Like a Son of Man.** ^[b] Now in my vision, I saw a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one "like a son of man,"^[i] with a gold crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. ¹⁵ Another angel then came out of the temple and called out in a loud voice to the one seated on the cloud, "Use your sickle and reap, for the time to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is fully ripe." ¹⁶ So the one who was seated on the cloud swept over the earth with his sickle, and the earth was harvested.

¹⁷ Another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he, too, had a sharp sickle. ¹⁸ Then from the altar came forth still another angel who was in charge of the fire, and he cried out in a loud voice to the one who had the sharp sickle, "Take your sharp sickle and gather the clusters from the vines of the earth, for her grapes are ripe."

¹⁶ So the angel swung his sickle over the earth and gathered in its vintage, which he then cast into the great winepress of God's wrath. ²⁰ The winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the winepress to the height of a horse's bridle for a distance of two hundred miles.

The Ethiopian Book of Benedictions

The **Ethiopian Book of Benedictions** refers to a collection of prayers, blessings, and liturgical texts within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church that focus on invoking divine favor, guidance, and protection. While there is no singular book universally identified by this title, Ethiopian Christianity is rich with sacred texts and rituals that emphasize blessings and benedictions as integral aspects of worship and daily life.

Liturgical and Spiritual Context

Benedictions in the Ethiopian Orthodox tradition are deeply rooted in scripture and the Church's ancient liturgical practices. These blessings are used in various contexts, from formal liturgical services to personal prayers, emphasizing the community's dependence on God's grace and favor. They are recited by priests, deacons, and monks during sacraments, feasts, and significant life events such as baptisms, weddings, and funerals.

Structure and Themes

The Ethiopian Book of Benedictions may encompass a range of texts, including:

1. **Scriptural Blessings:** Passages from the Psalms, the Prophets, and the Gospels that focus on God's promises and blessings for the faithful.
2. **Liturgical Prayers:** Blessings pronounced during the Divine Liturgy (*Qidase*), including:
 - **The Benediction of the Eucharist:** Invoking God's presence in the bread and wine.
 - **Blessings of the Congregation:** Prayers for the health, prosperity, and spiritual growth of the faithful.
3. **Seasonal Benedictions:** Prayers specific to feasts like Christmas (*Genna*), Epiphany (*Timket*), and Easter (*Fasika*), asking for the renewal of God's favor.
4. **Daily Blessings:** Short prayers for morning, evening, and other times of the day, often drawn from traditional Ge'ez hymnals like the *Deggwa*.

Key Texts and Influences

1. **The Psalms:** Heavily used in Ethiopian blessings, particularly Psalms of praise and supplication.
2. **The Synaxarium (*Senkessar*):** Stories of saints often include benedictions and prayers that invoke their intercession.
3. **The Miracles of Mary (*Ta'amra Maryam*):** Contains blessings and prayers for protection under the Virgin Mary's mantle.

Cultural and Religious Significance

Benedictions are not only central to worship but also permeate Ethiopian Christian culture. Families often invite clergy to bless homes, farms, or newly constructed buildings. Priestly benedictions mark life milestones, reinforcing God's presence in every aspect of existence.

Modern Relevance

The Ethiopian Book of Benedictions highlights the timeless connection between the divine and the faithful, offering a framework for living a life steeped in gratitude, faith, and hope. It remains an essential component of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church's spiritual and cultural heritage.

The Prayer of the Archangels

Heavenly King, You have given us archangels to assist us
during our pilgrimage on earth.
Saint Michael is our protector;
I ask him to come to my aid,
fight for all my loved ones,
and protect us from danger.
Saint Gabriel is a messenger of the Good News;
I ask him to help me clearly hear Your voice
and to teach me the truth.
Saint Raphael is the healing angel;
I ask him to take my need for healing and that of everyone I know,
lift it up to Your throne of grace and
deliver us back to the gift of recovery.
Help us, O Lord, to realize more fully the reality of archangels and their desire to serve us. Holy
angels, pray for us.
Amen.

The Ethiopian Hymn of Creation

The **Ethiopian Hymn of Creation** represents a profound reflection on the act of divine creation as expressed in Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity. While there is no specific text universally recognized by this name, the concept likely refers to hymns, prayers, and liturgical passages that celebrate God as the Creator of the universe. These compositions are deeply rooted in the Ethiopian Church's Ge'ez liturgical tradition and its unique theological perspective on the relationship between God, humanity, and the cosmos.

Theological Context

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church views creation as a sacred act revealing God's infinite power, wisdom, and love. Hymns of creation are a way to praise God for the beauty and order of the world and to reflect on humanity's role as stewards of creation. These hymns often intertwine scriptural references with poetic and mystical expressions, illustrating the inseparability of creation from divine grace.

Sources and Texts

1. **The Psalms:** Many Ethiopian hymns draw from the Psalms, particularly passages like:
 - **Psaln 1G:1:** "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands."
 - **Psaln 104:** A detailed poetic meditation on creation's beauty and harmony.

2. **The Ge'ez Hynnal (*Deggwa*):** The liturgical book of hymns used in Ethiopian worship contains numerous compositions that glorify God as Creator, often sung during morning services and special feast days.
 3. **The Book of Enoch (1 Enoch):** Unique to the Ethiopian canon, this ancient text includes descriptions of creation's mysteries, such as the workings of the heavens and the natural world.
 4. **Liturgical Prayers:** These often include poetic praises of God's creative power, recited during the *Qidase* (Divine Liturgy) and on specific holy days.
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Themes in the Hynns

- **Celebration of Nature:** Hymns describe the majesty of the sun, moon, stars, rivers, and mountains as testimonies to God's glory.
 - **Hunan Stewardship:** They emphasize humanity's responsibility to care for and honor creation.
 - **Cosmic Harmony:** Creation is portrayed as a harmonious whole, reflecting God's wisdom and order.
 - **Christ as Creator:** Theologically, the Ethiopian Church sees Christ as integral to creation, based on John 1:3: "Through Him, all things were made."
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Liturgical and Cultural Significance

The Hymn of Creation plays a vital role in worship and Ethiopian Christian identity. It reinforces a sense of awe and reverence for God and the world He made. In daily life, it inspires gratitude for the natural world, fostering spiritual and ecological mindfulness.

The Ethiopian Hymn of Creation remains a testament to the Church's enduring celebration of the divine mystery manifest in the cosmos, encouraging worshippers to live in harmony with God's creation.

The Testament of Reuben

Chapter 1

1:1 "A copy of the testament of Reuben: the things which he commanded to his sons before he died in the one hundred twenty-fifth year of his life."

1:2 "Two years after the death of Joseph, his brother Reuben became sick and there gathered to watch over him his sons and his son's sons."

1:3 "And he said to them, My children, behold I am dying, and I am going the way of my fathers."

1:4 "When he saw Judah and Gad and Asher his brothers there he said to them, Raise me up so that I can tell my brothers and my children the things that I have hidden in my heart, for behold I am

departing from you now."

1:5 "And when he was raised up he kissed them and said to them, Listen, my brothers and my sons; give heed to the things which I, Reuben, your father, command you."

1:6 "See here, I call the God of heaven to bear witness to you this day, so that you will not behave yourselves in the ignorant ways of youth and sexual promiscuity in which I indulged myself and defiled the marriage bed of my father, Jacob."

1:7 "But I tell you he struck me with a severe wound in my loins for seven months, and if my father, Jacob, had not prayed to the Lord in my behalf, the Lord would have destroyed me."

1:8 "For I was thirty years old when I committed this evil deed in the sight of the Lord, and for seven months I was an invalid on the brink of death."

1:9 "And after this, with determination of soul, for seven years I repented before the Lord;"

1:10 "I did not drink wine or liquor; meat did not enter my mouth, and I did not eat any pleasurable food. Rather, I was mourning over my sin, since it was so great. Never had anything like it been done in Israel."

Chapter 2

2:1 "And now give heed to me, my children, concerning the things which I saw during my time of penitence, concerning the seven spirits of deceit."

2:2 "For seven spirits are established against mankind, and they are the sources of the deeds of youth."

2:3 "And seven other spirits are given to man at creation so that by them every human deed is done."

2:4 "First is the spirit of life, with which man is created as a composite being. The second is the spirit of seeing, with which comes desire."

2:5 "The third is the spirit of hearing, with which comes instruction. The fourth is the spirit of smell, with which is given taste for the drawing air and breath."

2:6 "The fifth is the spirit of speech, with which comes knowledge."

2:7 "The sixth is the spirit of taste for consuming food and drink; by it comes strength, because in food is the substance of strength."

2:8 "The seventh is the spirit of procreation and intercourse, with which come sins through fondness for pleasure."

2:9 "For this reason, it was the last in the creation and the first in youth, because it is filled with ignorance; it leads the young like a blind man into a ditch and like an animal over a cliff."

Chapter 3

3:1 "In addition to all is an eighth spirit: sleep, with which is created the ecstasy of nature and the image of death."

3:2 "With these are commingled the spirits of error."

3:3 "First, the spirit of promiscuity resides in the nature and the senses."

3:4 "A second spirit of insatiability, in the stomach; a third spirit of strife, in the liver and the gall; a fourth spirit of flattery and trickery, in order that through excessive effort one might appear to be at the height of his powers;"

3:5 "A fifth spirit of arrogance, that one might be boastful and haughty; a sixth spirit of lying, which through destructiveness and rivalry, handles his affairs smoothly and secretly even with his

relatives and his household."

3:6 "A seventh spirit of injustice, with which are thefts and crooked dealings, in order that one might gain his heart's desire. For injustice works together with the other spirits through acceptance of bribes."

3:8 "And thus every young man is destroyed, darkening his mind from the truth, neither gaining understanding in the Law of God nor heeding the advice of his fathers – just this was my plight in my youth."

3:9 "And now, my children, love truth and she will preserve you. Give heed to the words of Reuben, your father."

3:10 "Do not devote your attention to a woman's looks, nor live with a woman who is already married, nor become involved in affairs with women."

3:11 "For if I had not seen Bilhah bathing in a sheltered place, I would not have fallen into this great lawless act."

3:12 "For so absorbed were my senses by her naked femininity that I was not able to sleep until I had performed this revolting act."

3:13 "While our father, Jacob, had gone off to visit his father, Isaac, and we were at Gader near Ephratha in Bethlehem, Bilhah became drunk and was sound asleep, naked in her bedchamber."

3:14 "So when I came in and saw her nakedness, I performed the impious deed without her being aware of it. Leaving her sleeping soundly, I went out."

3:15 "And immediately a messenger from God revealed it to my father. He came and made lamentation over me, and never again touched her."

Chapter 4

4:1 "Do not devote your attention to the beauty of women, my children, nor occupy your minds with their activities. But live in integrity of heart in the fear/reverence of the Lord, and weary yourself in good deeds, in learning, and in tending your flocks, until the Lord gives you the mate whom he wills, so that you do not suffer, as I did."

4:2 "For until my father's death I never had the courage to look him in the face or speak to any of my brothers because of my disgraceful act."

4:3 "Even until now my conscience harasses me because of my impious act."

4:4 "And yet my father consoled me greatly and prayed to the Lord in my behalf so that the Lord's anger would pass me by – which is just how the Lord treated me. From that time until now I have kept a careful watch and have not sinned."

4:5 "So then, my children, observe all the things that I command you, and do not sin,"

4:6 "For the sin of promiscuity is the pitfall of life, separating man from God and leading on toward idolatry, because it is the deceiver of the mind and the perceptions, and leads youths down to hell before their time."

4:7 "For promiscuity has destroyed many. Whether a man is old, well born, rich, or poor, he brings on himself disgrace among mankind and provides Beliar/Satan with an opportunity to cause him to stumble."

4:8 "You heard how Joseph protected himself from a woman and purified his mind from all promiscuity;"

4:9 "He found favor before God and men. For the Egyptian woman did many things to him, summoned magicians, and brought potions for him, but his soul's deliberation rejected evil desire."

4:10 "For this reason the God of our fathers rescued him from every visible or hidden death."

4:11 "For if promiscuity does not triumph over your reason, then neither can Beliar/Satan conquer you."

Chapter 5

5:1 "For women are evil, my children, and by reason of their lacking authority or power over man, they scheme treacherously how they might entice him to themselves by means of their looks."

5:2 "And whomever they cannot enchant by their appearance they conquer by a stratagem."

5:3 "Indeed, the angel of the Lord told me and instructed me that women are more easily overcome by the spirit of promiscuity than are men. They contrive in their hearts against men, then by decking themselves out they lead men's minds astray, by a look they implant their poison, and finally in the act itself they take them captive."

5:4 "For a woman is not able to coerce a man overtly, but by a harlot's manner she accomplishes her villainy."

5:5 "Accordingly, my children, flee from sexual promiscuity, and order your wives and your daughters not to adorn their heads and their appearances so as to deceive men's sound minds. For every woman who schemes in these ways is destined for eternal punishment."

5:6 "For it was thus that they charmed the Watchers, who were before the Flood. As they continued looking at the women, they were filled with desire for them and perpetrated the act in their minds. Then they were transformed into human males, and while the women were cohabiting with their husbands they appeared to them. Since the women's minds were filled with lust for these apparitions, they gave birth to giants. For the Watchers were disclosed to them as being as high as the heavens."

Chapter 6

6:1 "So guard yourself against sexual promiscuity, and if you want to remain pure in your mind, protect your senses from women."

6:2 "And tell them not to consort with men, so that they too might be pure in their minds."

6:3 "For even recurrent chance meetings – although the impious act itself is not committed – are for these women an incurable disease, but for us they are the plague of Beliar/Satan and an eternal disgrace."

6:4 "Because in sexual promiscuity there is a place for neither understanding nor piety, and every passion dwells in its desire."

6:5 "For this reason, I say to you, you will vie with the sons of Levi and will seek to be exalted above them, but you will not be able."

6:6 "For God will perform vengeance in their behalf, and you will die an evil death,"

6:7 "Since God gave Levi the authority, and to Judah with him, [as well as to me and to Dan and to Joseph] to be rulers."

6:8 "It is for this reason that I command you to give heed to Levi, because he will know the law of God and will give instructions concerning justice and concerning sacrifice for Israel until the consummation of times; he is the anointed priest of whom the Lord spoke."

6:9 "I call to witness the God of heaven that you do the truth, each to his neighbor, and that you show love, each to his brother."

6:10 "Draw near to Levi in humility of your hearts in order that you may receive blessing from his

mouth.”

6:11 “For he will bless Israel and Judah, since it is through him that the Lord has chosen to reign in the presence of all the people.”

6:12 “Prostrate yourselves before his posterity, because (his offspring) will die in your behalf in wars visible and invisible. And he shall be among you an eternal king.”

Chapter 7

7:1 “And Reuben died, having spoken these commandments to his sons.”

7:2 “And they placed him in a coffin until they carried him up from Egypt and buried him in Hebron, in the cave where his father was.”

The Prophecy of Nathan

Solomon is David’s offspring who will build a house of cedar (7:2, 7:7) – a temple – in which the name of God can dwell. The narrative of 1 Kings 5-8 recounts the outworking of Nathan’s prophecy.

The promised temple is magnificent, but it comes at a great cost. Solomon extracted forced labor from his citizens to build the house of God, reminding the reader of the Egyptians who enslaved the Hebrews to build their cities (Exodus 1:11). Solomon also sent massive amounts of Israel’s produce to Lebanon as payment. Earlier in the narrative, the prophet Samuel had predicted how the monarchy would conscript the people for its work and take the fruits of their labors for its own purposes (1 Samuel 8:10-18). Even for the author, then, Solomon’s temple is something of a mixed blessing. The prophecy implicitly looks beyond its partial fulfillment in the age of Solomon to something greater.

Secondly, the narrative served as a word of encouragement for Jews living during and after the exile to Babylon. The Babylonians burned Solomon’s temple in 586 BCE (2 Kings 25:9). The temple Zerubbabel rebuilt many decades later was a shadow of its former glory (Haggai 2:3). Nathan’s prophecy reminds the exiles and former exiles that God’s presence is not tied to a single, big, fancy building in Jerusalem. God can be with his people wherever they are.

I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?” 2 Samuel 7:6-7

God’s relationship with Israel expressed through the tabernacle and the temple had changed before and it could, in God’s providence, change again.

Finally, for Christians, Nathan’s prophecy looks past the earthly monarchy and the physical temple to a time when the king and the temple are united in one man. This is one of those instances in which God so inspired the prophet’s words that they promise more than even the prophet himself could understand or imagine.

When Christians hear Nathan speak of David's offspring, their minds run to Jesus the Messiah, great David's greater son. God is Christ's father and Jesus is God's son in a way that no other descendant of David ever could be. Jesus' sonship transcends the adoptionist language of the Judean royal liturgy (e.g, Psalm 2:7).

The eternal kingdom – the throne that that will be established forever – is Christ's kingdom, which transcends every earthly kingdom.

The land of in which God's people can live securely and peacefully will come down from above, a new heaven, a new earth, a new Jerusalem, when Christ appears in glory at the end of the age.

Jesus, himself, is the house in which God's name dwells, and every function of the temple has been subsumed in his person (e.g. John 2:19-21). He is the heavenly manna and the embodiment of the word of God, both of which were represented in the Ark of the Covenant. He is the mercy seat atop the Ark, at which the sins of the whole people of God were forgiven. He is the sacrifice to end all bloody sacrifices, cleansing worshippers from sin and guilt and uniting them in fellowship to God and each other. He is the bread of presence, eaten weekly as a sign of God's love. He is the golden lamp stand, giving light to the world. The prayers of his people are incense rising to heaven. In the world, this temple is visible in the life and liturgy of the church of Jesus Christ, not in a pile of stones in Jerusalem.

In Jesus, God fulfills the words of the prophet in a manner that I'm sure would surprise both Nathan and David.

The Vision of Samuel

A Religious Establishment with No Vision

When Samuel was a boy, the story tells us, "the word of the LORD was rare...visions were not widespread" (1 Samuel 3:1). It's not that God had ceased speaking. Rather, the text tells us that Eli, the chief priest at Shiloh, had begun to lose his vision. His "eyesight begun to grow dim so that he could not see" (3:2). While this is a comment on Eli's age and physical infirmity, it is also a statement about his ineffective religious leadership. Having grown old, he was no longer able to see God's action in the world.

Later in the text, the text explains what was actually happening under Eli's leadership of the sanctuary at Shiloh. His sons Phinehas and Hophni, who are in line to inherit the priesthood at Shiloh, are "blaspheming God" (3:13), and Eli has done nothing to restrain them. There is generational corruption in the religious leadership of the sanctuary of God.

While we don't know precisely how Hophni and Phinehas blasphemed against God, the Hebrew *meqallim lahem* suggests that they have been using God's name in their own self-interest (literally "making light of God for themselves"). They have used their position as priests at Shiloh to gain material and political power for themselves, blaspheming God's name in the process.

Phinehas and Hophni are like the leaders of the Christian Right in our own day. They have turned their backs on the true message of God in order to pursue their own advantage. They have belittled

the covenant in order to enrich their own bank accounts. They have cozied up to political corruption in order to secure their own power. They have allowed the poor to suffer in order to further the prosperity of the wealthy. They have used their religious positions to further their own self-interests, using God's name in ways that are unworthy of the God of justice.

While Eli himself doesn't seem to have participated in the corrupted activities of his sons, he is no better. The text tells us that God holds Eli accountable for the actions of his sons because "he did not restrain them" (1 Sam 3:13). Like many well-meaning but silent Christian progressives in our own day, Eli didn't have the backbone to stand up to the blasphemies being perpetrated in his own house. He knew what his sons were doing—and yet he did nothing.

The way the story is told in 1 Samuel 3, the background of Phinehas and Hophni comes at the end of the text in God's pronouncement against the house of Eli (3:11-20). Perhaps not unexpectedly, this prophetic overthrow of the religious establishment isn't included in the main lectionary selection, which confines it to a parenthetical addition. The lectionary committee must have understood the implications of this text for its own religious establishment!

The religious establishment of Shiloh—and the religious establishment of America—has lost its way. And so God had to intervene.

The Prophetic Call of a Younger Generation

It is no accident that Samuel is still a boy when God calls him as a religious reformer. This isn't a cute story about how God can work even in the lives of young people. Rather, Samuel's youth is precisely the point. The calling he receives could not have been received by anyone older than him. God calls Samuel precisely because he has not yet been institutionalized into the ways of the religious establishment.

Samuel had been born miraculously to his mother Hannah, who had dedicated him to God from birth (1 Samuel 1-2). Samuel had been serving in the sanctuary since a young age, but he had not yet risen to a position of influence in the religious structure. The text tells us that "Samuel did not yet know the LORD" (3:7). This enables God to speak a fresh word to him.

God calls Samuel the boy is tending the lamp of God in the sanctuary. Samuel at first doesn't understand what is happening. He rushes to Eli, thinking that his master has called him. Twice Eli sends Samuel back to bed. But the third time Eli realizes and instructs Samuel to wait for God to call again and then to reply, "Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening" (3:9).

When Samuel finally responds to God as instructed by Eli, God explains to Samuel that the religious establishment of Eli and his sons will soon be overthrown. God says,

I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. I have told him that I am about to punish his house forever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God, and he did not restrain them. Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be expiated by sacrifice or offering forever. (3:14).

God doesn't have a childish task in mind for Samuel. Rather, with the boy Samuel, God starts a religious revolution. God is going to destroy the religious establishment and start over with this boy who has not been corrupted.

Overthrowing the Religious Establishment

To me, one of the most remarkable aspects of this text is Eli's response to God's prophecy against his continued religious authority. At first Samuel is afraid to speak to Eli about God's plan to overthrow him and his sons.

But rather than hiding from the inevitable future, Eli invites Samuel to tell him everything (3:17). When Samuel says that God is planning to overthrow his priesthood at Shiloh, Eli simply replies, "It is the LORD; let him do what seems good to him" (3:18). Eli continues to raise and nurture Samuel until God does, in fact, overthrow Eli and his sons to put Samuel in charge of the sanctuary.

As I read this text, I can't help but wonder if we have reached just such a moment in the story of Christianity in North America. It seems to me that we in the predominately white churches in North America—both Evangelical and mainline—have lost our way. Our expectation of cultural significance has blinded us to what God is doing in our midst. Some of us have become corrupted by power, blaspheming God in order to achieve our selfish political ends. Others of us have become enablers, afraid to risk our own comfortable positions to restrain our blasphemous brothers (yes, the gendered language is intentional).

I think we have reached the point at which the future of the church lies in other directions. God is calling younger generations who have not yet become enmeshed in the blasphemies and complacencies of the past. God is raising up a new and diverse generation of leaders, transforming a church that has lost its vision of what it means to worship God in this time and in this place.

Like, Eli, we can nurture the generations of leaders who will overthrow us. We can acknowledge that God's voice is not the same as our own, sending them away to consult directly with God. We can inquire of them what God has said to them, even if it is bad news for us. We can embrace the future that God is working out in our midst, even though it will mean letting go of a past in which we held the positions of influence.

But the future lies with a new generation that can yet see what God is doing to transform the world.

The Prayer of Hannah

Then Hannah prayed and said:

"My heart rejoices in the Lord;
in the Lord my horn^[a] is lifted high.
My mouth boasts over my enemies,
for I delight in your deliverance.

²"There is no one holy like the Lord;
there is no one besides you;
there is no Rock like our God.

³"Do not keep talking so proudly
or let your mouth speak such arrogance,

for the Lord is a God who knows,
and by him deeds are weighed.

⁴"The bows of the warriors are broken,
but those who stumbled are armed with strength.

⁵Those who were full hire themselves out for food,
but those who were hungry are hungry no more.
She who was barren has borne seven children,
but she who has had many sons pines away.

⁶"The Lord brings death and makes alive;
he brings down to the grave and raises up.

⁷The Lord sends poverty and wealth;
he humbles and he exalts.

⁸He raises the poor from the dust
and lifts the needy from the ash heap;
he seats them with princes
and has them inherit a throne of honor.

"For the foundations of the earth are the Lord's;
on them he has set the world.

⁶He will guard the feet of his faithful servants,
but the wicked will be silenced in the place of darkness.

"It is not by strength that one prevails;

¹⁰ those who oppose the Lord will be broken.

The Most High will thunder from heaven;
the Lord will judge the ends of the earth.

"He will give strength to his king
and exalt the horn of his anointed."

¹¹ Then Elkanah went home to Ramah, but the boy ministered before the Lord under Eli the priest.

Eli's Wicked Sons

¹² Eli's sons were scoundrels; they had no regard for the Lord. ¹³ Now it was the practice of the priests that, whenever any of the people offered a sacrifice, the priest's servant would come with a three-pronged fork in his hand while the meat was being boiled ¹⁴ and would plunge the fork into the pan or kettle or caldron or pot. Whatever the fork brought up the priest would take for himself. This is how they treated all the Israelites who came to Shiloh. ¹⁵ But even before the fat was burned, the priest's servant would come and say to the person who was sacrificing, "Give the priest some meat to roast; he won't accept boiled meat from you, but only raw."

¹⁶ If the person said to him, "Let the fat be burned first, and then take whatever you want," the servant would answer, "No, hand it over now; if you don't, I'll take it by force."

¹⁷ This sin of the young men was very great in the Lord's sight, for they^[b] were treating the Lord's offering with contempt.

¹⁸ But Samuel was ministering before the Lord—a boy wearing a linen ephod. ¹⁶ Each year his mother made him a little robe and took it to him when she went up with her husband to offer the annual sacrifice. ²⁰ Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, saying, “May the Lord give you children by this woman to take the place of the one she prayed for and gave to^[c] the Lord.” Then they would go home. ²¹ And the Lord was gracious to Hannah; she gave birth to three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile, the boy Samuel grew up in the presence of the Lord.

²² Now Eli, who was very old, heard about everything his sons were doing to all Israel and how they slept with the women who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting. ²³ So he said to them, “Why do you do such things? I hear from all the people about these wicked deeds of yours. ²⁴ No, my sons; the report I hear spreading among the Lord’s people is not good. ²⁵ If one person sins against another, God^[d] may mediate for the offender; but if anyone sins against the Lord, who will intercede for them?” His sons, however, did not listen to their father’s rebuke, for it was the Lord’s will to put them to death.

²⁶ And the boy Samuel continued to grow in stature and in favor with the Lord and with people.

Prophecy Against the House of Eli

²⁷ Now a man of God came to Eli and said to him, “This is what the Lord says: ‘Did I not clearly reveal myself to your ancestor’s family when they were in Egypt under Pharaoh? ²⁸ I chose your ancestor out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to go up to my altar, to burn incense, and to wear an ephod in my presence. I also gave your ancestor’s family all the food offerings presented by the Israelites. ²⁹ Why do you^[e] scorn my sacrifice and offering that I prescribed for my dwelling? Why do you honor your sons more than me by fattening yourselves on the choice parts of every offering made by my people Israel?’

³⁰ “Therefore the Lord, the God of Israel, declares: ‘I promised that members of your family would minister before me forever.’ But now the Lord declares: ‘Far be it from me! Those who honor me I will honor, but those who despise me will be disdained. ³¹ The time is coming when I will cut short your strength and the strength of your priestly house, so that no one in it will reach old age, ³² and you will see distress in my dwelling. Although good will be done to Israel, no one in your family line will ever reach old age. ³³ Every one of you that I do not cut off from serving at my altar I will spare only to destroy your sight and sap your strength, and all your descendants will die in the prime of life.

³⁴ “And what happens to your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, will be a sign to you—they will both die on the same day. ³⁵ I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who will do according to what is in my heart and mind. I will firmly establish his priestly house, and they will minister before my anointed one always. ³⁶ Then everyone left in your family line will come and bow down before him for a piece of silver and a loaf of bread and plead, ‘Appoint me to some priestly office so I can have food to eat.’”

The Lament of Job

I once had a surgeon tell me I wasn't a very good patient because I tried to "gut it out," instead of being honest about the pain I was experiencing. Apparently, it's hard on a healer when a patient masks their symptoms; making a diagnosis can become a bit like trying to shoot at a moving target.

My doctor believed my stubborn refusal to admit pain reflected my lack of trust in his competence as a physician. In Job chapter three, we see that Job is honest about his own pain, which is a clear indicator that he truly wants to be healed and trusts in the competence of the Great Physician. It would take me a long time to learn that instead of exacerbating a painful experience, honest tears and the acknowledgment of pain can actually serve as a soothing pressure relief valve.

By contrast, between the amped-up sensation of reality television, the shrieking discord of current political affairs, and the twenty-four/seven barrage of social media that has saturated our culture, it's entirely possible for real trauma and suffering to go unnoticed and untended. We rush to triage emotional hangnails but completely ignore the people around us who are bleeding out. Silence doesn't always indicate bravery, but it is a pretty good indicator that we might not notice when someone is truly suffering.

Job's outburst is a healthy reminder that our Redeemer doesn't rank our emotions on a scale from good to bad, allowing only "good" emotions like joy and peace while barring "bad" emotions like grief and disappointment. We do not have to censor ourselves before the God who knows our hearts better than we do. Scripture doesn't instruct us to smile on the outside while we die on the inside—just the opposite, in fact (see 1 Samuel 1). Frankly, I believe one of the biggest fallacies perpetrated in communities of faith is that the closer we get to Jesus, the more we need to keep a lid on it. Stoicism is not a spiritual gift, y'all!

We need to understand there's a colossal difference between disagreeing with God and denying His existence altogether. Job cursed the day he was born and expressed confusion, frustration, and even anger, at God over allowing tragedy to befall him—but he did not reject God. In fact, the tormented exasperation Job hurls *toward* God proves that he is anything but an atheist! He knows God holds all things together.

Faith powered by God can stretch us far beyond our own capacity to endure. Still, it's not our anguish that distances us from God; it's our apathy. The main takeaway from Job chapter three: we can and should continue to bring all of who we are—including our anger, confusion, and disappointment—before God. We can trust Him with every piece of our hearts.

The Vision of Ezekiel (Additional Fragments)

1 Now it came about in the thirtieth year, on the fifth *day* of the fourth month, while I was by the river Chebar among the exiles, the heavens were opened and I saw ^[a]visions of God. ² (On the fifth of the month ^[b]in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's exile, ³the word of the Lord came expressly to Ezekiel

the priest, son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and there the hand of the Lord came upon him.)

⁴ As I looked, behold, a high wind was coming from the north, a great cloud with fire flashing intermittently and a bright light around it, and in its midst *something* like gleaming^[c] metal in the midst of the fire. ⁵ And within it there were figures resembling four living beings. And this was their appearance: they had human form. ⁶ Each of them had four faces and four wings. ⁷ Their legs were straight and ^[d]their feet were like a calf's ^[e]hoof, and they sparkled like polished bronze. ⁸ Under their wings on their four sides *were* human hands. As for the faces and wings of the four of them, ⁹ their wings touched one another; *their faces* did not turn when they moved, each went straight forward. ¹⁰ As for the form of their faces, *each had* a human face; ^[f]all four had the face of a lion on the right and the face of a bull on the left, and ^[g]all four had the face of an eagle. ¹¹ Such were their faces. Their wings were spread out above; each had two touching another *being*, and two covering their bodies. ¹² And each went straight forward; wherever the spirit was about to go, they would go, without turning as they went. ¹³ ^[h]In the midst of the living beings there was something that looked like burning coals of fire, ^[i]like torches moving among the living beings. The fire was bright, and lightning was ^[j]flashing from the fire. ¹⁴ And the living beings ran back and forth like bolts of lightning.

¹⁵ Now as I looked at the living beings, behold, there was one wheel on the ground beside the living beings, for ^[k]each of the four of them. ¹⁶ The appearance of the wheels and their workmanship *was* like ^[l]sparkling topaz, and all four of them had the same form, their appearance and workmanship *being* as if ^[m]one wheel were within another. ¹⁷ Whenever they^[n] moved, they ^[o]moved in *any* of their four^[p] directions without turning as they^[q] moved. ¹⁸ As for their rims, they were high and awesome, and the rims of all four of them were^[r] covered with eyes all around. ¹⁹ Whenever the living beings ^[s]moved, the wheels ^[t]moved with them. And whenever the living beings rose from the earth, the wheels rose *also*. ²⁰ Wherever the spirit was about to go, they would go in that direction^[u]. And the wheels rose just as they *did*; for the spirit of the living ^[v]beings *was* in the wheels. ²¹ Whenever those went, they went; and whenever those stopped, they stopped. And whenever those rose from the earth, the wheels rose just as they *did*; for the spirit of the living ^[w]beings *was* in the wheels.

Vision of Divine Glory

²² Now over the heads of the living ^[x]beings *there was* something like an expanse, like the awesome gleam of crystal, spread out over their heads. ²³ Under the expanse their wings *were stretched out* straight, one toward the other; each one also had two *wings* covering its body on the one side and on the other. ²⁴ And I also heard the sound of their wings, like the sound of abundant waters as they went, like the voice of ^[y]the Almighty, a sound of a crowd like the sound of an army camp; whenever they stopped, they let down their wings. ²⁵ And a voice came from above the expanse that was over their heads; whenever they stood still, they let down their wings.

²⁶ Now above the expanse that was over their heads there was something resembling a throne, like ^[z]lapis lazuli in appearance; and on that which resembled a throne, high up, *was* a figure with the appearance of a man. ²⁷ Then I ^[aa]noticed from the appearance of His waist and upward *something* like gleaming ^[ab]metal that looked like fire all around within it, and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw something like fire; and *there was* a radiance around Him. ²⁸ Like the appearance of the rainbow ^[ac]in the clouds on a rainy day, *so was* the appearance of

the surrounding radiance. Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw *it*, I fell on my face and heard a voice speaking.

The Prophet's Call

2 Then He said to me, "Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak with you." ² And as He spoke to me the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet; and I heard *Him* speaking to me. ³ Then He said to me, "Son of man, I am sending you to the sons of Israel, to a rebellious people who have rebelled against Me; they and their fathers have revolted against Me to this very day. ⁴ So I am sending you to those who are ^[ad]impudent and obstinate children, and you shall say to them, 'This is what the Lord ^[ae]God says:' ⁵ As for them, whether they listen or ^[af]not—for they are a rebellious house—they will know that a prophet has been among them. ⁶ And as for you, son of man, you are not to fear them nor fear their words, though thistles and thorns are with you and you sit on scorpions; you are not to fear their words nor be dismayed at their presence, since they are a rebellious house. ⁷ But you shall speak My words to them whether they listen or ^[ag]not, for they are rebellious.

⁸ "Now you, son of man, listen to what I am speaking to you; do not be rebellious like that rebellious house. Open your mouth wide and eat what I am giving you." ⁹ Then I looked, and behold, a hand was extended to me; and behold, a ^[ah]scroll was in it. ¹⁰ When He spread it out before me, it was written on the front and back, and written on it were songs of mourning, sighing, and woe.

Ezekiel's Commission

3 Then He said to me, "Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel." ² So I opened my mouth, and He fed me this scroll. ³ And He said to me, "Son of man, feed your stomach and fill your ^[ai]body with this scroll which I am giving you." Then I ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth.

⁴ Then He said to me, "Son of man, ^[aj]go to the house of Israel and speak with My words to them. ⁵ For you are not being sent to a people of ^[ak]unintelligible speech or difficult language, *but* to the house of Israel, ⁶ nor to many peoples of ^[al]unintelligible speech or difficult language, whose words you cannot understand. ^[am]But I have sent you to ^[an]the people who understand you; ⁷ yet the house of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, since they are not willing to listen to Me. The entire house of Israel certainly is ^[ao]stubborn and obstinate. ⁸ Behold, I have made your face just as hard as their faces, and your forehead just as hard as their foreheads. ⁹ Like emery harder than flint I have made your forehead. Do not be afraid of them or be dismayed before them, since they are a rebellious house." ¹⁰ Moreover, He said to me, "Son of man, take into your heart all My words which I will speak to you and listen ^[ap]closely. ¹¹ ^[aq]Go to the exiles, to the sons of your people, and speak to them and tell them, whether they listen or ^[ar]not, 'This is what the Lord ^[as]God says.'"

¹² Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard a great rumbling sound behind me: "Blessed be the glory of the Lord from His place!" ¹³ And *I heard* the sound of the wings of the living beings touching one another and the sound of the wheels beside them, even a great rumbling sound. ¹⁴ So the Spirit lifted me up and took me away; and I went embittered in the rage of my spirit, and the hand of the Lord was strong on me. ¹⁵ Then I came to the exiles who lived beside the river Chebar *at* Tel-abib, and I sat there for seven days where they were living, causing consternation among them.

¹⁶ Now at the end of seven days the word of the Lord came to me, saying, ¹⁷ "Son of man, I have appointed you as a watchman for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from My mouth, warn them from Me. ¹⁸ When I say to the wicked, 'You will certainly die,' and you do not warn him or speak out to warn the wicked from his wicked way so that he may live, that wicked person shall die for wrongdoing, but his blood I will require from your hand. ¹⁹ However if you have warned the wicked and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his wicked way, he shall die for wrongdoing, but you have saved yourself. ²⁰ Again, when a righteous person turns away from his righteousness and commits sin, and I place an obstacle before him, he will die; since you have not warned him, he shall die in his sin, and his righteous deeds which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require from your hand. ²¹ However, if you have warned ^[at] the righteous person that the righteous is not to sin, and he does not sin, he shall certainly live because he took warning; and you have saved yourself."

²² Now the hand of the Lord was on me there, and He said to me, "Get up, go out to the plain, and there I will speak to you." ²³ So I got up and went out to the plain; and behold, the glory of the Lord was standing there, like the glory that I saw by the river Chebar, and I fell on my face. ²⁴ But the Spirit entered me and set me up on my feet; and He spoke with me and said to me, "Go, shut yourself inside your house. ²⁵ And as for you, son of man, they will put ropes ^[au] around you and bind you with them so that you do not go out among them. ²⁶ Moreover, I will make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth so that you will be unable to speak and will not be a man who reprimands them, since they are a rebellious house. ²⁷ But when I speak to you, I will open your mouth and you will say to them, 'This is what the Lord ^[av] God says: 'The one who hears, let him hear; and the one who refuses, let him refuse; for they are a rebellious house.

Footnotes

- a. Ezekiel 1:1 Some ancient versions *a vision*
- b. Ezekiel 1:2 Lit *it was*
- c. Ezekiel 1:4 Heb uncertain; Gr indicates a gold and silver alloy
- d. Ezekiel 1:7 Lit *the sole of their feet*
- e. Ezekiel 1:7 Lit *sole of a foot*
- f. Ezekiel 1:10 Lit *the four of them*
- g. Ezekiel 1:10 Lit *the four of them*
- h. Ezekiel 1:13 As in some ancient versions; MT *And the likeness of the living beings*
- i. Ezekiel 1:13 Lit *like the appearance of*
- j. Ezekiel 1:13 Lit *going out*
- k. Ezekiel 1:15 Lit *his four faces*
- l. Ezekiel 1:16 Or *the look of topaz*
- m. Ezekiel 1:16 Lit *the wheel in the midst of the wheel*

- n. Ezekiel 1:17 Lit *went*
- o. Ezekiel 1:17 Lit *went*
- p. Ezekiel 1:17 Lit *sides*
- q. Ezekiel 1:17 Lit *went*
- r. Ezekiel 1:18 Lit *full of*
- s. Ezekiel 1:19 Lit *went*
- t. Ezekiel 1:19 Lit *went*
- u. Ezekiel 1:20 MT adds *the spirit to go*
- v. Ezekiel 1:20 MT *being*
- w. Ezekiel 1:21 MT *being*
- x. Ezekiel 1:22 As in some mss and ancient versions; MT *being*
- y. Ezekiel 1:24 Heb *Shaddai*
- z. Ezekiel 1:26 Heb *eben-sappir*
- aa. Ezekiel 1:27 Lit *saw*
- bb. Ezekiel 1:27 See note v 4
- cc. Ezekiel 1:28 Lit *which occurs in*
- dd. Ezekiel 2:4 Lit *hard-faced and hard-hearted*
- ee. Ezekiel 2:4 Heb *YHWH*, usually rendered *Lord*
- ff. Ezekiel 2:5 Lit *refrain*
- gg. Ezekiel 2:7 Lit *refrain*
- hh. Ezekiel 2:9 Lit *scroll of a book*
- ii. Ezekiel 3:3 Lit *inward parts*
- jj. Ezekiel 3:4 Lit *go, come*
- kk. Ezekiel 3:5 Lit *deep lip and heavy tongue*
- ll. Ezekiel 3:6 Lit *deep lip and heavy tongue*
- mm. Ezekiel 3:6 Or *I certainly have sent*
- nn. Ezekiel 3:6 Lit *them, they understand*
- oo. Ezekiel 3:7 Lit *of a hard forehead and hard of heart*
- pp. Ezekiel 3:10 Lit *with your ears*

- qq. Ezekiel 3:11 Lit *Go, come*
- rr. Ezekiel 3:11 Lit *refrain*
- ss. Ezekiel 3:11 Heb *YHWH*, usually rendered *Lord*
- tt. Ezekiel 3:21 Lit *him, the righteous*
- uu. Ezekiel 3:25 Lit *on*
- vv. Ezekiel 3:27 Heb *YHWH*, usually rendered *Lord*

The Ethiopian Book of Martyrdoms

The **Ethiopian Book of Martyrdoms** refers to a collection of texts, traditions, and liturgical commemorations that honor Christian martyrs in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. While there may not be a singular book universally identified by this title, Ethiopian Christianity has preserved a wealth of hagiographical literature and liturgical readings dedicated to the memory of martyrs who suffered for their faith. These texts reflect the Church's deep veneration for those who sacrificed their lives in defense of Christianity and serve as a source of spiritual inspiration and guidance.

Historical and Religious Context

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church has a long-standing tradition of venerating martyrs, tracing its roots to the early Christian era. These martyrs include figures from the broader Christian world, such as early Church saints, as well as Ethiopian-specific martyrs who played a significant role in preserving the faith amid persecution or during the expansion of Christianity in Ethiopia.

The commemoration of martyrs is not only a spiritual act but also a way to reinforce the community's identity and its connection to the universal Church. The stories of martyrs are recounted during liturgical services, particularly on feast days dedicated to individual saints or groups of martyrs.

Sources of the Ethiopian Book of Martyrdoms

1. The Synaxarium (Senkessar):

- This is the most comprehensive collection of hagiographies and martyrdom accounts used in the Ethiopian Church. It includes stories of martyrs celebrated across Christendom, such as St. Stephen, St. George, and the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste, as well as Ethiopian-specific martyrs like St. Abba Samuel of Waldebbba.
- Each day of the liturgical calendar is associated with the commemoration of specific saints or martyrs, often accompanied by readings and hymns.

2. Acts of the Martyrs:

- Texts recounting the trials, suffering, and miraculous deeds of martyrs, often emphasizing their unwavering faith and divine intervention during persecution.

3. Liturgical Hymns and Prayers:

- Hymns from the *Deggwa* (Ge'ez hymnal) celebrate the martyrs' bravery and their reward in the heavenly kingdom.

4. Local Traditions and Manuscripts:

- Ethiopian monasteries have preserved unique manuscripts detailing the lives of regional saints and martyrs, many of whom defended Christianity against local opposition or foreign invaders.

Themes and Symbolism

- **Faith and Perseverance:** The martyrs' stories emphasize unwavering devotion to Christ, even in the face of death.
- **Divine Intervention:** Miracles often accompany the narratives, demonstrating God's power and vindication of the faithful.
- **Victory in Suffering:** Martyrdom is portrayed as a triumph, with the martyr's death leading to eternal life and glory.

Liturgical and Cultural Importance

The Ethiopian Book of Martyrdoms plays a significant role in shaping the faith and practices of Ethiopian Christians. The stories are recited during feasts, inspiring the faithful to emulate the martyrs' virtues of courage, humility, and devotion. These texts also serve as a reminder of the Church's historical struggles and the sacrifices made to preserve its traditions.

The Ethiopian Book of Martyrdoms stands as a testament to the enduring legacy of faith and the profound reverence for those who gave their lives in the name of Christ. It continues to inspire generations of believers to live with courage and conviction.

The Hymn of Abba Moses

The **Hymn of Abba Moses** refers to a sacred composition or devotional text associated with the veneration of **Abba Moses the Black** (also known as Moses the Strong or Moses the Ethiopian), a renowned desert father and saint in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and the wider Christian monastic tradition. While not necessarily a singular, universally recognized hymn, the phrase evokes the rich tradition of hymns and prayers that celebrate his life, repentance, and spiritual teachings.

Abba Moses the Black: Historical Context

Abba Moses the Black, a 4th-century saint, was originally a servant who turned to a life of crime before undergoing a profound conversion to Christianity. After repenting and entering a monastic life under the guidance of Saint Isidore, Moses became a model of humility, forgiveness, and spiritual strength. His journey from sin to sainthood is an inspiration for Christians, particularly in Ethiopia, where his heritage as an African saint carries deep cultural resonance.

Abba Moses is remembered for his asceticism, wisdom, and ultimate martyrdom at the hands of bandits, during which he refused to resist violently, embodying Christ-like forgiveness.

Themes of the Hymn

The Hymn of Abba Moses likely encompasses themes central to his life and teachings:

1. **Repentance and Transformation:** Celebrating his journey from a life of sin to one of deep faith.
 2. **Humility and Forgiveness:** Emphasizing his self-denial and his ability to forgive even his enemies.
 3. **Spiritual Warfare:** Reflecting his teachings on overcoming temptation and the spiritual struggles of monastic life.
 4. **Martyrdom:** Honoring his death as a testament to unwavering faith in the face of violence.
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Liturgical Use

1. **Feast Day Celebrations:** In the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Abba Moses is commemorated on his feast day, with hymns and prayers dedicated to his memory. These often draw from the *Deggwa* (the Ethiopian hymnal) and Ge'ez scriptural traditions.
 2. **Monastic Context:** Hymns dedicated to Abba Moses are popular in monasteries, where his life serves as an ideal for monks striving for spiritual perfection.
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Structure of the Hymn

The hymn would likely follow traditional Ge'ez hymn structures, with repetitive phrases, invocations, and rhythmic patterns designed for communal chanting. It may include:

- **Introductory Praise:** Glorifying God for raising Abba Moses as a light to sinners.
- **Narrative Reflection:** Highlighting key moments of his life, such as his conversion, ascetic practices, and martyrdom.

- **Intercessory Appeal:** Asking Abba Moses to intercede on behalf of the faithful.
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Cultural and Spiritual Legacy

The Hymn of Abba Moses resonates deeply with Ethiopian Christians and the broader Orthodox community, offering a model of redemption and spiritual victory. It serves as both a celebration of his life and a source of encouragement for those seeking to overcome personal struggles through faith.

By commemorating Abba Moses, the hymn connects believers with the enduring message of hope, repentance, and divine grace, reflecting the transformative power of a life devoted to God.

The Ethiopian Book of Light

The "Book of Light" could encompass a variety of texts and traditions, including biblical, apocryphal, and liturgical writings, that reflect the theme of enlightenment through faith, divine revelation, and spiritual practice.

Themes in the Ethiopian Book of Light

1. **God as the Source of Light:**
 - Rooted in biblical texts such as **Genesis 1:3** ("Let there be light") and **John 8:12** ("I am the light of the world"), Ethiopian Christian writings emphasize the divine nature of light as a symbol of life, truth, and salvation.
 2. **The Cosmic Light:**
 - Light is seen as a manifestation of God's presence, sustaining the universe and guiding creation toward its intended purpose.
 3. **Spiritual Illumination:**
 - Ethiopian theology often ties light to wisdom (*Sophia*), divine revelation, and spiritual awakening. The faithful are called to walk in the light, symbolizing a life of righteousness and communion with God.
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Key Texts Related to the Book of Light

1. **The Ge'ez Bible:**
 - Passages from the Psalms, Prophets, and the Gospels emphasize themes of light, such as **Psalms 27:1** ("The Lord is my light and my salvation") and **Isaiah 60:1** ("Arise, shine, for your light has come").

2. The Book of Enoch (1 Enoch):

- Central to the Ethiopian canon, this apocryphal text contains vivid descriptions of celestial light, the heavenly realms, and the righteous shining like the stars in the presence of God.

3. The Kebra Nagast (*The Glory of Kings*):

- A foundational Ethiopian text that describes divine light as the manifestation of God's covenant with the Ethiopian people, often symbolized through the Ark of the Covenant.

4. Liturgical Hymns and Prayers:

- The Ethiopian *Deggwa* (hymnal) includes numerous hymns praising Christ as the light of the world and invoking divine illumination for the faithful.

Liturgical and Mystical Significance

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church incorporates the concept of light extensively in its worship and theology:

- **Liturgical Symbolism:** Candles, incense, and processions often represent divine light, particularly during major feasts like Christmas (*Genna*) and Easter (*Fasika*).
- **Monastic Traditions:** Monks and ascetics meditate on divine light as a path to spiritual union with God.

Cultural Impact

The Ethiopian Book of Light reflects the broader cultural reverence for illumination, both literal and metaphorical. In Ethiopian art, manuscripts, and iconography, light frequently symbolizes divine presence and guidance. It inspires believers to seek moral clarity and spiritual wisdom, embodying the transformative power of God's grace.

Conclusion

The Ethiopian Book of Light, whether interpreted as a collection of sacred writings, hymns, or mystical teachings, captures the essence of Ethiopia's deep-rooted Christian spirituality. It is a testament to the belief that divine light not only reveals truth but also transforms and guides the faithful toward eternal communion with God.

The Ethiopian Gospel of the Nativity of Mary

Chapter 1.

The blessed and glorious ever-virgin Mary, sprung from the royal stock and family of David, born in the city of Nazareth, was brought up at Jerusalem in the temple of the Lord. Her father was named Joachim, and her mother Anna. Her father's house was from Galilee and the city of Nazareth, but her mother's family from Bethlehem. Their life was guileless and right before the Lord, and irreproachable and pious before men. For they divided all their substance into three parts. One part they spent upon the temple and the temple servants; another they distributed to strangers and the poor; the third they reserved, for themselves and the necessities of their family. Thus, dear to God, kind to men, for about twenty years they lived in their own house, a chaste married life, without having any children. Nevertheless they vowed that, should the Lord happen to give them offspring, they would deliver it to the service of the Lord; on which account also they used to visit the temple of the Lord at each of the feasts during the year.

Chapter 2.

And it came to pass that the festival of the dedication was at hand; wherefore also Joachim went up to Jerusalem with some men of his own tribe. Now at that time Issachar was high priest there. And when he saw Joachim with his offering among his other fellow citizens, he despised him, and spurned his gifts, asking why he, who had no offspring, presumed to stand among those who had; saying that his gifts could not by any means be acceptable to God, since He had deemed him unworthy of off-spring: for the Scripture said, Cursed is every one who has not begot a male or a female in Israel. He said, therefore, that he ought first to be freed from this curse by the begetting of children; and then, and then only, that he should come into the presence of the Lord with his offerings. And Joachim, covered with shame from this reproach that was thrown in his teeth, retired to the shepherds, who were in their pastures with their flocks; nor would he return home, lest perchance he might be branded with the same reproach by those of his own tribe, who were there at the time, and had heard this from the priest.

Chapter 3.

Now, when he had been there for some time, on a certain day when he was alone, an angel of the Lord stood by him in a great light. And when he was disturbed at his appearance, the angel who had appeared to him restrained his fear, saying: Fear not, Joachim, nor be disturbed by my appearance; for I am the angel of the Lord, sent by Him to you to tell you that your prayers have been heard, and that your charitable deeds have gone up into His presence. Acts 10:4 For He has seen your shame, and has heard the reproach of unfruitfulness which has been unjustly brought against you. For God is the avenger of sin, not of nature: and, therefore, when He shuts up the womb of any one, He does so that He may miraculously open it again; so that that which is born may be acknowledged to be not of lust, but of the gift of God. For was it not the case that the first mother of your nation — Sarah — was barren up to her eightieth year? And, nevertheless, in extreme old age she brought forth Isaac, to whom the promise was renewed of the blessing of all nations. Rachel also, so favoured of the Lord, and so beloved by holy Jacob, was long barren; and yet she brought forth Joseph, who was not only the lord of Egypt, but the deliverer of many nations who were ready to perish of hunger. Who among the judges was either stronger than Samson, or more holy than Samuel? And yet the

mothers of both were barren. If, therefore, the reasonableness of my words does not persuade you, believe in fact that conceptions very late in life, and births in the case of women that have been barren, are usually attended with something wonderful. Accordingly your wife Anna will bring forth a daughter to you, and you shall call her name Mary: she shall be, as you have vowed, consecrated to the Lord from her infancy, and she shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from her mother's womb. She shall neither eat nor drink any unclean thing, nor shall she spend her life among the crowds of the people without, but in the temple of the Lord, that it may not be possible either to say, or so much as to suspect, any evil concerning her. Therefore, when she has grown up, just as she herself shall be miraculously born of a barren woman, so in an incomparable manner she, a virgin, shall bring forth the Son of the Most High, who shall be called Jesus, and who, according to the etymology of His name, shall be the Saviour of all nations. And this shall be the sign to you of those things which I announce: When you shall come to the Golden gate in Jerusalem, you shall there meet Anna your wife, who, lately anxious from the delay of your return, will then rejoice at the sight of you. Having thus spoken, the angel departed from him.

Chapter 4.

Thereafter he appeared to Anna his wife, saying: Fear not, Anna, nor think that it is a phantom which you see. For I am that angel who has presented your prayers and alms before God; and now have I been sent to you to announce to you that you shall bring forth a daughter, who shall be called Mary, and who shall be blessed above all women. She, full of the favour of the Lord even from her birth, shall remain three years in her father's house until she be weaned. Thereafter, being delivered to the service of the Lord, she shall not depart from the temple until she reach the years of discretion. There, in fine, serving God day and night in fastings and prayers, she shall abstain from every unclean thing; she shall never know man, but alone, without example, immaculate, uncorrupted, without intercourse with man, she, a virgin, shall bring forth a son; she, His hand-maiden, shall bring forth the Lord — both in grace, and in name, and in work, the Saviour of the world. Wherefore arise, and go up to Jerusalem; and when you shall come to the gate which, because it is plated with gold, is called Golden, there, for a sign, you shall meet your husband, for whose safety you have been anxious. And when these things shall have so happened, know that what I announce shall without doubt be fulfilled.

Chapter 5.

Therefore, as the angel had commanded, both of them setting out from the place where they were, went up to Jerusalem; and when they had come to the place pointed out by the angel's prophecy, there they met each other. Then, rejoicing at seeing each other, and secure in the certainty of the promised offspring, they gave the thanks due to the Lord, who exalts the humble. And so, having worshipped the Lord, they returned home, and awaited in certainty and in gladness the divine promise. Anna therefore conceived, and brought forth a daughter; and according to the command of the angel, her parents called her name Mary.

Chapter 6.

And when the circle of three years had rolled round, and the time of her weaning was fulfilled, they brought the virgin to the temple of the Lord with offerings. Now there were round the temple, according to the fifteen Psalms of Degrees, fifteen steps going up; for, on account of the temple

having been built on a mountain, the altar of burnt-offering, which stood outside, could not be reached except by steps. On one of these, then, her parents placed the little girl, the Blessed Virgin Mary. And when they were putting off the clothes which they had worn on the journey, and were putting on, as was usual, others that were neater and cleaner, the virgin of the Lord went up all the steps, one after the other, without the help of any one leading her or lifting her, in such a manner that, in this respect at least, you would think that she had already attained full age. For already the Lord in the infancy of His virgin wrought a great thing, and by the indication of this miracle foreshowed how great she was to be. Therefore, a sacrifice having been offered according to the custom of the law, and their vow being perfected, they left the virgin within the enclosures of the temple, there to be educated with the other virgins, and themselves returned home.

Chapter 7.

But the virgin of the Lord advanced in age and in virtues; and though, in the words of the Psalmist, her father and mother had forsaken her, the Lord took her up. For daily was she visited by angels, daily did she enjoy a divine vision, which preserved her from all evil, and made her to abound in all good. And so she reached her fourteenth year; and not only were the wicked unable to charge her with anything worthy of reproach, but all the good, who knew her life and conversation, judged her to be worthy of admiration. Then the high priest publicly announced that the virgins who were publicly settled in the temple, and had reached this time of life, should return home and get married, according to the custom of the nation and the ripeness of their years. The others readily obeyed this command; but Mary alone, the virgin of the Lord, answered that she could not do this, saying both that her parents had devoted her to the service of the Lord, and that, moreover, she herself had made to the Lord a vow of virginity, which she would never violate by any intercourse with man. And the high priest, being placed in great perplexity of mind, seeing that neither did he think that the vow should be broken contrary to the Scripture, which says, Vow and pay, nor did he dare to introduce a custom unknown to the nation, gave order that at the festival, which was at hand, all the chief persons from Jerusalem and the neighbourhood should be present, in order that from their advice he might know what was to be done in so doubtful a case. And when this took place, they resolved unanimously that the Lord should be consulted upon this matter. And when they all bowed themselves in prayer, the high priest went to consult God in the usual way. Nor had they long to wait: in the hearing of all a voice issued from the oracle and from the mercy-seat, that, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, a man should be sought out to whom the virgin ought to be entrusted and espoused. For it is clear that Isaiah says: A rod shall come forth from the root of Jesse, and a flower shall ascend from his root; and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of wisdom and piety; and he shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord. Isaiah 11:1-2 According to this prophecy, therefore, he predicted that all of the house and family of David that were unmarried and fit for marriage should bring there rods to the altar; and that he whose rod after it was brought should produce a flower, and upon the end of whose rod the Spirit of the Lord should settle in the form of a dove, was the man to whom the virgin ought to be entrusted and espoused.

Chapter 8.

Now there was among the rest Joseph, of the house and family of David, a man of great age: and when all brought there rods, according to the order, he alone withheld his. Wherefore, when nothing in conformity with the divine voice appeared, the high priest thought it necessary to consult God a second time; and He answered, that of those who had been designated, he alone to whom the virgin ought to be espoused had not brought his rod. Joseph, therefore, was found out. For when he had brought his rod, and the dove came from heaven; and settled upon the top of it, it clearly appeared to all that he was the man to whom the virgin should be espoused. Therefore, the usual ceremonies of betrothal having been gone through, he went back to the city of Bethlehem to put his house in order, and to procure things necessary for the marriage. But Mary, the virgin of the Lord, with seven other virgins of her own age, and who had been weaned at the same time, whom she had received from the priest, returned to the house of her parents in Galilee.

Chapter 9.

And in those days, that is, at the time of her first coming into Galilee, the angel Gabriel was sent to her by God, to announce to her the conception of the Lord, and to explain to her the manner and order of the conception. Accordingly, going in, he filled the chamber where she was with a great light; and most courteously saluting her, he said: Hail, Mary! O virgin highly favoured by the Lord, virgin full of grace, the Lord is with you; blessed are you above all women, blessed above all men that have been hitherto born. Luke 1:26-38 And the virgin, who was already well acquainted with angelic faces, and was not unused to the light from heaven, was neither terrified by the vision of the angel, nor astonished at the greatness of the light, but only perplexed by his words; and she began to consider of what nature a salutation so unusual could be, or what it could portend, or what end it could have. And the angel, divinely inspired, taking up this thought, says: Fear not, Mary, as if anything contrary to your chastity were hid under this salutation. For in choosing chastity, you have found favour with the Lord; and therefore you, a virgin, shall conceive without sin, and shall bring forth a son. He shall be great, because He shall rule from sea to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth; and He shall be called the Son of the Most High, because He who is born on earth in humiliation, reigns in heaven in exaltation; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end; Luke 1:32-33 forasmuch as He is King of kings and Lord of lords, Revelation 19:16 and His throne is from everlasting to everlasting. The virgin did not doubt these words of the angel; but wishing to know the manner of it, she answered: How can that come to pass? For while, according to my vow, I never know man, how can I bring forth without the addition of man's seed? To this the angel says: Think not, Mary, that you shall conceive in the manner of mankind: for without any intercourse with man, you, a virgin, will conceive; you, a virgin, will bring forth; you, a virgin, will nurse: for the Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow you, Luke 1:35 without any of the heats of lust; and therefore that which shall be born of you shall alone be holy, because it alone, being conceived and born without sin, shall be called the Son of God. Then Mary stretched forth her hands, and raised her eyes to heaven, and said: Behold the hand-maiden of the Lord, for I am not worthy of the name of lady; let it be to me according to your word.

It will be long, and perhaps to some even tedious, if we insert in this little work every thing which we read of as having preceded or followed the Lord's nativity: wherefore, omitting those things which

have been more fully written in the Gospel, let us come to those which are held to be less worthy of being narrated.

Chapter 10.

Joseph therefore came from Judæa into Galilee, intending to marry the virgin who had been betrothed to him; for already three months had elapsed, and it was the beginning of the fourth since she had been betrothed to him. In the meantime, it was evident from her shape that she was pregnant, nor could she conceal this from Joseph. For in consequence of his being betrothed to her, coming to her more freely and speaking to her more familiarly, he found out that she was with child. He began then to be in great doubt and perplexity, because he did not know what was best for him to do. For, being a just man, he was not willing to expose her; nor, being a pious man, to injure her fair fame by a suspicion of fornication. He came to the conclusion, therefore, privately to dissolve their contract, and to send her away secretly. And while he thought on these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in his sleep, saying: Joseph, you son of David, fear not; that is, do not have any suspicion of fornication in the virgin, or think any evil of her; and fear not to take her as your wife: for that which is begotten in her, and which now vexes your soul, is the work not of man, but of the Holy Spirit. For she alone of all virgins shall bring forth the Son of God, and you shall call His name Jesus, that is, Saviour; for He shall save His people from their sins. Therefore Joseph, according to the command of the angel, took the virgin as his wife; nevertheless he knew her not, but took care of her, and kept her in chastity. Matthew 1:18-24 And now the ninth month from her conception was at hand, when Joseph, taking with him his wife along with what things he needed, went to Bethlehem, the city from which he came. And it came to pass, while they were there, that her days were fulfilled that she should bring forth; and she brought forth her first-born son, as the holy evangelists have shown, our Lord Jesus Christ, who with the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost lives and reigns God from everlasting to everlasting.

The Legend of the Ethiopian Tabot

The **Legend of the Ethiopian Tabot** is a cornerstone of Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity, shrouded in mystery, devotion, and deep cultural significance. The term *Tabot* refers to the sacred replica of the Ark of the Covenant, believed to house the tablets of the Ten Commandments. Every church in Ethiopia possesses at least one Tabot, housed in the Holy of Holies, symbolizing God's presence among His people. Its veneration is rooted in a mix of biblical tradition, historical lore, and Ethiopian identity.

Origins and Spiritual Significance

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church traces the Tabot's origins to the legendary union of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, as chronicled in the *Kebra Nagast* (*The Glory of Kings*). According to this text, their son, Emperor Menelik I, journeyed to Jerusalem and returned to Ethiopia with the original Ark of the Covenant, brought there by divine will. It is believed that the Ark now resides in the Church of St. Mary of Zion in Axum, making the Tabot replicas a powerful link to this sacred relic.

For Ethiopians, the Tabot is not merely a symbol but the embodiment of God's covenant with humanity. It is central to every liturgical celebration, especially during the feast of **Tinket**

(Epiphany), when Tabots are paraded in grand processions to commemorate the baptism of Jesus Christ.

The Rituals Surrounding the Tabot

The Tabot is treated with the utmost reverence, wrapped in fine cloths and only seen by ordained priests. During major feasts, it is carried on the priest's head, accompanied by hymns, drumming, and the joyous ululations of the faithful. The procession symbolizes the divine journey with His people, drawing parallels to the Israelites carrying the Ark in the wilderness.

Each Tabot is consecrated to a specific biblical figure or event, such as the Virgin Mary, St. Michael, or the Holy Trinity, influencing the dedication of the church that houses it. The clergy and laity alike regard the Tabot as the heart of the church, and its absence renders a building void of sacredness.

Cultural and National Identity

The legend of the Tabot goes beyond religious practice; it is woven into Ethiopia's identity. It reinforces the nation's claim as a spiritual and historical heir to biblical Israel. Axum, as the Ark's alleged resting place, stands as a symbol of Ethiopian sovereignty and divine favor.

The Tabot remains a potent representation of Ethiopia's enduring faith and a mystery that continues to inspire awe across the world.

The Ethiopian Book of Prayers for the Dead

The **Ethiopian Book of Prayers for the Dead** is a sacred collection of liturgical texts, hymns, and supplications used in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church to pray for the repose of the souls of the departed. Rooted in the Church's ancient traditions and theology, these prayers reflect the belief in the ongoing spiritual connection between the living and the dead, emphasizing the hope for resurrection and eternal life.

Theological Basis

In Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity, prayers for the dead are deeply connected to the Church's understanding of the afterlife. It is believed that souls undergo a journey after death, during which prayers offered by the living can intercede on their behalf, seeking God's mercy and the eventual reward of paradise. This practice aligns with biblical passages, such as **2 Maccabees 12:44-46**, which supports the idea of praying for the dead, and with the Church's broader theology of love and community that transcends death.

Structure and Content

The Ethiopian Book of Prayers for the Dead is not a singular text but rather a collection of specific prayers and rituals found in various liturgical books. Key components include:

1. **The Office for the Dead:**

- A formal liturgical service performed by priests and deacons, often including readings from the Psalms, Gospels, and Epistles.
- Hymns from the *Deggwa* (Ge'ez hymnal) that focus on themes of mercy, forgiveness, and the hope of resurrection.

2. Supplications and Intercessions:

- Personal and communal prayers asking for God's forgiveness of the deceased's sins and for their soul's rest in the company of the righteous.

3. Conmemorative Prayers:

- Special prayers recited on anniversaries, particularly the third, seventh, and fortieth days after death, and during the annual remembrance of the departed.

4. Ge'ez Psalms:

- The recitation of psalms, particularly those expressing trust in God's mercy, such as **Psaln 23** ("The Lord is my shepherd") and **Psaln 51** ("Have mercy on me, O God").

Rituals Accompanying the Prayers

- **The Anointing of the Body:** Before burial, the body is anointed while prayers are recited, asking for purification and peace.
- **The Procession to the Grave:** The Tabot (a replica of the Ark of the Covenant) is carried in the funeral procession, signifying God's covenant with the faithful.
- **Almsgiving:** Acts of charity are often performed in memory of the departed, emphasizing communal responsibility for their spiritual well-being.

Cultural and Spiritual Significance

These prayers are a vital part of Ethiopian Orthodox spirituality, embodying the Church's deep-rooted hope in the resurrection and the life to come. They also strengthen the communal bonds of the faithful, uniting families and congregations in their shared belief in God's mercy and the transformative power of prayer.

Conclusion

The Ethiopian Book of Prayers for the Dead is a profound expression of faith, love, and hope. It highlights the Church's enduring commitment to interceding for the departed, emphasizing that death is not the end but a transition to eternal communion with God.

The Gospel of Judas (Expanded Fragments)

Introduction

33 This is the secret message of judgment Jesus spoke with Judas Iscariot over a period of eight days, three days before he celebrated Passover.

When he appeared on earth, he did signs and great wonders for the salvation of humanity. Some [walked] in the way of righteousness, but others walked in their transgression, so the twelve disciples were called. He started to tell them about the mysteries beyond the world and what would happen at the end. Often he didn't reveal himself to his disciples, but you'd find him in their midst as a child.

Jesus Criticizes the Disciples

One day he was with his disciples in Judea. He found them sitting together practicing their piety. When he [came up to] his disciples **34** sitting together praying over the bread, [he] laughed.

The disciples said to him, "Master, why are you laughing at [our] prayer? What have we done? [This] is what's right."

He answered and said to them, "I'm not laughing at you. You're not doing this because you want to, but because through this your God [will be] praised."

They said, "Master, you [...] are the Son of our God!"

Jesus said to them, "How do [you] know me? Truly [I] say to you, no generation of the people among you will know me."

When his disciples heard this, [they] started to get angry and furious and started to curse him in their hearts.

But when Jesus noticed their ignorance, [he said] to them, "Why are you letting your anger trouble you? Has your God within you and [his stars] **35** become angry with your souls? If any of you is [strong enough] among humans to bring out the perfect Humanity, stand up and face me."

All of them said, "We're strong enough." But their spirits weren't brave enough to stand before [him] – except Judas Iscariot. He was able to stand before him, but he couldn't look him in the eye, so he looked away.

Judas [said] to him, "I know who you are and where you've come from. You've come from the immortal realm of Barbelo, and I'm not worthy to utter the name of the one who's sent you."

Then Jesus, knowing that he was thinking about what's exalted, said to him, "Come away from the others and I'll tell you the mysteries of the kingdom. Not so that you'll go there, but you'll grieve much **36** because someone else will replace you to complete the twelve [elements] before their God."

Judas said to him, "When will you tell me these things, and when will the great day of light dawn for the generation [...]?"

But when he said these things, Jesus left him.

Another Generation

The next morning, he appeared to his disciples. [And] they said to him, "Master, where did [you] go and what did you do when you left us?"

Jesus said to them, "I went to another great and holy generation."

His disciples said to him, "Lord, what great generation is better and holier than us, that's not in these realms?"

Now when Jesus heard this, he laughed. He said to them, "Why are you wondering in your hearts about the strong and holy generation? **37** Truly I say to you, no one born [of] this realm will see that [generation], no army of angels from the stars will rule over it, and no person of mortal birth will be able to join it, because that generation doesn't come from [...] that has become [...] the generation of the people among [them] is from the generation of the great people [...] the powerful authorities who [...] nor the powers [...] those by which you rule."

When his disciples heard these things, they were each troubled in their spirit. They couldn't say a thing.

The Disciples' Vision

Another day Jesus came up to them. They said to him, "Master, we've seen you in a dream, because we had great [dreams last] night."

But Jesus said, "Why [...] hidden yourselves?"

38 And they [said, "We saw] a great [house, with a great] altar [in it, and] twelve people – we'd say they were priests – and a name. And a crowd of people was waiting at the altar [until] the priests [finished receiving] the offerings. We kept waiting too."

[Jesus said], "What were they like?"

And they said, "[Some] fast [for] two weeks. Others sacrifice their own children; others their wives, praising and humbling themselves among each other. Others sleep with men; others murder; yet others commit many sins and do criminal things. [And] the people standing [before] the altar invoke your [name]! **39** And in all their sacrificing, they fill the [altar] with their offerings." When they said this, [they] fell silent because they were troubled.

Jesus said to them, "Why are you troubled? Truly I say to you, all the priests standing before that altar invoke my name. And [again], I say to you, my name has been written on this [house] of the generations of the stars by the human generations. [And they] have shamefully planted fruitless trees in my name." Jesus said to them, "You're the ones receiving the offerings on the altar you've seen. That's the God you serve, and you're the twelve people you've seen. And the animals you saw brought in to be sacrificed are the crowd you lead astray **40** before that altar. [Your minister] will

stand up and use my name like that, and [the] generations of the pious will be loyal to him. After him, another person will present [those who sleep around], and another those who murder children, and another those who sleep with men, and those who fast, and the rest of impurity, crime, and error. And those who say, 'We're equal to the angels' – they're the stars that finish everything. It's been said to the human generations, 'Look, God has accepted your sacrifice from the hands of priests,' that is, the minister of error. But the Lord who commands is the Lord over everything. On the last day, they'll be found guilty."

41 Jesus said [to them], "Stop [sacrificing animals]. You've [offered them] over the altar, over your stars with your angels where they've already been completed. So let them become [...] with you and let them [become] clear."

His disciples [said to him], "Cleanse us from our [sins] that we've committed through the deceit of the angels."

Jesus said to them, "It's not possible [...], nor [can] a fountain quench the fire of the entire inhabited world. Nor can a [city's] well satisfy all the generations, except the great, stable one. A single lamp won't illuminate all the realms, except the second generation, nor can a baker feed all creation 42 under [heaven]."

And [when the disciples heard] these [things], they said to [him], "Master, help us and save us!"

Jesus said to them, "Stop struggling against me. Each one of you has his own star, [and ...] of the stars will [...] what belongs to it [...] I wasn't sent to the corruptible generation, but to the strong and incorruptible generation, because no enemy has ruled [over] that generation, nor any of the stars. Truly I say to you, the pillar of fire will fall quickly and that generation won't be moved by the stars."

Jesus and Judas

And when Jesus [said] these things, he left, [taking] Judas Iscariot with him. He said to him, "The water on the exalted mountain is [from] 43 [...] it didn't come to [water ... the well] of the tree of [the fruit ...] of this realm [...] after a time [...], but came to water God's paradise and the enduring [fruit], because [it] won't corrupt that generation's [walk of life], but [it will exist] for all eternity."

Judas said to [him], "Tell] me, what kind of fruit does this generation have?"

Jesus said, "The souls of every human generation will die; however, when these people have completed the time in the kingdom and the spirit leaves them, their bodies will die but their souls will live, and they'll be taken up."

Judas said, "What will the rest of the human generations do?"

Jesus said, "It's not possible 44 to sow on [rock] and harvest its fruit. In the same way, it's [not possible to sow on] the [defiled] race along with the perishable wisdom [and] the hand which created mortal humans so that their souls may go up to the realms above. [Truly] I say to you, [no ruler], angel, [or] power will be able to see the [places] that [this great], holy generation [will see]." When Jesus said this, he left.

Judas said, "Master, just as you've listened to all of them, now listen to me too, because I've seen a great vision."

But Jesus laughed when he heard this. He said to him, "Why are you all worked up, you thirteenth demon? But speak up, and I'll bear with you."

Judas said to him, "In the vision, I saw myself. The twelve disciples are stoning me and **45** chasing [me rapidly]. And I also came to the place where [I had followed] you. I saw [a house in this place], and my eyes couldn't [measure] its size. Great people surrounded it, and that house had a roof of greenery. In the middle of the house was [a crowd ...]. Master, take me in with these people!"

[Jesus] answered and said, "Your star has led you astray, Judas," and that "no person of mortal birth is worthy to enter the house you've seen, because that place is reserved for those who are holy. Neither the sun nor the moon will rule there, nor the day, but those who are holy will always stand in the realm with the holy angels. Look, I've told you the mysteries of the kingdom **46** and I've taught you about the error of the stars and [...] sent [on high] over the twelve realms."

Judas said, "Master, surely my seed doesn't dominate the rulers, does it?"

Jesus answered and said to him, "Come, let me [tell] you [about the holy generation. Not so that you'll go there], but you'll grieve much when you see the kingdom and all its generation."

When Judas heard this, he said to him, "What good has it done me that you've separated me from that generation?"

Jesus answered and said, "You'll become the thirteenth, and will be cursed by the other generations and will rule over them. In the last days they'll [...] to you and you won't go up **47** to the holy generation."

Jesus Reveals Everything to Judas

Jesus said, "[Come] and I'll teach you about the [mysteries that no] human [will] see, because there exists a great and boundless realm whose horizons no angelic generation has seen, [in] which is a [great] invisible Spirit, which no [angelic] eye has ever seen, no heart has ever comprehended, and it's never been called by any name.

"And a luminous cloud appeared there. And he (the Spirit) said, 'Let an angel come into being to attend me.' And a great angel, the Self-Begotten, the God of the Light, emerged from the cloud. And because of him, another four angels came into being from another cloud, and they attended the angelic Self-Begotten. And said **48** the [Self-Begotten], 'Let [a realm] come into being,' and it came into being [just as he said]. And he [created] the first luminary to rule over it. And he said, 'Let angels come into being to serve [it,' and myriads] without number came into being. And he said, '[Let a] luminous realm come into being,' and it came into being. He created the second luminary to rule over it, along with myriads of angels without number to offer service. And that's how he created the rest of the realms of light. And he made them to be ruled, and created for them myriads of angels without number to assist them.

"And Adamas was in the first cloud of light that no angel could ever see among all those called 'God.' **4G** And [Adamas begat Seth in] that [place after the] image [of ...] and after the likeness of [this] angel. He made the incorruptible [generation] of Seth appear to the twelve androgynous [luminaries. And then] he made seventy-two luminaries appear in the incorruptible generation according to the Spirit's will. Then the seventy-two luminaries themselves made three hundred sixty luminaries appear in the incorruptible generation according to the Spirit's will so that there'd be five for each. And the twelve realms of the twelve luminaries make up their father, with six heavens for each realm so there are seventy-two heavens for the seventy-two luminaries, and for each one **50** [of them five] firmaments [for a total of] three hundred sixty [firmaments. They] were given authority and a [great] army of angels without number for honor and service, along with virgin spirits [too] for the honor and [service] of all the realms and the heavens with their firmaments.

"Now the crowd of those immortals is called 'cosmos' – that is, 'perishable' – by the father and the seventy-two luminaries with the Self-Begotten and his seventy-two realms. That's where the first human appeared with his incorruptible powers. In the realm that appeared with his generation is the cloud of knowledge and the angel who's called **51** [Eleleth ...] After these things [Eleleth] said, 'Let twelve angels come into being [to] rule over Chaos and [Hades]. And look, from the cloud there appeared an [angel] whose face flashed with [fire] and whose likeness was [defiled] by blood. His name was Nebro, which means 'Rebel.' Others call him Yaldabaoth. And another angel, Saklas, came from the cloud too. So Nebro created six angels – and Saklas (did too) – to be assistants. They brought out twelve angels in the heavens, with each of them receiving a portion in the heavens.

"And the twelve rulers spoke with the twelve angels: 'Let each of you **52** [...] and let them [...] generation [...] five] angels:

The first [is Yaoth], who's called 'the Good One.'

The second is Harmathoth, [the eye of fire].

The [third] is Galila.

The fourth [is] Yobel.

The fifth is Adonaios.

"These are the five who ruled over Hades and are the first over Chaos.

"Then Saklas said to his angels, 'Let's create a human being after the likeness and the image.' And they fashioned Adam and his wife Eve, who in the cloud is called 'Life,' because by this name all the generations seek him, and each of them calls her by their names. Now Saklas didn't **53** [command ...] give birth, except [...] among the generations [...] which this [...] and the [angel] said to him, 'Your life will last for a limited time, with your children.'"

Then Judas said to Jesus, "[How] long can a person live?"

Jesus said, "Why are you amazed that the lifespans of Adam and his generation are limited in the place he's received his kingdom with his ruler?"

Judas said to Jesus, "Does the human spirit die?"

Jesus said, "This is how it is. God commanded Michael to loan spirits to people so that they might serve. Then the Great One commanded Gabriel to give spirits to the great generation with no king –

the spirit along with the soul. So the [rest] of the souls **54** [...] light [...] the] Chaos [...] seek [the] spirit within you which you've made to live in this flesh from the angelic generations. Then God caused knowledge to be brought to Adam and those with him, so that the kings of Chaos and Hades might not rule over them."

[Then] Judas said to Jesus, "So what will those generations do?"

Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, the stars complete all these things. When Saklas completes the time span that's been determined for him, their first star will appear with the generations, and they'll finish what's been said. Then they'll sleep around in my name, murder their children, **55** and [they'll [...] evil and [...] the realms, bringing the generations and presenting them to Saklas. [And] after that [...] will bring the twelve tribes of [Israel] from [...], and the [generations] will all serve Saklas, sinning in my name. And your star will [rule] over the thirteenth realm." Then Jesus [laughed].

[Judas] said, "Master, why [are you laughing at me?"

Jesus] answered [and said], "I'm not laughing [at you but] at the error of the stars, because these six stars go astray with these five warriors, and they'll all be destroyed along with their creations."

Then Judas said to Jesus, "What will those do who've been baptized in your name?"

The Betrayal

Jesus said, "Truly I say [to you], this baptism **56** [which they've received in] my name [...] will destroy the whole generation of the earthly Adam. Tomorrow they'll torture the one who bears me. Truly I [say] to you, no hand of a mortal human [will fall] upon me. Truly [I say] to you, Judas, those who offer sacrifices to Saklas [...] everything that's evil. But you'll do more than all of them, because you'll sacrifice the human who bears me. Your horn has already been raised, your anger has been kindled, your star has ascended, and your heart has [strayed]. **57** Truly [I say to you], your last [...] and] the [...] the thrones] of the realm have [been defeated], the kings have grown weak, the angelic generations have grieved, and the evil [they sowed [...] is destroyed, [and] the [ruler] is wiped out. [And] then the [fruit] of the great generation of Adam will be exalted, because before heaven, earth, and the angels, that generation from the realms exists. Look, you've been told everything. Lift up your eyes and see the cloud with the light in it and the stars around it. And the star that leads the way is your star."

Then Judas looked up and saw the luminous cloud, and he entered it. Those standing on the ground heard a voice from the cloud saying, **58** "[. . . the] great [generation . . .] and [. . .]." And Judas didn't see Jesus anymore.

Immediately there was a disturbance among [the] Jews, more than [...] Their high priests grumbled because he'd gone into the guest room to pray. But some scribes were there watching closely so they could arrest him during his prayer, because they were afraid of the people, since they all regarded him as a prophet.

And they approached Judas and said to him, "What are you doing here? Aren't you Jesus' disciple?"

Then he answered them as they wished. Then Judas received some money and handed him over to them.

The Hymn of the Savior's Bride

1

We satisfy Christ, as His Bride, in His image;
As new man and warrior, dominion we win!
Safeguarded in battle in Christ as our armor,
We fight for God's interests, His kingdom bring in!

2

We're garbed in fine linen, our bridal apparel,
Made spotless and bright through God's love and His light;
An army that follows the Lord into battle,
We're clothed in this linen, with Christ armed in might!

3

We're girded with Truth, with Christ's righteousness covered,
We're shod with the gospel of peace through His blood,
We're shielded by faith, and we're helmed with salvation,
And armed with the sword of the Spirit, the word!

4

God's word is a bounty of food for our eating;
This food constitutes us, through prayer, hour by hour;
By this constitution we're readied for battle,
And, led by the Spirit, we speak with His pow'r!

5

Our battle is corporate—as one man we conquer!
We're one with the Lord in the might of His strength!
Withstanding the foe, in the Body empowered,
Steadfastly we stand, headed up through His reign!

6

The Lord is our center, our source and our standing,
Our leader, our Captain, our conqueror, our King!
Our Bridegroom, our Husband, our Head, our Beloved!
We love Him intensely—from Him triumphs spring!

7

We move in God's move with the Lord in His headship,
Upheld by the Head as His Body on earth!
Christ's made us partakers in all He's accomplished!
Exalt Him, rejoicing! God's will must come forth!

8

God's image expressed, His dominion established,
Through prayer corresponding to Christ on the throne,
Fulfills God's intention, His purpose eternal,
Regaining the earth for God's pleasure alone!

9

The church is the Bride, the new man, and the warrior
Fulfilling God's heart's desire, stage after stage.
We love Christ supremely and stand in His victory
To bring in His Kingdom by turning the age.

The Acts of Andrew and Matthias

In the City of the Man-eaters

About that time all the apostles had come together to the same place, and shared among themselves the countries, casting lots, in order that each might go away into the part that had fallen to him. By lot, then, it fell to Matthias to set out to the country of the man-eaters. And the men of that city used neither to eat bread nor drink wine; but they ate the flesh of men, and drank their blood. Every man, therefore, who came into their city they laid hold of, and digging they thrust out his eyes, and gave him a drug to drink, prepared by sorcery and magic; and from drinking the drug his heart was altered and his mind deranged.

Matthias then having come into the gate of their city, the men of that city laid hold of him, and thrust out his eyes; and after putting them out they made him drink the drug of their magical deception, and led him away to the prison, and put beside him grass to eat, and he ate it not. For when he had partaken of their drug, his heart was not altered, nor his mind deranged; but he kept praying to God, weeping, and saying: Lord Jesus Christ, for whose sake we have forsaken all things and have followed You, knowing that You are the helper of all who hope in You, attend then and behold what they have done to Matthias Your servant, how they have made me near to the brutes; for You are He who knows all things. If, therefore, You have ordained that the wicked men in this city should eat me up, I will not by any means flee from Your dispensation. Afford to me then, O Lord, the light of mine eyes, that at least I may behold what the wicked men in this city have in hand for me; do not forsake me, O my Lord Jesus Christ, and do not give me up to this bitter death.

While Matthias was thus praying in the prison, a light shone, and there came forth out of the light a voice saying: Beloved Matthias, receive your sight. And immediately he received his sight. And again there came forth a voice saying: Be of good courage, our Matthias, and be not dismayed; for I shall not by any means forsake you, for I shall deliver you from all danger; and not only you, but also all your brethren who are with you: for I am with you everywhere and at all times. But remain here twenty-seven days for the edification of many souls; and after that I shall send forth Andrew to you, and he shall lead you forth out of this prison; and not you only, but also all who hear. Having said this, the Saviour said again to Matthias, Peace be to you, our Matthias, and went into heaven. Then Matthias having beheld Him, said to the Lord: Let your grace abide with me, O my Lord Jesus.

Then Matthias therefore sat down in the prison, and sang. And it came to pass that, when the executioners came into the prison to bring forth the men to eat them, Matthias also shut his eyes, that they might not behold that he saw. And the executioners having come to him, read the ticket in his hand, and said among themselves: Yet three days, and we shall bring out this one also from the prison, and slay him. Because in the case of every man whom they laid hold of, they noted that day on which they laid hold of him, and tied a ticket to his right hand, that they might know the completion of the thirty days.

And it came to pass when the twenty-seven days were fulfilled since Matthias was seized, the Lord appeared in the country where Andrew was teaching, and said to him: Rise up, and set out with your disciples to the country of the man-eaters, and bring forth Matthias out of that place; for yet three days, and the men of the city will bring him forth and slay him for their food. And Andrew answered and said: My Lord, I shall not be able to accomplish the journey there before the limited period of the three days; but send Your angel quickly, that he may bring him out thence: for you know, Lord, that I also am flesh, and shall not be able to go there quickly. And He says to Andrew: Obey Him who made you, and Him who is able to say in a word, and that city shall be removed thence, and all that dwell in it. For I command the horns of the winds, and they drive it thence. But rise up early, and go down to the sea with your disciples, and you shall find a boat upon the shore, and you shall go aboard with your disciples. And having said this, the Saviour again said: Peace to you, Andrew, along with those with you! And He went into the heavens.

And Andrew having risen up early, proceeded to the sea along with his disciples; and having come down to the shore, he saw a little boat, and in the boat three men sitting. For the Lord by His own power had prepared a boat, and He it was in human shape a pilot in the boat; and He brought two angels whom He made to appear like men, and they were in the boat sitting. Andrew, therefore, having beheld the boat, and the three who were in it, rejoiced with exceeding great joy; and having gone to them, he said: Where are you going, brethren, with this little boat? And the Lord answered and said to him: We are going to the country of the man-eaters. And Andrew having beheld Jesus, did not recognise Him; for Jesus was hiding His Godhead, and He appeared to Andrew like a pilot. And Jesus having heard Andrew saying, I too am going to the country of the man-eaters, says to him: Every man avoids that city, and how are you going there? And Andrew answered and said: We have some small business to do there, and we must get through with it; but if you can, do us this kindness to convey us to the country of the man-eaters, to which also you intend to go. Jesus answered and said to them: Come on board.

And Andrew said: I wish to make some explanation to you, young man, before we come on board your boat. And Jesus said: Say what you will. And Andrew said to Him: We have no passage-money to give you; we have not even bread for our nourishment. And Jesus answered and said to him: How, then, are you going away without giving us the passage-money, and without having bread for your nourishment? And Andrew said to Jesus, Listen, brother; do not think that it is through masterfulness that we do not give you our passage-money, but we are disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, the good God. For He chose for Himself us twelve, and gave us such a commandment, saying, When you go to preach, do not carry money in the journey, nor bread, nor bag, nor shoes, nor staff, nor two coats. If, therefore, you will do us the kindness, brother, tell us at once; if not, let us know, and we shall go and seek another boat for ourselves. And Jesus answered and said to Andrew: If this is the commandment which you received, and you keep it, come on board my boat with all joy. For I really wish you, the disciples of Him who is called Jesus, to come on board my boat, rather than those who give me of their silver and gold; for I am altogether worthy that the apostle of the Lord should come on board my boat. And Andrew answered and said: Permit me, brother, may the Lord grant you glory and honour. And Andrew went on board the boat with his disciples.

And having gone on board, he sat down by the boat's sail. And Jesus answered and said to one of the angels: Rise and go down to the hold of the boat, and bring up three loaves, that the men may eat, lest perchance they be hungry, from having come to us off a long journey. And he rose and went down to the hold of the boat, and brought up three loaves, as the Lord commanded him; and he gave them the loaves. Then Jesus said to Andrew: Rise up, brother, with your friends; partake of food, that you may be strong to bear the tossing of the sea. And Andrew answered and said to his disciples: My children, we have found great kindness from this man. Stand up, then, and partake of the nourishment of bread, that you may be strong to bear the tossing of the sea. And his disciples were not able to answer him a word, for they were in distress because of the sea. Then Jesus forced Andrew to partake himself also of the nourishment of bread along with his disciples. And Andrew answered and said to Jesus, not knowing that it was Jesus: Brother, may the Lord give you heavenly bread out of His kingdom. Allow me then brother; for you see the children, that they are distressed because of the sea. And Jesus answered and said to Andrew: Assuredly the brethren are without experience of the sea; but inquire of them whether they want to go to land, and yourself to remain, until you shall finish your business, and again come back to them. Then Andrew said to his disciples: My children, do you wish to go to the land, and me to remain here until I shall finish my business for which I have been sent? And they answered and said to Andrew: If we go away from you, may we become strangers to the good things which the Lord has provided for us. Now, therefore, we are with you, wherever you may go.

Jesus answered and said to Andrew: If you are truly a disciple of Him who is called Jesus, tell your disciples the miracles which your Teacher did, that their soul may rejoice, and that they may forget the fear of the sea; for, behold, we are going to take the boat off from the land. And immediately Jesus said to one of the angels: Let go the boat; and he let go the boat from the land. And Jesus came and sat down beside the rudder, and steered the boat. Then Andrew exhorted and comforted his disciples, saying: My children, who have given up your life to the Lord, fear not; for the Lord will not at all forsake you forever. For at that time when I was alone with our Lord, we went on board the boat with Him, and He lay down to sleep in the boat, trying us; for He was not fast asleep. And a

great wind having arisen, and the sea being stormy, so that the waves were uplifted, and came under the sail of the boat, and when we were in great fear, the Lord stood up and rebuked the winds, and there was a calm in the sea; for all things feared Him, as being made by Him. Now, therefore, my children, fear not. For the Lord Jesus will not at all forsake us. And having said this, the holy Andrew prayed in his heart that his disciples might be led to sleep. And as Andrew was praying, his disciples fell asleep.

And Andrew, turning round to the Lord, not knowing that it was the Lord, said to Him: Tell me, O man, and show me the skill of your steering; for I have never seen any man so steering in the sea as I now see you. For sixteen years have I sailed the sea, and behold this is the seventeenth, and I have not seen such skill; for truly the boat is just as if on land. Show me then, young man, your skill. Then Jesus answered and said to Andrew: We also have often sailed the sea, and been in danger; but since you are a disciple of Him called Jesus, the sea has recognised you that you are righteous, and has become calm, and has not lifted its waves against the boat. Then Andrew cried out with a loud voice, saying: I thank You, my Lord Jesus Christ, that I have met a man who glorifies Your name.

And Jesus answered and said: O Andrew, tell me, you disciple of Him called Jesus, wherefore the unbelieving Jews did not believe in Him, saying that He was not God, but man. Show me, O disciple of Him called Jesus; for I have heard that He showed His Godhead to His disciples. And Andrew answered and said: Truly, brother, He showed us that He was God. Do not think, then, that He is man. For He made the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and all that is in them. And Jesus answered and said: How then did the Jews not believe Him? Perhaps He did not do miracles before them? Andrew said: Have you not heard of the miracles which He did before them? He made the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear; He cleansed lepers, He changed water into wine; and having taken five loaves and two fishes, He made a crowd recline on the grass, and having blessed, He gave them to eat; and those that ate were five thousand men, and they were filled: and they took up what was over to them twelve baskets of fragments. And after all these things they did not believe Him.

And Jesus answered and said to Andrew: Perhaps He did these miracles before the people, and not before the chief priests, and because of this they did not believe Him.

And Andrew answered and said: Nay, brother, He did them also before the chief priests, not only openly, but also in secret, and they did not believe Him. Jesus answered and said: What are the miracles which He did in secret? Disclose them to me. And Andrew answered and said: O man, who hast the spirit of inquisitiveness, why do you put me to the test? And Jesus answered and said: I do not put you to the test by saying this, O disciple of Him called Jesus; but my soul rejoices and exults, and not only mine, but also every soul that hears the wonders of Jesus.

And Andrew answered and said: O child, the Lord shall fill your soul with all joy and all good, as you have persuaded me now to relate to you the miracles which our Lord did in secret.

It came to pass as we, the twelve disciples, were going with our Lord into a temple of the Gentiles, that He might make known to us the ignorance of the devil, that the chief priests, having beheld us following Jesus, said to us, O wretches, why do you walk with him who says, I am the Son of God? Do you mean to say that God has a son? Which of you has ever at any time seen God associating with a woman? Is not this the son of Joseph the carpenter, and his mother is Mary, and his brothers

James and Simon? And when we heard these words, our hearts were turned into weakness. And Jesus, having known that our hearts were giving way, took us into a desert place, and did great miracles before us, and displayed to us all His Godhead. And we spoke to the chief priests, saying, Come ye also, and see; for, behold, He has persuaded us.

And the chief priests having come, went with us; and when we had gone into the temple of the Gentiles, Jesus showed us the heaven, that we might know whether the things were true or not. And there went in along with us thirty men of the people, and four chief priests. And Jesus, having looked on the right hand and on the left of the temple, saw two sculptured sphinxes, one on the right and one on the left. And Jesus having turned to us, said, Behold the sign of the cross; for these are like the cherubim and the seraphim which are in heaven. Then Jesus, having looked to the right, where the sphinx was, said to it, I say unto you, you image of that which is in heaven, which the hands of craftsmen have sculptured, be separated from your place, and come down, and answer and convict the chief priests, and show them whether I am God or man.

And immediately at that very time the sphinx removed from its place, and having assumed a human voice, said, O foolish sons of Israel, not only has the blinding of their own hearts not been enough for them, but they also wish others to be blind like themselves, saying that God is man, who in the beginning fashioned man, and put His breath into all, who gave motion to those things which moved not; He it is who called Abraham, who loved his son Isaac, who brought back his beloved Jacob into his land; He is the Judge of living and dead; He it is who prepares great benefits for those who obey Him, and prepares punishment for those who believe Him not. Heed not that I am an idol that can be handled; for I say unto you, that the sacred places of your synagogue are more excellent. For though we are stones, the priests have given us only the name of a god; and those priests who serve the temple purify themselves, being afraid of the demons: for if they have had intercourse with women, they purify themselves seven days, because of their fear; so that they do not come into the temple because of us, because of the name which they have given us, that we are a god. But you, if you have committed fornication, take up the law of God, and go into the synagogue of God, and purify, and read, and do not reverence the glorious words of God. Because of this, I say unto you, that the holy things purify your synagogues, so that they also become churches of His only begotten Son. The sphinx having said this, ceased speaking.

And we said to the chief priests, Now it is fitting that you should believe, because even the stones have convicted you. And the Jews answered and said, By magic these stones speak, and do not you think that it is a god? For if you have tested what has been said by the stone, you have ascertained its deception. For where did he find Abraham, or how did he see him? For Abraham died many years before he was born, and how does he know him?

And Jesus, having again turned to the image, said to it, Because these believe not that I have spoken with Abraham, go away into the land of the Canaanites, and go away to the double cave in the field of Mamre, where the body of Abraham is, and cry outside of the tomb, saying, Abraham, Abraham, whose body is in the tomb, and whose soul is in paradise, thus speaks He who fashioned man, who made you from the beginning his friend, Rise up, you and your son Isaac, and the son of your son Jacob, and come to the temples of the Jebusites, that we may convict the chief priests, in order that they may know that I am acquainted with you, and you with me. And when the sphinx heard these words, immediately she walked about in the presence of us all, and set out for the land of the

Canaanites to the field of Mamre, and cried outside of the tomb, as God had commanded her. And straightway the twelve patriarchs came forth alive out of the tomb, and answered and said to her, To which of us have you been sent? And the sphinx answered and said, I have been sent to the three patriarchs for testimony; but do ye go in, and rest until the time of the resurrection. And having heard, they went into the tomb and fell asleep. And the three patriarchs set out along with the sphinx to Jesus, and convicted the chief priests. And Jesus said to them, Go away to your places; and they went away. And He said also to the image, Go up to your place; and straightway she went up and stood in her place. And He did also many other miracles, and they did not believe Him; which *miracles*, if I shall recount, you will not be able to bear. And Jesus answered and said to him: I can bear it; for I prudently listen to profitable words.

And when the boat was about to come near the land, Jesus bent down His head upon one of His angels, and was quiet. And Andrew ceased speaking; and he also, reclining his head upon one of his disciples, fell asleep. And Jesus said to His angels: Spread your hands under him, and carry Andrew and his disciples, and go and put them outside of the city of the man-eaters; and having laid them on the ground, return to me. And the angels did as Jesus commanded them, and the angels returned to Jesus: and He went up into the heavens with His angels.

And when it was morning, Andrew, having awakened and looked up, found himself sitting on the ground; and having looked, he saw his disciples sleeping on the ground: and he wakened them, and said to them: Rise up, my children, and know the great dispensation that has happened to us, and learn that the Lord was with us in the boat, and we knew Him not; for He transformed Himself as if He were a pilot in the boat, and humbled Himself, and appeared to us as a man, putting us to the test. And Andrew, recovering himself, said: Lord, I recognised Your excellent words, but You did not manifest Yourself to me, and because of this I did not know You. And his disciples answered and said to him: Father Andrew, do not think that we knew when you were speaking with Him in the boat, for we were weighed down by a most heavy sleep; and eagles came down out of the heavens, and lifted up our souls, and took them away into the paradise in heaven, and we saw great wonders. For we beheld our Lord Jesus sitting on a throne of glory, and all the angels round about Him. We beheld also Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the saints; and David praised Him with a song upon his harp. And we beheld there you the twelve apostles standing by in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, and outside of you twelve angels round about you, and each angel standing behind each of you, and they were like you in appearance. And we heard the Lord saying to the angels, Listen to the apostles in all things whatsoever they shall ask you. These are the things which we have seen, father Andrew, until you woke us; and angels, who appeared like eagles, brought our souls into our bodies.

Then Andrew, having heard, rejoiced with great joy that his disciples had been deemed worthy to behold these wonderful things. And Andrew looked up into heaven, and said: Appear to me, Lord Jesus Christ; for I know that You are not far from Your servants. Pardon me, Lord, for what I have done; for I have beheld You as a man in the boat, and I have conversed with You as with a man. Now therefore, Lord, manifest Yourself to me in this place.

And when Andrew had said this, Jesus appeared to him in the likeness of a most beautiful little child. And Jesus answered and said: Hail, our Andrew! And Andrew, having beheld Him, worshipped Him, saying: Pardon me, Lord Jesus Christ, for I saw You like a man on the sea, and conversed with

You. What is there, then, wherein I have sinned, my Lord Jesus, that You did not manifest Yourself to me on the sea? And Jesus answered and said to Andrew: You have not sinned, but I did this to you because you said, I shall not be able to go to the city of the man-eaters in three days; and I have showed you that I am able to do all things, and to appear to every one as I wish. Now therefore rise up, go into the city to Matthias, and bring him forth out of the prison, and all the strangers that are with him. For, behold, I show you, Andrew, what you must suffer before going into this city. They will heap upon you tortures and insults, and scatter your flesh in the ways and the streets, and your blood shall flow to the ground, but they are not able to put you to death; but endure, just as you saw me beaten, insulted, and crucified: for there are those who are destined to believe in this city. And having said this, the Saviour went into the heavens.

And Andrew went into the city along with his disciples, and no one beheld him. And when he came to the prison, he saw seven warders standing at the gate guarding, and he prayed within himself, and they fell down and expired; and he marked the gate with the sign of the cross, and it opened of its own accord. And having gone in with his disciples, he found Matthias sitting and singing; and seeing him, he stood up, and they saluted each other with a holy kiss; and he said to Matthias: Brother, how have you been found here? For yet three days, and they will bring you out to be food for them. Where are the great mysteries which you have been taught, and the wonderful things which we have believed? And Matthias said to him: Did you not hear the Lord saying, I shall send you like sheep into the midst of wolves? They straightway brought me into the prison, and I prayed to the Lord; and He said to me, Remain here twenty-seven days, and I shall send you Andrew, and he will bring you forth out of the prison. And now, behold, it has come to pass as the Lord said.

Then Andrew, having looked, saw three men shut up eating grass naked; and he beat his breast, and said: Consider, O Lord, what the men suffer; how have they made them like the irrational brutes? And he says to Satan: Woe to you, the devil, the enemy of God, and to your angels, because the strangers here have done nothing to you; and how have you brought upon them the punishment? How long will you war against the human race? You brought forth Adam out of paradise, and caused men to be mixed up with transgression; and the Lord was enraged, and brought on the deluge so as to sweep man away. And again have you made your appearance in this city too, in order that you may make those who are here eat men, that the end of them also may be in execration and destruction, thinking in yourself that God will sweep away the work of His hands. Have you not heard that God said, I will not bring a deluge upon the earth? but if there is any punishment prepared, it is for the sake of taking vengeance upon you.

Then he stood up, and Andrew and Matthias prayed; and after the prayer Andrew laid his hands upon the faces of the blind men who were in the prison, and straightway they all received their sight. And again he laid his hand upon their hearts, and their minds were changed into human reason. Then Andrew answered them: Rise up, and go into the lower parts of the city, and you shall find in the way a great fig-tree, and sit under the fig-tree, and eat of its fruit, until I come to you; but if I delay coming there, you will find abundance of food for yourselves: for the fruit shall not fail from the fig-tree, but according as you eat it shall produce more fruit, and nourish you, as the Lord has said. And they answered and said to Andrew: Go along with us, O our master, lest perchance the wicked men of this city again see us, and shut us up, and inflict upon us greater and more dreadful tortures than they have inflicted upon us. And Andrew answered and said to them: Go; for in truth I say to you, that as you go, not a dog shall bark with his tongue against you. And there were in all two

hundred and seventy men and forty-nine women whom Andrew released from the prison. And the men went as the blessed Andrew said to them; and he made Matthias go along with his disciples out of the eastern gate of the city. And Andrew commanded a cloud, and the cloud took up Matthias and the disciples of Andrew; and the cloud set them down on the mountain where Peter was teaching, and they remained beside him.

And Andrew, having gone forth from the prison, walked about in the city; and having seen a brazen pillar, and a statue standing upon it, he came and sat down behind that pillar until he should see what should happen. And it happened that the executioners went to the prison to bring out the men for their food, according to the custom; and they found the doors of the prison opened, and the guards that guarded it lying dead upon the ground. And straightway they went, and reported to the rulers of the city, saying: We found the prison opened, and having gone inside we found nobody; but we found the guards lying dead upon the ground. And the rulers having heard this, said among themselves: What, then, has happened? You do not mean to say that some persons have gone into the prison of the city, and have killed the warders, and taken away those that were shut up? And they spoke to the executioners, saying: Go to the prison, and bring the men that are dead, that we may eat them up today. And let us go tomorrow, and bring together all the old men of the city, that they may cast lots upon themselves, until the seven lots come, and we slay seven each day. And they shall be to us for food until we may choose young men, and put them in boats as sailors, that they may go away to the countries round about, and attack them, and bring some men here, that they may be for food to us.

And the executioners went to the prison, and brought the seven men that were dead; and there was an oven built in the midst of the city, and there lay in the oven a large trough in which they killed the men, and their blood ran down into the trough, and they drew out of the blood and drank it. And they brought the men, and. put them into the trough. And when the executioners were lifting their hands against them, Andrew heard a voice, saying: Behold, Andrew, what is happening in this city. And Andrew having beheld, prayed to the Lord, saying: Lord Jesus Christ, who ordered me to come into this city, do not suffer those in this city to do any evil, but let the knives go out of the hands of the wicked ones. And straightway the knives of the wicked men fell, and their hands were turned into stone. And the rulers, having seen what had happened, wept, saying: Woe unto us, for here are the magicians who have gone into the prison, and brought out the men; for, behold, they have bewitched these also. What, then, shall we do? Let us go now, and gather together the old men of the city, seeing that we are hungry.

And they went and gathered them together, and found two hundred and seventeen; and they brought them to the rulers, and they made them cast lots, and the lot came upon seven old men. And one of those taken by lot answered and said to the officers: I pray you, I have for myself one son; take him, and slay him instead of me, and let me go. And the officers answered and said to him: We cannot take your son, unless we bring him first to our superiors. And the officers went and told the rulers. And the rulers answered and said to the officers: If he give us his son instead of himself, let him go. And the officers went and told the old man. And the old man answered and said to them: I have also a daughter along with my son; take them, and kill them, only let me go. And he gave his children to the officers, that they might kill them. And the children wept to each other, and prayed the officers, saying: We pray you do not kill us, as we are of so small a size; but let us complete our size, and so kill us. For it was a custom in that city, and they did not bury their dead,

but ate them up. And the officers did not hearken to the children, nor take pity upon them, but carried them to the trough weeping and praying.

And it happened, as they were leading them away to kill them, that Andrew, having beheld what happened, shed tears; and weeping, he looked up to heaven and said: Lord Jesus Christ, as You heard me in the case of the dead men, and did not suffer them to be eaten up, so also now hear me, that the executioners may not inflict death upon these children, but that the knives may be loosened out of the hands of the executioners. And straightway the knives were loosened, and fell out of the hands of the executioners. And when this came to pass, the executioners, having beheld what had happened, were exceedingly afraid. And Andrew, seeing what had happened, glorified the Lord because He had listened to him in every work.

And the rulers, having beheld what had happened, wept with a great weeping, saying: Woe unto us! What are we to do? And, behold, the devil appeared in the likeness of an old man, and began to say in the midst of all: Woe unto you! Because you are now dying, having no food; what can sheep and oxen do for you? They will not at all be enough for you. But rise up, and make a search here for one who has come to the city, a stranger named Andrew, and kill him; for if you do not, he will not permit you to carry on this practice longer: for it was he who let loose the men out of the prison. Assuredly the man is in this city, and you have not seen him. Now, therefore, rise and make search for him, in order that henceforward you may be able to collect your food.

And Andrew saw the devil, how he was talking to the multitudes; but the devil did not see the blessed Andrew. Then Andrew answered the devil, and said: O Belial most fiendish, who art the foe of every creature; but my Lord Jesus Christ will bring you down to the abyss. And the devil, having heard this, said: I hear your voice indeed, and I know your voice, but where you are standing I know not. And Andrew answered and said to the devil: Why, then, have you been called Amael? is it not because you are blind, not seeing all the saints? And the devil, having heard this, said to the citizens: Look round now for him speaking to me, for he is the man. And the citizens, having run in different directions, shut the gates of the city, and searched for the blessed one, and did not see him. Then the Lord showed Himself to Andrew, and said to him; Andrew, rise up and show yourself to them, that they may learn my power, and the powerlessness of the devil working in them.

Then Andrew rose up, and said in presence of all: Behold, I am Andrew whom you seek. And the multitudes ran upon him, and laid hold of him, saying: What you have done to us, we also will do to you. And they reasoned among themselves, saying: By what death shall we kill him? And they said to each other: If we take off his head, his death is not torture; and if we burn him, he will not be for food to us. Then one of them, the devil having entered into him, answered and said to the multitudes: As he has done to us, so let us also do to him. Let us rise up, then, and fasten a rope to his neck, and drag him through all the streets and lanes of the city; and when he is dead, we shall share his body. And they did as he said to them; and having fastened a rope round his neck, they dragged him through the streets and lanes of the city, and the flesh of the blessed Andrew stuck to the ground, and his blood flowed to the ground like water. And when it was evening they cast him into the prison, having bound his hands behind him; and he was in sore distress.

And in the morning again they brought him out, and having fastened a rope round his neck, they dragged him about; and again his flesh stuck to the ground, and his blood flowed. And the blessed one wept and prayed, saying: Do not forsake me, my Lord Jesus Christ; for I know that You are not

far from Your servants. And as he was praying, the devil walked behind, and said to the multitudes: Strike him on the mouth, that he may not speak.

And when it was evening they took him again to the prison, having bound his hands behind him, and left him till the morrow again. And the devil having taken with himself seven demons whom the blessed one had cast out of the countries round about, and having gone into the prison, they stood before him, wishing to kill him. And the demons answered and said to Andrew: Now have you fallen into our hands. Where is your glory and your exultation, you who raises yourself up against us, and dishonors us, and tells our doings to the people in every place and country, and has made desolate our workshops and our temples, in order that sacrifices may not be brought to them? Because of this, then, we shall also kill you, like your teacher called Jesus, and John whom Herod beheaded.

And they stood before Andrew, wishing to kill him; and having beheld the seal upon his forehead which the Lord gave him, they were afraid, and did not come near him, but fled. And the devil said to them: Why have you fled from him, my children, and not killed him? And the demons answered and said to the devil: We cannot kill him, but kill him if you art able; for we knew him before he came into the distress of his humiliation. Then one of the demons answered and said: We cannot kill him, but come let us mock him in the distress of his humiliation. And the demons came and stood before him, and scoffed at him. And the blessed one hearing, wept; and there came to him a voice saying: Andrew, why are you weeping? And it was the voice of the devil changed. And Andrew answered and said: I am weeping because God commanded me, saying, Be patient toward them. And the devil said: If you can do anything, do it. And Andrew answered and said: Is it for this, then, that you do these things to me? But forbid it that I should disobey the commandment of my Lord; for if the Lord shall make for me a charge in this city, I shall chastise you as you deserve. And having heard this, they fled.

And when it was morning they brought him out again, and having fastened a rope about his neck, they dragged him; and again his flesh stuck to the ground, and his blood flowed to the ground like water. And the blessed one, as he was being dragged along, wept, saying: Lord Jesus Christ, be not displeased with me; for You know, Lord, what the fiend has inflicted upon me, along with his demons. These tortures are enough, my Lord; for, behold, I am dragged about for three days. But remember, Lord, that You were three hours upon the cross, and cried out to the Father, My Father, why have You forsaken me? Where are Your words, Lord, which You spoke to us, confirming us, when we walked about with You, saying to us, You shall not lose one hair? Consider, then, Lord, what has become of my flesh, and the hairs of my head. Then Jesus said to Andrew: O our Andrew, the heaven and the earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. Turn yourself then, Andrew, and behold your flesh that has fallen, and your hair, what has become of them. And Andrew turned, and saw great trees springing up, bearing fruit; and he glorified God.

And when it was evening they took him up again, and cast him into the prison, having bound his hands behind him; and he was exceedingly exhausted. And the men of the city said among themselves: Perhaps he dies in the night, and we do not find him alive on the following day; for he was languid, and his flesh was spent.

And the Lord appeared in the prison, and having stretched out His hand, said to Andrew: Give me your hand, and rise up whole. And Andrew, having beheld the Lord Jesus, gave Him his hand, and rose up whole. And falling down, he worshipped Him, and said: I thank You, my Lord Jesus Christ,

that You have speedily brought help to me. And Andrew, having looked into the middle of the prison, saw a pillar standing, and upon the pillar there stood an alabaster statue. And Andrew, having gone up to the statue, unfolded his hands seven times, and said to the pillar, and the statue upon it: Fear the sign of the cross, which the heaven and the earth dread; and let the statue set upon the pillar bring up much water through its mouth, until all who are in this city be punished. And say not, I am stone, and am not worthy to praise the Lord, for the Lord fashioned us from the earth; but you are pure, because that out of you He gave the tables of the law. When the blessed Andrew had said this, straightway the stone statue cast out of its mouth water in abundance, as if out of a canal. And the water stood high upon the earth; and it was exceedingly acrid, eating into the flesh of men.

And when it was morning, the men of the city saw it, and began to flee, saying in themselves: Woe to us! Because we are now dying. And the water killed their cattle and their children; and they began to flee out of the city. Then Andrew prayed, saying: Lord Jesus Christ, in whom I have hoped that this miracle should come upon this city, forsake me not, but send Michael Your archangel in a cloud of fire, and be a wall round the city, that no one may be able to escape out of the fire. And straightway a cloud of fire came down and encircled the city like a wall; and the water was as high as the neck of those men, and it was eating them up exceedingly. And they wept, saying: Woe to us! For all these things have come upon us because of the stranger who is in the prison. Let us go and release him, lest perchance we die.

And they went out, crying with a loud voice: God of the stranger, take away from us this water. And the apostle knew that they were in great affliction, and said to the alabaster statue: Stop the water, for they have repented. And I say to you, that if the citizens of this city shall believe, I will build a church, and place you in it, because you have done me this service. And the statue ceased flowing, and no longer brought forth water. And the men of the city, having come out to the doors of the prison, cried out, saying: Have pity upon us, God of the stranger, and do not according to our unbelief, and according to what we have done to this man, but take away from us this water. And Andrew came forth out of the prison; and the water ran this way and that from the feet of the blessed Andrew. Then all the multitude seeing him, all cried out: Have pity upon us.

And the old man having come who gave up his children that they should slay them instead of him, prayed at the feet of the blessed Andrew, saying: Have pity upon me. And the holy Andrew answered and said to the old man: I wonder how you say, Have pity upon me; for you had no pity upon your children, but gave them up to be slain instead of you. Therefore I say to you, At what hour this water goes away, into the abyss shall you go, with the fourteen executioners who slay the men every day. And he came to the place of the trough, where they used to slay the men. And the blessed one, having looked up to heaven, prayed before all the multitude; and the earth was opened, and swallowed up the water, along with the old man. He was carried down into the abyss, with the executioners. And the men, having seen what had happened, were exceedingly afraid, and began to say: Woe unto us because this man is from God; and now he will kill us because of the afflictions which we have caused him. For, behold, what he said to the executioners and the old man has befallen them. Now, therefore, he will command the fire, and it will burn us. And Andrew, having heard, said to them: Fear not, children; for I shall not send these also to Hades; but those have gone, that you may believe in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Then the holy Andrew ordered to be brought up all who had died in the water. And they were not able to bring them; for there had died a great multitude both of men, and women, and children, and cattle.

Then Andrew prayed, and they all came to life. And after these things he drew a plan of a church, and he caused the church to be built. And he baptized them, and gave them the ordinances of our Lord Jesus Christ, saying to them: Stand by these, in order that you may know the mysteries of our Lord Jesus Christ. And they all prayed him: We pray you, stay with us a few days, that we may be filled with your fountain, because we are newly planted. And he did not comply with their request, but said to them: I shall go first to my disciples. And the children followed after, weeping and praying, with the men; and they cast ashes upon their heads. And he did not comply with them, but said: I shall go to my disciples, and after that I shall come again to you. And he went his way.

And the Lord Jesus Christ came down, being like a comely little child, and met Andrew, and said: Andrew, why have you come out and left them without fruit, and hast not had compassion upon the children that followed after you, and the men entreating you, Stay with us a few days? For the cry of them and the weeping has come up to heaven. Now therefore return, and go into the city, and remain there seven days, until I shall confirm their souls in the faith; and then you shall go away into the country of the barbarians, you and your disciples. And after going into this city, you shall proclaim my Gospel, and bring up the men who are in the abyss. And you shall do what I command you.

Then Andrew turned and went into the city, saying: I thank You, my Lord Jesus Christ, who wishes to save every soul, that You have not allowed me to go forth out of this city in mine anger. And when he had come into the city, they, seeing him, rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And he stayed there seven days, teaching and confirming them in the Lord Jesus Christ. And the seven days having been fulfilled, it came to pass, while the blessed Andrew was going out, all came together to him, from the child even to the elder, and sent him on his way, saying: There is one God, *the God* of Andrew, and one Lord Jesus Christ, who alone does wonders; to whom be glory and strength forever. Amen.

The Gospel of the Nazarenes (please see the attached ebook)

The Gospel of the Nazoreans is an expansion of the Gospel of Matthew, translated from Greek into Aramaic or Syriac.

In *The Other Gospels*, Cameron notes the sources that are available: "The first reference to the *Gospel of the Nazoreans* was made ca. 180 C.E. by Hegesippus (a church writer whose five-volume 'Memoirs' are now lost, preserved only in a few quotations in the writings of Eusebius). Fragments are preserved in the works of Origen (early in the third century) and Eusebius (early in the fourth century); Epiphanius (late in the fourth century) attests to the existence of this gospel, but does not quote from it. Most of the fragments that are to be assigned to the *Gospel of the Nazoreans* come from the writings of Jerome (ca. 400 C.E.), who incorrectly identifies this gospel with the *Gospel of the Hebrews*, but who, his testimony notwithstanding, certainly had firsthand knowledge only of the *Gospel of the Nazoreans*."

Cameron also makes these observations on provenance and dating: "*The Gospel of the Nazoreans* was composed sometime after the Gospel of Matthew and before the first attestation of the text by Hegesippus. Its provenance is most likely western Syria, where Matthew was probably composed and the Nazoreans were still at home in the fourth century. The theology reflected in the extant fragments is not at all 'heretical,' but is closely aligned with and dependent upon the developing theology of the emerging 'catholic' church. The variant readings witness to the instability of gospel texts and gospel manuscripts in the first few centuries C.E. Most of all, the *Gospel of the Nazoreans* demonstrates the continuing use and expansion of gospel traditions within a group of Jewish Christians."

The Homily on Hope by Cyril of Alexandria

Cyril of Alexandria on the resurrection of Jesus Christ as giving us a sure hope, guaranteed by the Spirit, that we too will rise again.

Those who have a sure hope, guaranteed by the Spirit, that they will rise again lay hold of what lies in the future as though it were already present.

They say: "Outward appearances will no longer be our standard in judging other men. Our lives are all controlled by the Spirit now, and are not confined to this physical world that is subject to corruption. The light of the Only-begotten has shone on us, and we have been transformed into the Word, the source of all life. While sin was still our master, the bonds of death had a firm hold on us, but now that the righteousness of Christ has found a place in our hearts we have freed ourselves from our former condition of corruptibility".

This means that none of us lives in the flesh anymore, at least not in so far as living in the flesh means being subject to the weaknesses of the flesh, which include corruptibility. *Once we thought of Christ as being in the flesh, but we do not do so any longer*, says Saint Paul [2 Corinthians 5:16]. By this he meant that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us; he suffered death in the flesh in order to give all men life.

It was in this flesh that we knew him before, but we do so no longer. Even though he remains in the flesh, since he came to life again on the third day and is now with his Father in heaven, we know that he has passed beyond the life of the flesh; for *having died once, he will never die again, death has no power over him any more. His death was a death to sin, which he died once for all; his life is life with God* [Romans 6:9].

Since Christ has in this way become the source of life for us, we who follow in his footsteps must not think of ourselves as living in the flesh any longer, but as having passed beyond it. Saint Paul's saying is absolutely true that *when anyone is in Christ he becomes a completely different person: his old life is over and a new life has begun* [2 Cor. 5:17].

We have been justified by our faith in Christ and the power of the curse has been broken. Christ's coming to life again for our sake has put an end to the sovereignty of death. We have come to know the true God and to worship him in spirit and in truth, through the Son, our mediator, who sends down upon the world the Father's blessings.

And so Saint Paul shows deep insight when he says: *This is all God's doing: it is he who has reconciled us to himself through Christ.* For the mystery of the incarnation and the renewal it accomplished could not have taken place without the Father's will. Through Christ we have gained access to the Father, for as Christ himself says, no one comes to the Father except through him. *This is all God's doing, then. It is he who has reconciled us to himself through Christ, and who has given us the ministry of reconciliation.*

The Letter of Barnabas (Extended Fragments)

Barnabas 1:1

I Bid you greeting, sons and daughters, in the name of the Lord that loved us, in peace.

Barnabas 1:2

Seeing that the ordinances of God are great and rich unto you, I rejoice with an exceeding great and overflowing joy at your blessed and glorious spirits; so innate is the grace of the spiritual gift that ye have received.

Barnabas 1:3

Wherefore also I the more congratulate myself hoping to be saved, for that I truly see the Spirit poured out among you from the riches of the fount of the Lord. So greatly did the much-desired sight of you astonish me respecting you.

Barnabas 1:4

Being therefore persuaded of this, and being conscious with myself that having said much among you I know that the Lord journeyed with me on the way of righteousness, and am wholly constrained also myself to this, to love you more than my own soul (for great faith and love dwelleth in you through the hope of the life which is His)--considering this therefore, that,

Barnabas 1:5

if it shall be my care to communicate to you some portion of that which I received, it shall turn to my reward for having ministered to such spirits, I was eager to send you a trifle, that along with your faith ye might have your knowledge also perfect.

Barnabas 1:6

Well then, there are three ordinances of the Lord; *the hope of life, which is the beginning and end of our faith; and righteousness, which is the beginning and end of judgment; love shown in gladness and exultation, the testimony of works of righteousness.*

Barnabas 1:7

For the Lord made known to us by His prophets things past and present, giving us likewise the firstfruits of the taste of things future. And seeing each of these things severally coming to pass, according as He spake, we ought to offer a richer and higher offering to the fear of Him. But I, not as though I were a teacher, but as one of yourselves, will show forth a few things, whereby ye shall be gladdened in the present circumstances.

Barnabas 2:1

Seeing then that the days are evil, and that the Active One himself has the authority, we ought to give heed to ourselves and to seek out the ordinances of the Lord.

Barnabas 2:2

The aids of our faith then are fear and patience, and our allies are long-suffering and self-restraint.

Barnabas 2:3

While these abide in a pure spirit in matters relating to the Lord, wisdom, understanding, science, knowledge rejoice with them.

Barnabas 2:4

For He hath made manifest to us by all the prophets that He wanteth neither sacrifices nor whole burnt offerings nor oblations, saying at one time;

Barnabas 2:5

What to Me is the multitude of your sacrifices, saith the Lord I am full of whole burnt-offerings, and the fat of lambs and the blood of bulls and of goats desire not, not though ye should come to be seen of Me. or who required these things at your hands? Ye shall continue no more to tread My court. If ye bring fine flour, it is in vain; incense is an abomination to Me; your new moons and your Sabbaths I cannot away with.

Barnabas 2:6

These things therefore He annulled, that the new law of our Lord Jesus Christ, being free from the yoke of constraint, might have its oblation not made by human hands.

Barnabas 2:7

And He saith again unto them; *Did command your fathers when they went forth from the land of Egypt to bring Me whole burnt offerings and sacrifices?*

Barnabas 2:8

Nay, this was My command unto them, Let none of you bear a grudge

of evil against his neighbor in his heart, and love you not a false oath.

Barnabas 2:9

So we ought to perceive, unless we are without understanding, the mind of the goodness of our Father; for He speaketh to us, desiring us not to go astray like them but to seek how we may approach Him.

Barnabas 2:10

Thus then speaketh He to us; *The sacrifice unto God is a broken heart, the smell of a sweet savor unto the Lord is a heart that glorifies its Maker.* We ought therefore, brethren, to learn accurately concerning our salvation, lest the Evil One having effected an entrance of error in us should fling us away from our life.

Barnabas 3:1

He speaketh again therefore to them concerning these things; *Wherefore fast ye for Me, saith the Lord, so that your voice is heard this day crying aloud? This is not the fast which have chosen, saith the Lord; not a man abasing his soul;*

Barnabas 3:2

not though ye should bend your neck as a hoop, and put on sackcloth and make your bed of ashes, not even so shall ye call a fast that is acceptable.

Barnabas 3:3

But unto us He saith; *Behold, this is the fast which I have chosen, saith the Lord; loosen every band of wickedness, untie the tightened cords of forcible contracts, send away the broken ones released and tear in pieces every unjust bond. Break thy bread to the hungry, and if thou seest one naked clothe him; bring the shelterless into thy house, and if thou seest a humble man, thou shalt not despise him, neither shall any one of thy household and of thine own seed.*

Barnabas 3:4

Then shall thy light break forth in the morning, and thy healing shall arise quickly, and righteousness shall go forth before thy face, and the glory of God shall environ thee.

Barnabas 3:5

Then shalt thou cry out and God shall hear thee; while thou art still speaking, He shall say 'Lo, I am here'; if thou shalt take away from thee the yoke and the stretching forth of the finger and

the word of murmuring, and shalt give thy bread to the hungry heartily, and shalt pity the abased soul.

Barnabas 3:6

To this end therefore, my brethren, He that is long-suffering, foreseeing that the people whom He had prepared in His well-beloved would believe in simplicity, manifested to us beforehand concerning all things, that we might not as novices shipwreck ourselves upon their law.

Barnabas 4:1

It behooves us therefore to investigate deeply concerning the present, and to search out the things which have power to save us. Let us therefore flee altogether from all the works of lawlessness, lest the works of lawlessness overpower us; and let us loathe the error of the present time, that we may be loved for that which is to come.

Barnabas 4:2

Let us give no relaxation to our soul that it should have liberty to consort with sinners and wicked men, lest haply we be made like unto them.

Barnabas 4:3

The last offence is at hand, concerning which the scripture speaketh, as Enoch saith. *For to this end the Master hath cut the seasons and the days short, that His beloved might hasten and come to His inheritance.*

Barnabas 4:4

And the prophet also speaketh on this wise; *Ten reigns shall reign upon the earth, and after them shall arise another king, who shall bring low three of the kings under one.*

Barnabas 4:5

In like manner Daniel speaketh concerning the same; *And I saw the forth beast to be wicked and strong and more intractable than all the beasts of the earth, and how there arose from him ten horns, and from these a little horn and excrescence, and how that it abased under one three of the great horns.*

Barnabas 4:6

Ye ought therefore to understand. Moreover I ask you this one thing besides, as being one of yourselves and loving you all in particular more than my own soul, to give heed to yourselves now, and not to liken yourselves to certain persons who pile up sin upon sin, saying that our covenant remains to them also.

Barnabas 4:7

Ours it is; but they lost it in this way for ever, when Moses had just received it. For the scripture saith; *And Moses was in the mountain fasting forty days and forty nights, and he received the covenant from the Lord, even tablets of stone written with the finger of the hand of the Lord.*

Barnabas 4:8

But they lost it by turning unto idols. For thus saith the Lord; *Moses, Moses, come down quickly; for thy people whom thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt hath done unlawfully.* And Moses understood, and threw the two tables from his hands; and their covenant was broken in pieces, that the covenant of the beloved Jesus might be sealed unto our hearts in the hope which springeth from faith in Him.

Barnabas 4:9

But though I would fain write many things, not as a teacher, but as becometh one who loveth you not to fall short of that which we possess, I was anxious to write to you, being your devoted slave. Wherefore let us take heed in these last days. For the whole time of our faith shall profit us nothing, unless we now, in the season of lawlessness and in the offenses that shall be, as becometh sons of God, offer resistance, that the Black One may not effect an entrance.

Barnabas 4:10

Let us flee from all vanity, let us entirely hate the works of the evil way. Do not entering in privily stand apart by yourselves, as if ye were already justified, but assemble yourselves together and consult concerning the common welfare.

Barnabas 4:11

For the scripture saith; *Woe unto them that are wise for themselves, and understanding in their own sight.* Let us become spiritual, let us become a temple perfect unto God. As far as in us lies, let us exercise ourselves in the fear of God, [and] let us strive to keep His commandments, that we may rejoice in His ordinances.

Barnabas 4:12

The Lord judgeth the world without respect of persons; each man shall receive according to his deeds. If he be good, his righteousness shall go before him in the way; if he be evil, the recompense of his evil-doing is before him; lest perchance,

Barnabas 4:13

if we relax as men that are called, we should slumber over our sins,

and the prince of evil receive power against us and thrust us out from the kingdom of the Lord.

Barnabas 4:14

Moreover understand this also, my brothers. When ye see that after so many signs and wonders wrought in Israel, even then they were abandoned, let us give heed, lest haply we be found, as the scripture saith, *many are called but few are chosen*.

Barnabas 5:1

For to this end the Lord endured to deliver His flesh unto corruption, that by the remission of sins we might be cleansed, which cleansing is through the blood of His sprinkling.

Barnabas 5:2

For the scripture concerning Him containeth some things relating to Israel, and some things relating to us. And it speaketh thus; *He was wounded for your transgressions, and He hath been bruised for our sins; by His stripes we were healed. As a sheep He was led to slaughter, as a lamb is dumb before his shearer*.

Barnabas 5:3

We ought therefore to be very thankful unto the Lord, for that He both revealed unto us the past, and made us wise in the present, and as regards the future we are not without understanding.

Barnabas 5:4

Now the scripture saith; *Not unjustly is the net spread for the birds*. He meaneth this that a man shall justly perish, who having the knowledge of the way of righteousness forceth himself into the way of darkness.

Barnabas 5:5

There is yet this also, my brethren; if the Lord endured to suffer for our souls, though He was Lord of the whole world, unto whom God said from the foundation of the world, *Let us make man after our image and likeness*, how then did He endure to suffer at the hand of men?

Barnabas 5:6

Understand ye. The prophets, receiving grace from Him, prophesied concerning Him. But He Himself endured that He might destroy death and show forth the resurrection of the dead, for that He must needs be manifested in the flesh;

Barnabas 5:7

that at the same time He might redeem the promise made to the fathers, and by preparing the new people for Himself might show,

while He was on earth, that having brought about the resurrection He will Himself exercise judgment.

Barnabas 5:8

Yea and further, He preached teaching Israel and performing so many wonders and miracles, and He loved him exceedingly.

Barnabas 5:9

And when He chose His own apostles who were to proclaim His Gospel, who that He might show that *He came not to call the righteous but sinners* were sinners above every sin, then He manifested Himself to be the Son of God.

Barnabas 5:10

For if He had not come in the flesh neither would men have looked upon Him and been saved, forasmuch as when they look upon the sun that shall cease to be, which is the work of His own hands, they cannot face its rays.

Barnabas 5:11

Therefore the Son of God came in the flesh to this end, that He might sum up the complete tale of their sins against those who persecuted and slew His prophets.

Barnabas 5:12

To this end therefore He endured. For God saith of the wounds of His flesh that they came from them; *When they shall smite their own shepherd, then shall the sheep of the flock be lost.*

Barnabas 5:13

But He Himself desired so to suffer; for it was necessary for Him to suffer on a tree. For he that prophesied said concerning Him, *Spare My soul from the sword; and, Pierce My flesh with nails, for the congregations of evil-doers have risen up against Me.*

Barnabas 5:14

And again He saith; *Behold I have given My back to stripes, and My cheeks to smitings, and My face did I set as a hard rock.*

Barnabas 6:1

When then He gave the commandment, what saith He? *Who is he that disputeth with Me? Let him oppose Me. Or who is he that goeth to law with Me? Let him draw nigh unto the servant of the Lord,*

Barnabas 6:2

Woe unto you, for ye all shall wax old as a garment, and the moth shall consume you. And again the prophet saith, seeing that as a hard stone He was ordained for crushing; *Behold I will put into the*

fountains of Zion a stone very precious, elect, a chief corner-stone, honorable.

Barnabas 6:3

Then again what saith He; *And whosoever shall set his hope on Him, shall live forever.* Is our hope then set upon a stone? Far be it. But it is because the Lord hath set His flesh in strength. For He saith; *And He set Me as a hard rock.*

Barnabas 6:4

And the prophet saith again; *The stone which the builders rejected, this became the head and the corner.* And again He saith; *This is the great and wonderful day, which the Lord made.*

Barnabas 6:5

I write to you the more simply, that ye may understand, I who am the offscouring of your love.

Barnabas 6:6

What then saith the prophet again? *The assembly of evildoers gathered around Me, they surrounded Me as bees surround a comb; and; For My garment they cast a lot.*

Barnabas 6:7

Forasmuch then as He was about to be manifested in the flesh and to suffer, His suffering was manifested beforehand. For the prophet saith concerning Israel; *Woe unto their soul, for they have counseled evil counsel against themselves saying, Let us bind the righteous one, for he is unprofitable for us.*

Barnabas 6:8

What sayeth the other prophet Moses unto them? *Behold, these things saith the Lord God; enter into the good land which the Lord swear unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and inherit it, a land flowing with milk and honey.*

Barnabas 6:9

But what saith knowledge? Understand ye. Set your hope on Him who is about to be manifested to you in the flesh, even Jesus. For man is earth suffering; for from the face of the earth came the creation of Adam.

Barnabas 6:10

What then saith He? *Into the good land, a land flowing with milk and honey.* Blessed is our Lord, brethren, who established among us wisdom and understanding of His secret things. For the prophet speaketh a parable concerning the Lord. Who shall comprehend, save he that is wise and prudent and that loveth his Lord?

Barnabas 6:11

Forasmuch then as He renewed us in the remission of sins, He made us to be a new type, so that we should have the soul of children, as if He were recreating us.

Barnabas 6:12

For the scripture saith concerning us, how He saith to the Son; *Let us make man after our image and after our likeness, and let them rule over the beasts of the earth and the fowls of the heaven and the fishes of the sea.* And the Lord said when He saw the fair creation of us men; *Increase and multiply and fill the earth.*

These words refer to the Son.

Barnabas 6:13

Again I will shew thee how the Lord speaketh concerning us. He made a second creation at the last; and the Lord saith; *Behold I make the last things as the first.* In reference to this then the prophet preached; *Enter into a land flowing with milk and honey, and be lords over it.*

Barnabas 6:14

Behold then we have been created anew, as He saith again in another prophet; *Behold, saith the Lord, I will take out from these, that is to say, from those whom the Spirit of the Lord foresaw, their stony hearts, and will put into them hearts of flesh;* for He Himself was to be manifested in the flesh and to dwell in us.

Barnabas 6:15

For a holy temple unto the Lord, my brethren, is the abode of our heart.

Barnabas 6:16

For the Lord saith again; *For wherein shall I appear unto the Lord my God and be glorified? I will make confession unto Thee in the assembly of my brethren, and I will sing unto Thee in the midst of the assembly of the saints.* We therefore are they whom He brought into the good land.

Barnabas 6:17

What then is the milk and the honey Because the child is first kept alive by honey, and then by milk. So in like manner we also, being kept alive by our faith in the promise and by the word, shall live and be lords of the earth.

Barnabas 6:18

Now we have already said above; *And let them increase and multiply and rule over the fishes.* But who is he that is able [now] to rule

over beasts and fishes and fowls of the heaven; for we ought to perceive that to rule implieth power, so that one should give orders and have dominion.

Barnabas 6:19

If then this cometh not to pass now, assuredly He spake to us for the hereafter, when we ourselves shall be made perfect so that we may become heirs of the covenant of the Lord.

Barnabas 7:1

Understand therefore, children of gladness, that the good Lord manifested all things to us beforehand, that we might know to whom we ought in all things to render thanksgiving and praise.

Barnabas 7:2

If then the Son of God, being Lord and future Judge of quick and dead, suffered that His wound might give us life, let us believe that the Son of God could not suffer except for our sakes.

Barnabas 7:3

But moreover when crucified He had vinegar and gall given Him to drink. Hear how on this matter the priests of the temple have revealed. Seeing that there is a commandment in scripture, *Whatsoever shall not observe the fast shall surely die*, the Lord commanded, because He was in His own person about to offer the vessel of His Spirit a sacrifice for our sins, that the type also which was given in Isaac who was offered upon the altar should be fulfilled.

Barnabas 7:4

What then saith He in the prophet? *And let them eat of the goat that is offered at the fast for all their sins. Attend carefully; And let all the priests alone eat the entrails unwashed with vinegar.*

Barnabas 7:5

Wherefore? Since ye are to give Me, who am to offer My flesh for the sins of My new people, gall with vinegar to drink, eat ye alone, while the people fasteth and waileth in sackcloth and ashes; that He might shew that He must suffer at their hands.

Barnabas 7:6

Attend ye to the commandments which He gave. *Take two goats, fair and alike, and offer them, and let the priest take the one for a whole burnt offering for sins.*

Barnabas 7:7

But the other one--what must they do with it? *Accursed*, saith He, *is the one*. Give heed how the type of Jesus is revealed.

Barnabas 7:8

And do ye all spit upon it and goad it, and place scarlet wool about its head, and so let it be cast into the wilderness. And when it is so done, he that taketh the goat into the wilderness leadeth it, and taketh off the wool, and putteth it upon the branch which is called Rachia, the same whereof we are wont to eat the shoots when we find them in the country. Of this briar alone is the fruit thus sweet.

Barnabas 7:9

What then meaneth this? Give heed. *The one at the alter, and the other accursed.* And moreover the accursed one crowned. For they shall see Him in that day wearing the long scarlet robe about His flesh, and shall say, Is not this He, Whom once we crucified and set at nought and spat upon; verily this was He, Who then said that He was the Son of God.

Barnabas 7:10

For how is He like the goat? For this reason it says *the goats shall be fair and alike*, that, when they shall see Him coming then, they may be astonished at the likeness of the goat. Therefore behold the type of Jesus that was to suffer.

Barnabas 7:11

But what meaneth it, that they place the wool in the midst of the thorns? It is a type of Jesus set forth for the Church, since whosoever should desire to take away the scarlet wool it behoved him to suffer many things owing to the terrible nature of the thorn, and through affliction to win the mastery over it. Thus, He saith, they that desire to see Me, and to attain unto My kingdom, must lay hold on Me through tribulation and affliction.

Barnabas 8:1

But what think ye meaneth the type, where the commandment is given to Israel that those men, whose sins are full grown, offer an heifer and slaughter and burn it, and then that the children take up the ashes, and cast them into vessels, and twist the scarlet wool on a tree (see here again is the type of the cross and the scarlet wool), and the hyssop, and that this done the children should sprinkle the people one by one, that they may be purified from their sins?

Barnabas 8:2

Understand ye how in all plainness it is spoken unto you; the calf is Jesus, the men that offer it, being sinners, are they that offered Him for the slaughter. After this it is no more men (who offer); the glory is no more for sinners.

Barnabas 8:3

The children who sprinkle are they that preached unto us the forgiveness of sins and the purification of our heart, they to whom, being twelve in number for a testimony unto the tribes (for there are twelve tribes of Israel), He gave authority over the Gospel, that they should preach it.

Barnabas 8:4

But wherefore are the children that sprinkle three in number? For a testimony unto Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, because these are mighty before God.

Barnabas 8:5

Then there is the placing the wool on the tree. This means that the kingdom of Jesus is on the cross, and that they who set their hope on Him shall live for ever.

Barnabas 8:6

And why is there the wool and the hyssop at the same time? Because in His kingdom there shall be evil and foul days, in which we shall be saved; for he who suffers pain in the flesh is healed through the foulness of the hyssop.

Barnabas 8:7

Now to us indeed it is manifest that these things so befell for this reason, but to them they were dark, because they heard not the voice of the Lord.

Barnabas 9:1

Furthermore He saith concerning the ears, how that it is our heart which He circumcised. The Lord saith in the prophet; *With the hearing of the ears they listened to Me*. And again He saith; They that are afar off shall hear with their ears, and shall perceive what I have done. And; *Be ye circumcised in your hearts*, saith the Lord.

Barnabas 9:2

And again He saith; *Hear, O Israel, for thus saith the Lord thy God. Who is he that desireth to live forever, let him hear with his ears the voice of My servant*.

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And again He saith; *Hear, O heaven, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken these things for a testimony*. And again He saith; Hear the words of the Lord, ye rulers of this people. And again He saith; *Hear, O my children, the voice of one crying in the wilderness*. Therefore He circumcised our ears, that hearing the word we might believe.

Barnabas 9:3

But moreover the circumcision, in which they have confidence, is abolished; for He hath said that a circumcision not of the flesh should be practiced. But they transgressed, for an evil angel taught them cleverness.

Barnabas 9:4

He saith unto them; *Thus saith the Lord your God* (so I find the commandment); *sow not upon thorns, be ye circumcised in to your Lord.* And what saith He? *Be ye circumcised in the hardness of your heart; and then ye will not harden your neck.* Take this again; *Behold, sayith the Lord, all the Gentiles are uncircumcised in their foreskin, but this people is uncircumcised in their hearts.*

Barnabas 9:5

But thou wilt say; In truth the people hath been circumcised for a seal. Nay, but so likewise is every Syrian and Arabian and all the priests of the idols. Do all those then too belong to their covenant? Moreover the Egyptians also are included among the circumcised.

Barnabas 9:6

Learn therefore, children of love, concerning all things abundantly, that Abraham, who first appointed circumcision, looked forward in the spirit unto Jesus, when he circumcised having received the ordinances of three letters.

Barnabas 9:7

For the scripture saith; *And Abraham circumcised of his household eighteen males and three hundred.* What then was the knowledge given unto him? Understand ye that He saith *the eighteen* first, and then after an interval *three hundred* In the eighteen 'I' stands for ten, 'H' for eight. Here thou hast JESUS (IHSOYS). And because the cross in the 'T' was to have grace, He saith also *three hundred.* So He revealeth Jesus in the two letters, and in the remaining one the cross.

Barnabas 9:8

He who placed within us the innate gift of His covenant knoweth; no man hath ever learnt from me a more genuine word; but I know that ye are worthy.

Barnabas 10:1

But forasmuch as Moses said; *Ye shall not eat seine nor eagle nor falcon nor crow nor any fish which hath no scale upon it,* he received in his understanding three ordinances.

Barnabas 10:2

Yea and further He saith unto them in Deuteronomy; *And I will lay as a covenant upon this people My ordinances.* So then it is not a commandment of God that they should not bite with their teeth, but Moses spake it in spirit.

Barnabas 10:3

Accordingly he mentioned the swine with this intent. Thou shalt not cleave, saith he, to such men who are like unto swine; that is, when they are in luxury they forget the Lord, but when they are in want they recognize the Lord, just as the swine when it eateth knoweth not his lord, but when it is hungry it crieth out, and when it has received food again it is silent.

Barnabas 10:4

Neither shalt thou eat eagle nor falcon nor kite nor crow. Thou shalt not, He saith, cleave unto, or be likened to, such men who now not how to provide food for themselves by toil and sweat, but in their lawlessness seize what belongeth to others, and as if they were walking in guilelessness watch and search about for some one to rob in their rapacity, just as these birds alone do not provide food for themselves, but sit idle and seek how they may eat the meat that belongeth to others, being pestilent in their evil-doings.

Barnabas 10:5

And thou shalt not eat, saith He, lamprey nor polypus nor cuttle fish . Thou shalt not, He meaneth, become like unto such men, who are desperately wicked, and are already condemned to death, just as these fishes alone are accursed and swim in the depths, not swimming on the surface like the rest, but dwell on the ground beneath the deep sea.

Barnabas 10:6

Moreover thou shalt not eat the hare. Why so? Thou shalt not be found a corrupter of boys, nor shalt thou become like such persons; for the hare gaineth one passage in the body every year; for according to the number of years it lives it has just so many orifices.

Barnabas 10:7

Again, *neither shalt thou eat the hyena;* thou shalt not, saith He, become an adulterer or a fornicator, neither shalt thou resemble such persons. Why so? Because this animal changeth its nature year by year, and becometh at one time male and at another female.

Barnabas 10:8

Moreover He hath hated the weasel also and with good reason. Thou

shalt not, saith He, become such as those men of whom we hear as working iniquity with their mouth for uncleanness, neither shalt thou cleave unto impure women who work iniquity with their mouth. For this animal conceiveth with its mouth.

Barnabas 10:9

Concerning meats then Moses received three decrees to this effect and uttered them in a spiritual sense; but they accepted them according to the lust of the flesh, as though they referred to eating.

Barnabas 10:10

And David also receiveth knowledge of the same three decrees, and saith; *Blessed is the man who hath not gone in the council of the ungodly*--even as the fishes go in darkness into the depths; *and hath not stood in the path of sinners*--just as they who pretend to fear the Lord sin like swine; *and hath not sat on the seat of the destroyers*--as the birds that are seated for prey. Ye have now the complete lesson concerning eating.

Barnabas 10:11

Again Moses saith; *Ye shall everything that divideth the hoof and cheweth the cud*. What meaneth he? He that receiveth the food knoweth Him that giveth him the food, and being refreshed appeareth to rejoice in him. Well said he, having regard to the commandment. What then meaneth he? Cleave unto those that fear the Lord, with those who meditate in their heart on the distinction of the word which they have received, with those who tell of the ordinances of the Lord and keep them, with those who know that meditation is a work of gladness and who chew the cud of the word of the Lord. But why that which divideth the hoof? Because the righteous man both walketh in this world, and at the same time looketh for the holy world to come. Ye see how wise a lawgiver Moses was.

Barnabas 10:12

But whence should they perceive or understand these things? Howbeit we having justly perceived the commandments tell them as the Lord willed. To this end He circumcised our ears and hearts, that we might understand these things.

Barnabas 11:1

But let us enquire whether the Lord took care to signify before hand concerning the water and the cross. Now concerning the water it is written in reference to Israel, how that they would not receive the baptism which bringeth remission of sins, but would build for themselves.

Barnabas 11:2

For the prophet saith; *Be astonished, O heaven, and let the earth shudder the more at this, for this people hath done two evil things; they abandoned Me the fountain of life, and they digged for themselves a pit of death.*

Barnabas 11:3

Is My holy mountain of Sinai a desert rock? for ye shall be as the fledglings of a bird, which flutter aloft when deprived of their nest.

Barnabas 11:4

And again the prophet saith; *I will go before thee, and level mountains and crush gates of brass and break in pieces bolts of iron, and I will give thee treasures dark, concealed, unseen, that they may know that I am the Lord God.*

Barnabas 11:5

And; *Thou shalt dwell in a lofty cave of a strong rock. And; His water shall be sure; ye shall see the King in glory, and your soul shall meditate on the fear of the Lord.*

Barnabas 11:6

And again He saith in another prophet; *And He that doeth these things shall be as the tree that is planted by the parting streams of waters, which shall yield his fruit at his proper season, and his leaf shall not fall off, and all things whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.*

Barnabas 11:7

Not so are the ungodly, not so, but are as the dust which the wind scattereth from the face of the earth. Therefore ungodly men shall not stand in judgment, neither sinners in the council of the righteous; for the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, and the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Barnabas 11:8

Ye perceive how He pointed out the water and the cross at the same time. For this is the meaning; Blessed are they that set their hope on the cross, and go down into the water; for He speaketh of the reward at *his proper season*; then, saith He, I will repay. But now what saith He? *His leaves shall not fall off*; He meaneth by this that every word, which shall come forth from you through your mouth in faith and love, shall be for the conversion and hope of many.

Barnabas 11:9

And again another prophet saith; *And the land of Jacob was praised*

above the whole earth. He meaneth this; He glorifieth the vessel of His Spirit.

Barnabas 11:10

Next what saith He? *And there was a river streaming from the right hand, and beautiful trees rose up from it; and whosoever shall eat of them shall live forever.*

Barnabas 11:11

This He saith, because we go down into the water laden with sins and filth, and rise up from it bearing fruit in the heart, resting our fear and hope on Jesus in the spirit. *And whosoever shall eat of these shall live forever;* He meaneth this; whosoever, saith He, shall hear these things spoken and shall believe, shall live forever.

Barnabas 12:1

In like manner again He defineth concerning the cross in another prophet, who saith; *And when shall these things be accomplished? saith the Lord. Whenever a tree shall be bended and stand upright, and whensoever blood shall drop from a tree.* Again thou art taught concerning the cross, and Him that was to be crucified.

Barnabas 12:2

And He saith again in Moses, when war was waged against Israel by men of another nation, and that He might remind them when the war was waged against them that for their sins they were delivered unto death; the Spirit saith to the heart of Moses, that he should make a type of the cross and of Him that was to suffer, that unless, saith He, they shall set their hope on Him, war shall be waged against them for ever. Moses therefore pileth arms one upon another in the midst of the encounter, and standing on higher ground than any he stretched out his hands, and so Israel was again victorious. Then, whenever he lowered them, they were slain with the sword.

Barnabas 12:3

Wherefore was this? That they might learn that they cannot be saved, unless they should set their hope on Him.

Barnabas 12:4

And again in another prophet He saith; *The whole day long have I stretched out My hands to a disobedient people that did gainsay My righteous way.*

Barnabas 12:5

Again Moses maketh a type of Jesus, how that He must suffer, and that He Himself whom they shall think to have destroyed shall make alive in an emblem when Israel was falling. For the Lord caused all manner

of serpents to bite them, and they died (forasmuch as the transgression was wrought in Eve through the serpent), that He might convince them that by reason of their transgression they should be delivered over to the affliction of death.

Barnabas 12:6

Yea and further though Moses gave the commandment; *Ye shall not have a molten or a carved image for your God*, yet he himself made one that he might show them a type of Jesus. So Moses maketh a brazen serpent, and setteth it up conspicuously, and summoneth the people by proclamation.

Barnabas 12:7

When therefore they were assembled together they entreated Moses that he should offer up intercession for them that they might be healed. And Moses said unto them; Whensoever, said he, one of you shall be bitten, let him come to the serpent which is placed on the tree, and let him believe and hope that the serpent being himself dead can make alive; and forthwith he shall be saved. And so they did. Here again thou hast in these things also the glory of Jesus, how that in Him and unto Him are all things.

Barnabas 12:8

What again saith Moses unto Jesus (Joshua) the son of Nun, when he giveth him this name, as being a prophet, that all the people might give ear to him alone, because the Father revealeth all things concerning His Son Jesus?

Barnabas 12:9

Moses therefore saith to Jesus the son of Nun, giving him this name, when he sent him as a spy on the land; *Take a book in thy hands, and write what the Lord saith, how the Son of God shall cut up by the roots all the house of Amalek in the last days.*

Barnabas 12:10

Behold again it is Jesus, not a son of man, but the Son of God, and He was revealed in the flesh in a figure. Since then men will say that Christ is the son of David, David himself prophesieth being afraid and understanding the error of sinners; *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on My right hand until I set thine enemies for a footstool under Thy feet.*

Barnabas 12:11

And again thus sayith Isaiah; *The Lord said unto my Christ the Lord, of whose right hand I laid hold, that the nations should give ear before Him, and I will break down the strength of kings.* See how David calleth Him Lord, and calleth Him not Son.

Barnabas 13:1

Now let us see whether this people or the first people hath the inheritance, and whether the covenant had reference to us or to them.

Barnabas 13:2

Hear then what the scripture saith concerning the people; *And Isaac prayed concerning Rebecca his wife, for she was barren. And she conceived. Then Rebecca went out to enquire of the Lord. And the Lord said unto her; Two nations are in thy womb, and two peoples in thy belly, and one people shall vanquish another people, and the greater shall serve the less.*

Barnabas 13:3

Ye ought to understand who Isaac is, and who Rebecca is, and in whose case He hath shown that the one people is greater than the other.

Barnabas 13:4

And in another prophecy Jacob speaketh more plainly to Joseph his son, saying; *Behold, the Lord hath not bereft me of thy face; bring me thy sons, that I may bless them.*

Barnabas 13:5

And he brought Ephraim and Manasseh, desiring that Manasseh should be blessed, because he was the elder; for Joseph led him by the right hand of his father Jacob. But Jacob saw in the spirit a type of the people that should come afterwards. And what saith He? *And Jacob crossed his hands, and placed his right hand on the head of Ephraim, the second and younger, and blessed him. And Joseph said unto Jacob, Transfer thy right hand to the head of Manasseh, for he is my first born son. And Jacob said to Joseph, I know it, my son, I know it; but the greater shall serve the less. Yet this one also shall be blessed.*

Barnabas 13:6

Mark in whose cases He ordained that this people should be first and heir of the covenant.

Barnabas 13:7

If then besides this He also recorded it through Abraham, we attain the completion of our knowledge. What then saith he to Abraham when he alone believed, and was ascribed for righteousness? *Behold I have made thee, Abraham, a father of nations that believe in God in uncircumcision.*

Barnabas 14:1

Yea verily, but as regards the covenant which He swear to the fathers to give it to the people let us see whether He hath actually

given it. He hath given it, but they themselves were not found worthy to receive it by reason of their sins.

Barnabas 14:2

For the prophet saith; *And Moses was fasting in Mount Sinai forty days and forty nights, that he might receive the covenant of the Lord to give to the people. And [Moses] received from the Lord the two tables which were written by the finger of the hand of the Lord in the spirit.* And Moses took them, and brought them down to give them to the people.

Barnabas 14:3

And the Lord said unto Moses; *Moses, Moses, come down quickly; for thy people, whom thou leddest forth from the land of Egypt, hath done wickedly. And Moses perceived that they had made for themselves again molten images, and he cast them out of his hands and the tables of the covenant of the Lord were broken in pieces.*

Barnabas 14:4

Moses received them, but they themselves were not found worthy. But how did we receive them? Mark this. Moses received them being a servant, but the Lord himself gave them to us to be the people of His inheritance, having endured patiently for our sakes.

Barnabas 14:5

But He was made manifest, in order that at the same time they might be perfected in their sins, and we might receive the covenant through Him who inherited it, even the Lord Jesus, who was prepared beforehand hereunto, that appearing in person He might redeem out of darkness our hearts which had already been paid over unto death and delivered up to the iniquity of error, and thus establish the covenant in us through the word.

Barnabas 14:6

For it is written how the Father chargeth Him to deliver us from darkness, and to prepare a holy people for Himself.

Barnabas 14:7

Therefore saith the prophet; *I the Lord thy God called thee in righteousness, and I will lay hold of thy hand and will strengthen thee, and I have given thee to be a covenant of the race, a light to the Gentiles, to open the eyes of the blind, and to bring forth them that are bound from their fetters, and them that sit in darkness from their prison house.* We perceive then whence we were ransomed.

Barnabas 14:8

Again the prophet saith; *Behold I have set Thee to be a light unto the Gentiles, that Thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth; thus saith the Lord that ransomed thee, even God.*

Barnabas 14:9

Again the prophet saith; *The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, wherefore He anointed Me to preach good tidings to the humble; He hath sent Me to heal them that are broken-hearted, to preach release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of recompense, to comfort all that mourn.*

Barnabas 15:1

Moreover concerning the Sabbath likewise it is written in the Ten Words, in which He spake to Moses face to face on Mount Sinai; *And ye shall hallow the Sabbath of the Lord with pure hands and with a pure heart.*

Barnabas 15:2

And in another place He saith; *If my sons observe the Sabbath then I will bestow My mercy upon them.*

Barnabas 15:3

Of the Sabbath He speaketh in the beginning of the creation; *And God made the works of His hands in six days, and He ended on the seventh day, and rested on it, and He hallowed it.*

Barnabas 15:4

Give heed, children, what this meaneth; *He ended in six days.* He meaneth this, that in six thousand years the Lord shall bring all things to an end; for the day with Him signifyeth a thousand years; and this He himself beareth me witness, saying; *Behold, the day of the Lord shall be as a thousand years.* Therefore, children, in six days, that is in six thousand years, everything shall come to an end.

Barnabas 15:5

And He rested on the seventh day. this He meaneth; when His Son shall come, and shall abolish the time of the Lawless One, and shall judge the ungodly, and shall change the sun and the moon and the stars, then shall he truly rest on the seventh day.

Barnabas 15:6

Yea and furthermore He saith; *Thou shalt hallow it with pure hands and with a pure heart.* If therefore a man is able now to hallow the day which God hallowed, though he be pure in heart, we have gone utterly astray.

Barnabas 15:7

But if after all then and not till then shall we truly rest and hallow it, when we shall ourselves be able to do so after being justified and receiving the promise, when iniquity is no more and all things have been made new by the Lord, we shall be able to hallow it then, because we ourselves shall have been hallowed first.

Barnabas 15:8

Finally He saith to them; *Your new moons and your Sabbaths I cannot away with.* Ye see what is His meaning ; it is not your present Sabbaths that are acceptable [unto Me], but the Sabbath which I have made, in the which, when I have set all things at rest, I will make the beginning of the eighth day which is the beginning of another world.

Barnabas 15:9

Wherefore also we keep the eighth day for rejoicing, in the which also Jesus rose from the dead, and having been manifested ascended into the heavens.

Barnabas 16:1

Moreover I will tell you likewise concerning the temple, how these wretched men being led astray set their hope on the building, and not on their God that made them, as being a house of God.

Barnabas 16:2

For like the Gentiles almost they consecrated Him in the temple. But what saith the Lord abolishing the temple? Learn ye. *Who hath measured the heaven with a span, or hath measured the earth with his hand? Have not I, saith the Lord? The heaven is My throne and the earth the footstool of My feet. What manner of house will ye build for Me? Or what shall be my resting place?* Ye perceive that their hope is vain.

Barnabas 16:3

Furthermore He saith again; *Behold they that pulled down this temple themselves shall build it.*

Barnabas 16:4

So it cometh to pass; for because they went to war it was pulled down by their enemies. Now also the very servants of their enemies shall build it up.

Barnabas 16:5

Again, it was revealed how the city and the temple and the people of Israel should be betrayed. For the scripture saith; *And it shall be in the last days, that the Lord shall deliver up the sheep of the*

pasture and the fold and the tower thereof to destruction. And it came to pass as the Lord spake.

Barnabas 16:6

But let us enquire whether there be any temple of God. There is; in the place where he himself undertakes to make and finish it. For it is written *And it shall come to pass, when the week is being accomplished, the temple of God shall be built gloriously in the name of the Lord.*

Barnabas 16:7

I find then that there is a temple, How then shall it be built in the name of the Lord? Understand ye. Before we believed on God, the abode of our heart was corrupt and weak, a temple truly built by hands; for it was full of idolatry and was a house of demons, because we did whatsoever was contrary to God.

Barnabas 16:8

But it shall be built in the name of the Lord. Give heed then that the temple of the Lord may be built gloriously.

Barnabas 16:9

How? Understand ye. By receiving the remission of our sins and hoping on the Name we became new, created afresh from the beginning. Wherefore God dwelleth truly in our habitation within us. How? The word of his faith, the calling of his promise, the wisdom of the ordinances, the commandments of the teaching, He Himself prophesying in us, He Himself dwelling in us, opening for us who had been in bondage unto death the door of the temple, which is the mouth, and giving us repentance leadeth us to the incorruptible temple.

Barnabas 16:10

For he that desireth to be saved looketh not to the man, but to Him that dwelleth and speaketh in him, being amazed at this that he has never at any time heard these words from the mouth of the speaker, nor himself ever desired to hear them. This is the spiritual temple built up to the Lord.

Barnabas 17:1

So far as it was possible with all simplicity to declare it unto you, my soul hopeth that I have not omitted anything [of the matters pertaining unto salvation and so failed in my desire].

Barnabas 17:2

For if I should write to you concerning things immediate or future, ye would not understand them, because they are put in parables. So much then for this.

Barnabas 18:1

But let us pass on to another lesson and teaching. There are two ways of teaching and of power, the one of light and the other of darkness; and there is a great difference between the two ways. For on the one are stationed the light giving angels of God, on the other the angels of Satan.

Barnabas 18:2

And the one is the Lord from all eternity and unto all eternity, whereas the other is Lord of the season of iniquity that now is.

Barnabas 19:1

This then is the way of light, if anyone desiring to travel on the way to his appointed place would be zealous in his works. The knowledge then which is given to us whereby we may walk therein is as follows.

Barnabas 19:2

Thou shalt love Him that made thee, thou shalt fear Him that created thee, thou shalt glorify Him that redeemed thee from death; thou shalt be simple in heart and rich in spirit; thou shalt not cleave to those who walk the way of death; thou shalt hate everything that is not pleasing to God; thou shalt hate all hypocrisy; thou shalt never forsake the commandments of the Lord.

Barnabas 19:3

Thou shalt not exalt thyself, but shalt be lowly minded in all things. Thou shalt not assume glory to thyself. Thou shalt not entertain a wicked design against thy neighbor; thou shalt not admit boldness into thy soul.

Barnabas 19:4

Thou shalt not commit fornication, *thou shalt not commit adultery*, thou shalt not corrupt boys. The word of God shall not come forth from thee where any are unclean. Thou shalt not make a difference in a person to reprove him for a transgression. Thou shalt be meek, thou shalt be *quiet*, thou shalt be *fearing the words* which thou hast heard. Thou shalt not bear a grudge against thy brother.

Barnabas 19:5

Thou shalt not doubt whether a thing shall be or not be. *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord in vain*. Thou shalt love thy neighbor more than thine own soul. Thou shalt not murder a child by abortion, nor again shalt thou kill it when it is born. Thou shalt not withhold thy hand from thy son or daughter, but from their youth thou shalt teach them the fear of God.

Barnabas 19:6

Thou shalt not be found coveting thy neighbors goods; thou shalt not be found greedy of gain. Neither shalt thou cleave with thy soul to the lofty, but shalt walk with the humble and righteous. The accidents that befall thee thou shalt receive as good, knowing that nothing is done without God. Thou shalt not be double minded nor double tongued.

Barnabas 19:7

Thou shalt be subject unto thy masters as to a type of God in shame and fear. Thou shalt not command in bitterness thy bondservant or thine handmaid who set their hope on the same God, lest haply, they should cease to fear the God who is over both of you; for He came not to call with respect of persons, but to call those whom the Spirit hath prepared.

Barnabas 19:8

Thou shalt make thy neighbor partake in all things, and shalt not say *that anything is thine own*. For if ye are fellow partakers in that which is imperishable, how much rather shall ye be in the things which are perishable. Thou shalt not be hasty with thine own tongue, for the mouth is the snare of death. So far as thou art able, thou shalt be pure for thy soul's sake.

Barnabas 19:9

Be not thou found holding out thy hands to receive, and drawing them in to give. Thou shalt love as the apple of thine eye every one *that speaketh unto thee the word of the Lord*.

Barnabas 19:10

Thou shalt remember the day of judgment night and day, and thou shalt seek out day by day the persons of the saints, either laboring by word and going to exhort them and meditating how thou mayest save souls by thy word, or thou shalt work with thy hands for a ransom for thy sins.

Barnabas 19:11

Thou shalt not hesitate to give, neither shalt thou murmur when giving, but thou shalt know who is the good paymaster of thy reward. Thou shalt keep those things which thou hast received, neither adding to them nor taking away from them. Thou shalt utterly hate the Evil One. Thou shalt judge righteously.

Barnabas 19:12

Thou shalt not make a schism, but thou shalt pacify them that contend by bringing them together. Thou shalt confess thy sins. Thou shalt

not betake thyself to prayer with an evil conscience. This is the way of light.

Barnabas 20:1

But the way of the Black One is crooked and full of a curse. For it is a way of eternal death with punishment wherein are the things that destroy men's souls--idolatry, boldness, exhalation of power, hypocrisy, doubleness of heart, adultery, murder, plundering, pride, transgression, treachery, malice, stubbornness, witchcraft, magic, covetousness, absence of the fear of God;

Barnabas 20:2

persecutors of good men, hating the truth, loving lies, not perceiving the reward of righteousness, not *cleaving to the good* nor to the righteous judgment, paying no heed to the widow and the orphan, wakeful not for the fear of God but for that which is evil; men from whom gentleness and forbearance stand aloof and far off; loving vain things, pursuing a recompense, not pitying the poor man, not toiling for him that is oppressed with toil, ready to slander, not recognizing Him that made them murderers of children, corrupters of the creatures of God, turning away from him that is in want, oppressing him that is afflicted, advocates of the wealthy, unjust judges of the poor, sinful in all things.

Barnabas 21:1

It is good therefore to learn the ordinances of the Lord, as many as have been written above, and to walk in them. For he that doeth these things shall be glorified in the kingdom of God; whereas he that chooseth their opposites shall perish together with his works. For this cause is the resurrection, for this the recompense.

Barnabas 21:2

I entreat those of you who are in a higher station, if ye will receive any counsel of good advice from me, keep amongst you those to whom ye may do good. Fail not.

Barnabas 21:3

The day is at hand, in which everything shall be destroyed together with the Evil One. *The Lord is at hand and his reward.*

Barnabas 21:4

Again and again I entreat you; be good lawgivers one to another; continue faithful councilors to yourselves; take away from you all hypocrisy.

Barnabas 21:5

And may God, who is Lord of the whole world, give you wisdom, judgment, learning, knowledge of His ordinances, patience.

Barnabas 21:6

And be ye taught of God, seeking diligently what the Lord requireth of you, and act that ye may be found in the day of judgment.

Barnabas 21:7

But if you have any remembrance of good, call me to mind when ye practice these things these things, that both my desire and my watchfulness may lead to some good result. I entreat you asking it as a favor.

Barnabas 21:8

So long as the good vessel (of the body) is with you, be lacking in none of these things, but search them out constantly, and fulfill every commandment; for they deserve it.

Barnabas 21:9

For this reason I was the more eager to write to you so far as I was able, that I might give you joy. Fare ye well, children of love and peace. The Lord of glory and of every grace be with your spirit.

The Prayer of Ambrose

O loving Lord Jesus Christ,

I, a sinner, not presuming on my own merits,

but trusting in Your mercy and goodness,

with fear and awe approach the table of Your most sacred banquet.

For I have stained both my heart and body with many sins,

and have not kept a strict guard over my mind and tongue.

Wherefore, O gracious God, O awful majesty, I, a wretched creature,

entangled in difficulties, have recourse to You, the fount of mercy;

to You I fly for healing and take refuge under Your protection,

and I ardently desire to have Him as my Savior whom I am unable to face as my Judge.

To You, Lord, I show my wounds, to You I lay bare my shame.

I know that my sins are many and great and on their account I am filled with fear.

But I trust in Your mercy, which is endless.

Look down on me, therefore, with the eyes of mercy, Lord Jesus Christ, eternal King,
God and Man, crucified for men. Hear me, for my hope is in You;
have mercy on me, for I am full of sin and wretchedness,
You who never cease to let flow the fountain of mercy.
Hail Victim of Salvation, offered for me and for all mankind on the tree of the cross.
Hail, noble and precious Blood, flowing from the wounds of my crucified Lord Jesus Christ
washing away the sins of the whole world.
Remember, Lord, Your creature, whom You have redeemed with Your Blood.
I am grieved because I have sinned. I desire to make amends for what I have done.
Take away from me, therefore, O most merciful Father, all my iniquities and my sins,
that, being purified both in soul and body, I may worthily partake of the Holy of Holies;
and grant that this holy oblation of Your Body and Blood, of which though unworthy I purpose to
partake,
may be to me the remission of my sins, the perfect cleansing of all my offenses,
the means of driving away all evil thoughts and of renewing all holy desires,
the accomplishment of works pleasing to You,
as well as the strongest defense for soul and body against the snares of my enemies.
Amen.

The Treatise on the Cross by Gregory of Nyssa (please see the attached ebook)

It is the property of the Godhead to pervade all things, and to extend itself through the length and
breadth of the substance of existence in every part.

For nothing would continue to be if it remained not within the existent.

And that which is this existent properly and primarily is the Divine Being, Whose existence in the
world the continuance of all things that exist forces us to believe in.

This is the very thing we learn from the figure of the Cross.

The Cross is divided into four parts, so that there are the projections, four in number, from the
central point where the whole converges upon itself.

Because He Who at the hour of His pre-arranged death was stretched upon it is He Who binds together all things into Himself, and by Himself brings to one harmonious agreement the diverse natures of actual existences.

For in these existences there is the idea either of something above, or of something below, or else the thought passes to the confines sideways.

If, therefore, you take into your consideration the system of things above the heavens or of things below the earth, or of things at the boundaries of the universe on either side, everywhere the presence of Deity anticipates your thought as the sole observable power that in every part of existing things holds in a state of being all those things.

All creation looks to Him, and is about and around Him, and through Him is coherent with itself, things above being through Him conjoined to things below and things lateral to themselves.

It was right that not by hearing only we should be conducted to the full understanding of the Deity, but that sight also should be our teacher in these sublime subjects for thought.

And it is from sight that the mighty Paul starts when he initiates the people of Ephesus in the mysteries, and imbues them through his instructions with the power of knowing what is that "depth and height and breadth and length" (Eph. 3:18).

In fact he designates each projection of the Cross by its proper appellation.

The upper part he calls height, the lower depth, and the side extensions breadth and length.

And in another passage he makes his thought still clearer to the Philippians, to whom he says, "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth" (Phil. 2:10).

In that passage he includes in one appellation the centre and projecting arms, calling "things in earth" all that is in the middle between things in heaven and things under the earth.

Such is the lesson we learn in regard to the mystery of the Cross.

The Ethiopian Book of Thanksgiving

The **Ethiopian Book of Thanksgiving** represents a collection of prayers, hymns, and liturgical practices within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, focusing on gratitude to God. While not a single codified text, this concept aligns with the Church's rich tradition of giving thanks in all aspects of life, from daily prayers to grand liturgical celebrations. Gratitude is central to Ethiopian Christianity, as it reflects the faithful's recognition of God's providence, mercy, and blessings.

Theological Foundation

Gratitude is deeply embedded in the theology of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Inspired by biblical passages such as **Psaln 136:1** ("Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever") and **1 Thessalonians 5:18** ("Give thanks in all circumstances"), thanksgiving is considered

both a duty and a joy. It acknowledges God as the source of all goodness and sustenance and reinforces the believer's relationship with the Creator.

Content and Structure

The Ethiopian Book of Thanksgiving encompasses several elements that are integral to the Church's worship and daily devotion:

1. Morning and Evening Prayers:

- These prayers, often recited individually or communally, include thanksgiving for the gift of life, health, and daily provision.
- The Psalms play a central role, especially **Psaln G2** ("It is good to give thanks to the Lord") and **Psaln 103** ("Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits").

2. Eucharistic Thanksgiving:

- During the Divine Liturgy (*Qidase*), the Eucharist is central to the Church's expression of gratitude. The Eucharistic prayer itself is an act of thanksgiving for Christ's sacrifice and the grace it imparts to the faithful.

3. Hynns of Gratitude:

- The *Deggwa* (Ge'ez hymnal) includes numerous hymns that celebrate God's creation, redemption, and ongoing presence in the world. These hymns are often sung during feast days and special services.

4. Seasonal and Feast-Specific Prayers:

- Special thanksgiving prayers and rituals are performed during major feasts, such as Christmas (*Genna*), Easter (*Fasika*), and Epiphany (*Timket*), highlighting God's blessings in salvation history.

5. Personal and Family Gratitude:

- Families often gather for prayers of thanks during milestones like the birth of a child, a bountiful harvest, or the recovery from illness. These prayers are both formal and spontaneous.

Cultural Expressions

Gratitude in Ethiopian tradition extends beyond formal prayers:

- **Almsgiving and Charity:** Acts of generosity are performed as expressions of thanks to God.
- **Festivals and Feasts:** Celebrations often include communal meals and traditional dances, thanking God for blessings and prosperity.

Spiritual and Connunal Inpact

The Ethiopian Book of Thanksgiving underscores the importance of gratitude as a spiritual practice that nurtures humility and joy. It strengthens the communal bonds of the faithful, as thanksgiving is often celebrated collectively in worship and fellowship. It also fosters a mindset of reliance on and appreciation for God's enduring grace.

Conclusion

The Ethiopian Book of Thanksgiving is a vibrant testament to the Church's emphasis on gratitude as a way of life. Whether through liturgical prayers, hymns, or daily acts of kindness, it reflects the deep faith and devotion of the Ethiopian Orthodox tradition, reminding believers to continually acknowledge God's blessings in all circumstances.

The Song of the Righteous

The Song of the Righteous is a poetic and spiritual expression central to the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, celebrating the lives, virtues, and triumphs of those who have walked in faith and righteousness. While there may not be a single text explicitly called "The Song of the Righteous," this concept resonates with the Church's tradition of hymns, prayers, and liturgical chants dedicated to the saints, martyrs, and all who embody the ideals of Christian virtue.

Theological Context

In the Ethiopian Orthodox tradition, righteousness is seen as living in harmony with God's will, guided by faith, humility, and obedience to His commandments. The "Song of the Righteous" embodies the joy and victory of those who have persevered in faith, echoing biblical themes such as:

- **Psaln 1:6:** "For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous."
- **Revelation 15:3-4:** The song of the redeemed praising God's justice and holiness.

These songs and hymns often celebrate God's guidance, the triumph of good over evil, and the hope of eternal life.

Thenes in the Song of the Righteous

1. **Praise of God's Faithfulness:** Acknowledging God as the sustainer and protector of the righteous.

2. **Victory Over Sin:** Highlighting the struggles and eventual triumph of the righteous in their spiritual journey.
 3. **Communion with the Divine:** Emphasizing the intimate relationship between the righteous and God, often portrayed as a harmonious union.
 4. **Eternal Reward:** Rejoicing in the promise of eternal life for those who live righteously.
-

Liturgical and Cultural Expressions

The "Song of the Righteous" is reflected in various aspects of Ethiopian Orthodox worship and culture:

1. Hymns and Chants:

- The *Deggwa* (Ge'ez hymnal) contains hymns celebrating the virtues and victories of biblical figures, saints, and martyrs.
- Specific hymns are sung during feast days, such as those dedicated to St. George, St. Mary, or the Archangel Michael, praising their righteousness and intercession.

2. Processional Songs:

- During major festivals like **Tinket** (Epiphany) or **Fasika** (Easter), processions include songs that honor the lives of the righteous and encourage the faithful to emulate their example.

3. Liturgical Texts:

- Prayers and readings during the *Qidase* (Divine Liturgy) highlight the deeds of the righteous, especially in the *Synaxarium* (hagiographical readings for each day).
-

Symbolism and Imagery

The "Song of the Righteous" often incorporates vivid imagery:

- **Light:** Symbolizing divine guidance and the purity of the righteous.
 - **Shepherd and Sheep:** Representing God's care for His faithful.
 - **Victory Crowns:** A metaphor for the eternal reward of the righteous, drawn from **2 Timothy 4:8**.
-

Spiritual and Communal Role

The "Song of the Righteous" inspires believers to live according to God's commandments and serves as a reminder of the ultimate reward for faithfulness. It unites the community in worship, as the congregation collectively honors those who have walked the path of righteousness.

Conclusion

The Song of the Righteous in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church is more than a hymn or chant—it is a profound spiritual celebration of faith, virtue, and divine grace. It encourages believers to pursue righteousness, offering hope and assurance of God's unwavering presence and the promise of eternal life. This "song" resonates as both a personal prayer and a communal anthem of praise and gratitude to God.

The Ethiopian Hymn of Redemption

The **Ethiopian Hymn of Redemption** is a deeply spiritual and poetic expression within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, celebrating the redemptive work of God through Jesus Christ. While not a singular, codified hymn, this concept reflects a collection of prayers, hymns, and liturgical compositions that focus on salvation, divine mercy, and the restoration of humanity to communion with God. These hymns are central to the Church's theology, liturgical practices, and spiritual life.

Theological Foundation

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church places redemption at the heart of its faith, rooted in Christ's incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection. The hymn emphasizes the themes of liberation from sin, victory over death, and the promise of eternal life. Drawing from key biblical passages such as:

- **John 3:16:** "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son."
- **Colossians 1:13-14:** "For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves, in whom we have redemption."

The hymn serves as a reminder of God's boundless love and mercy.

Themes in the Hymn of Redemption

1. **Christ as the Redeemer:**
 - Jesus is praised as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, fulfilling the prophecies of the Old Testament.
2. **Victory Over Sin and Death:**
 - The hymn celebrates Christ's triumph over the grave, offering hope and freedom to humanity.
3. **Universal Salvation:**

- Emphasizing that redemption is available to all who seek God's mercy and walk in His ways.

4. Thanksgiving and Praise:

- Gratitude for God's plan of salvation is a central theme, inspiring believers to live in faith and humility.

Liturgical Expressions

The Hymn of Redemption is expressed through various forms in Ethiopian worship:

1. The Divine Liturgy (*Qidase*):

- Central to the liturgy, prayers of redemption highlight Christ's sacrifice and its transformative power for the faithful.

2. Holy Week Hymns:

- During the Passion Week, special hymns recount the suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ, vividly portraying His redemptive mission.

3. The Psalms and Ge'ez Hymnal (*Deggwa*):

- Psalms such as **Psaln 130:7** ("With the Lord is unfailing love and with Him is full redemption") are sung, alongside Ge'ez hymns that praise God's mercy.

4. Seasonal Celebrations:

- Feasts like Easter (*Fasika*) are marked by elaborate hymns of redemption, celebrating the resurrection and its implications for humanity.

Symbolism and Imagery

The Hymn of Redemption is rich with metaphors:

- **Light:** Symbolizing the illumination of Christ's truth and the dispelling of spiritual darkness.
- **Blood of Christ:** A frequent motif, representing the price paid for humanity's redemption.
- **Freedom:** Redemption is often depicted as liberation from the bondage of sin, akin to the Exodus story.

Cultural and Spiritual Significance

The Ethiopian Hymn of Redemption transcends its liturgical role, permeating Ethiopian Christian culture. It inspires art, iconography, and personal devotion, reminding believers of the

transformative power of God's love. The hymn fosters hope and communal unity, as the faithful gather to celebrate their shared salvation.

Conclusion

The Ethiopian Hymn of Redemption is a profound testament to the Church's understanding of God's grace and the ultimate hope of salvation. Through its rich theology, vibrant liturgical expression, and deep cultural resonance, it continues to inspire generations of believers to live in the light of Christ's redeeming love.

The Prayer to Archangel Raphael

Glorious Archangel Saint Raphael,
great prince of the heavenly court,
you are illustrious for your gifts of wisdom and grace.

You are a guide of those who journey by land or sea or air,
consoler of the afflicted, and refuge of sinners.

I beg you, assist me in all my needs
and in all the sufferings of this life,
as once you helped the young Tobias on his travels.

Because you are the medicine of God,
I humbly pray you to heal the many infirmities of my soul
and the ills that afflict my body.
I especially ask of you the favor

(mention your request here)

and the great grace of purity
to prepare me to be the temple of the Holy Spirit.

St. Raphael, of the glorious seven
who stand before the throne of Him who lives and reigns,
Angel of health, the Lord has filled your hand
with balm from heaven to soothe or cure our pains.
Heal or cure the victim of disease
and guide our steps when doubtful of our ways.

Amen.

The Ethiopian Song of the Resurrection

Clergy: *Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life! (Thrice)*

Choir: *Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and on those in the tombs bestowing life! (Thrice)*

Stichos 1: *Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered, and let them that hate Him flee from before His face.*

Choir: *Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life.*

Stichos 2: *As smoke vanisheth, so let them vanish, as wax melteth before the fire.*

Choir: *Repeat Troparion*

Stichos 3: *So let the sinners perish at the presence of God, and let the righteous be glad.*

Choir: *Repeat Troparion*

Stichos 4: *This is the day which the Lord hath made; let us rejoice and be glad therein.*

Choir: *Repeat Troparion*

Priest: *Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.*

Choir: *Repeat Troparion*

Priest: *Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.*

Choir: *Repeat Troparion*

Priest: *Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death.*

Choir: *And upon those in the tombs bestowing life.*

The Testament of Issachar

Chapter 1

1:1 "A copy of the words of Issachar. He called his sons to him and said, Listen, children, to Issachar, your father; give ear to the words of one who is beloved of the Lord."

1:2 "I was the fifth son to be born to Jacob as a payment for mandrakes,"

1:3 "For when Reuben, my brother, brought in mandrakes from the field, Rachel met him on the way and took them."

1:4 "Reuben wept, and at the sound of his voice his mother, Leah, came out."

1:5 "These were fragrant fruit produced in the land of Horan in the high country below a waterfall."

1:6 "Rachel said, I will not give you these because they shall be mine in place of children."

1:7 "There were two of the fruits. Leah said, Is it not enough that you took the husband of my

virginity? Must you take these as well?"

1:8 "And Rachel said, In exchange for your son's mandrakes let Jacob be yours tonight."

1:9 "Leah replied to her, Do not boast, and do not hold too high opinion of yourself, for Jacob is mine and I am the wife of his youth."

1:10 "Rachel said, What do you mean? I was prepared for marriage to him first and for my sake he served our father fourteen years."

1:11 "What can I do with you? Treachery and human trickery are increasing, and treachery is spreading over the earth. If that were not so, you would not see Jacob's face."

1:12 "You are not his wife, but by craftiness you were taken to him in my place."

1:13 "My father deceived me and replaced me that night, not allowing Jacob to see me. Because if I had been there this would not have happened."

1:14 "Then Rachel said, In exchange for the mandrakes I will hire out a woman to Jacob for one night. And Jacob had intercourse with Leah; she conceived and bore me."

1:15 "And on account of the "hire," I was called Issachar."

Chapter 2

2:1 "Then an angel of the Lord appeared to Jacob and said, Rachel shall bear two children, because she despised intercourse with her husband, choosing rather continence."

2:2 "If Leah, my mother, had not given up the two fruits in exchange for sexual intercourse, she would have born eight sons. But accordingly, she bore six and Rachel bore two, because through the use of mandrakes the Lord had regard for her."

2:3 "For he perceived that she wanted to lie with Jacob for the sake of children and not merely for sexual gratification."

2:4 "In addition, she gave up Jacob on the following day so that she might obtain the other mandrake. Thus it was through the mandrakes that the Lord listened to Rachel."

2:5 "Even though she longed for them passionately, she did not eat them, but presented them in the house of the Lord, offering them up to the priest of the Most High who was there at that time."

Chapter 3

3:1 "Accordingly, when I grew up, my children, I lived my life in rectitude of heart; I became a farmer for the benefit of my father and my brothers, and I brought the produce from the fields at their appropriate times."

3:2 "And my father blessed me, since he saw that I was living in integrity."

3:3 "I was no meddler in my dealings, nor was I evil or slanderous to my neighbor."

3:4 "I spoke against no one, nor did I disparage the life of any human."

3:5 "I lived my life with singleness of vision. Accordingly, when I was thirty-five I took myself a wife because hard work consumed my energy, and pleasure with a woman never came to my mind; rather sleep overtook me because of my labor."

3:6 "And my father was continually rejoicing in my integrity. Whatever it was that I labored over at every harvest and whenever there was a firstborn, I first made an offering to the Lord through the priest, then for my father, and then for myself."

3:7 "And the Lord doubles the good things in my hands. Jacob knew that God collaborated with my integrity."

3:8 "In the integrity of my heart, I supplied everything from the good things of the earth to all the poor and the oppressed."

Chapter 4

4:1 "Now, listen to me, children, and live in integrity of heart, for in it I have observed everything that is well-pleasing to the Lord."

4:2 "The genuine man does not desire gold, he does not defraud his neighbor, he does not long for fancy foods, nor does he want fine clothes."

4:3 "He does not make plans to live a long life, but awaits only the will of God."

4:4 "And the spirits of error have no power over him, since he does not include feminine beauty in the scope of his vision, lest by allowing distraction he might corrupt his mind."

4:5 "Envy will not penetrate his thinking; no malice dissipates his soul; no avarice intrudes upon his integrity."

4:6 "For he lives by the integrity of his soul, and perceives all things by the rectitude of his heart, making no place for an outlook made evil by this world's error, in order that he might envision no turning aside from any of the Lord's commands."

Chapter 5

5:1 "Keep the Law of God, my children; achieve integrity; live without malice, not tinkering with God's commands or your neighbor's affairs."

5:2 "Love the Lord and your neighbor, be compassionate toward poverty and sickness."

5:3 "Bend your back in farming, perform the tasks of the soil in every kind of agriculture, offering gifts gratefully to the Lord."

5:4 "Thus the Lord will bless you with the first fruits, as he has blessed all the saints/elect from Abel until the present."

5:5 "For to you is given no other portion than the fertility of the earth, from which comes produce through toil."

5:6 "Our father, Jacob, blessed me by the blessing of the earth and of the first fruits."

5:7 "And Levi and Judah were glorified by the Lord among the sons of Jacob. The Lord made choice among them: To one he gave the priesthood and to the other, the kingship."

5:8 "Subject yourselves to them, and live in integrity as did your father, because to Gad has been assigned the rout of the attackers who are coming against Israel."

Chapter 6

6:1 "Understand, my children, that in the last times your sons will abandon sincerity and align themselves with insatiable desire. Forsaking guilelessness, they will ally themselves with villainy. Abandoning the commands of the Lord, they ally themselves with Beliar/Satan."

6:2 "Giving up agriculture, they pursue their own evil schemes, they will be scattered among the nations and enslaved by their enemies."

6:3 "Tell these things to your children, therefore, so that even though they might sin, they may speedily return to the Lord,"

6:4 "Because he is merciful: He will set them free and take them back to their land."

Chapter 7

7:1 "I am a hundred and twenty-two years old, and I am not aware of having committed a sin unto death."

7:2 "I have not had intercourse with any woman other than my wife, nor was I promiscuous by lustful look."

7:3 "I did not drink wine to the point of losing self-control. I was not passionately eager for any desirable possession of my neighbor."

7:4 "There was no deceit in my heart; no lie passed through my lips."

7:5 "I joined in lamentation with every oppressed human being, and shared my bread with the poor. I did not eat alone; I did not transgress boundaries;"

7:6 "I acted in piety and truth all my days. The Lord I loved with all my strength; likewise, I loved every human being as I love my children."

7:7 "You do these as well, my children, and every spirit of Beliar/Satan will flee from you, and no act of human evil will have power over you. Every wild creature you shall subdue, so long as you have the God of heaven with you, and walk with all mankind in sincerity of heart."

7:8 "And he instructed them that they should take him up to Hebron and bury him there in the cave with his fathers."

7:9 "And he stretched his legs and died at a good old age – the fifth son, with all his members sound and still strong; he slept the eternal sleep."

The Vision of Jacob (Expanded Fragments)

And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.—Genesis 28:1c-17.

At two periods of his life Jacob passed through crises of spiritual experience, both of which received symbolical expression, here at Bethel, and later at Peniel. Though, if we take the indications of time literally, it was in his manhood rather than in his youth that he left his father's house from fear of his brother Esau and went into the long exile at Padan-aram, we can scarcely, if we set the narratives side by side, avoid the conclusion that the one is intended to represent the conceptions which may come to youth, immaturity, inexperience, while the other reveals the tried and battered warrior in life's battle, humbled, disappointed, somewhat embittered, and altogether perplexed.

The vision at Bethel is comparatively simple. Jacob had hitherto lived, in the shelter of his father's home, a peaceful and industrious life, with little trouble, danger, or anxiety. But now, not without his own grievous fault, the peace was broken up, and he had become a wanderer. Yet though the wrench may have been great, and he could not have been without apprehension as he set forth on his lonely journey, he could have little actual knowledge of what might lie before him. The optimism of youth was not dead; life had hitherto presented no difficult or insuperable problem; his present undertaking might even lead to unexpected heights of success. So in a desert place, apparently near the Canaanite city of Luz, he lay down to rest, and in the night had a dream.¹ [Note: Principal A. Stewart.]

He was in the central thoroughfare, on the hard backbone of the mountains of Palestine; the ground

was strewn with wide sheets of bare rock; here and there stood up isolated fragments like ancient Druidical monuments. On the hard ground he lay down to rest, and in the visions of the night the rough stones formed themselves into a vast staircase, reaching into the depth of the wide and open sky, which, without any interruption of tent or tree, was stretched above the sleeper's head. On the staircase were seen ascending and descending the messengers of God; and from above there came the Divine voice which told the houseless wanderer that, little as he thought it, he had a Protector there and everywhere; that even in this bare and open thoroughfare, in no consecrated grove or cave, the Lord was in this place, though he knew it not. This was Bethel, the House of God, and this was the gate of heaven.¹ [Note: Dean Stanley.]

I

The Presence of the Lord

And Jacob waked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.

1. What Jacob saw in his dream was only the glorified presentment of the thoughts with which his mind had been filled during the day. The ladder, which was the scenic framework of his vision, may have been but the terraced hillside on which he had been gazing ere he fell asleep. All day long, as he had pursued his journey, the glorious expanse of an Oriental sky, one quivering, trembling mass of blue, had been above him, and as he had looked up with wonder and awe into its silent depths, deep questionings had beset him. Then as the twilight stole over the scene, and the stars peeped forth, the sense of mystery deepened, and the questions which had been urging themselves redoubled their solemnity and intensity. And so there rose within his heart strong yearnings; and those yearnings half articulated themselves into prayers. The vision was evidently a surprise. But he would have had no spiritual vision if he had had no spiritual desires. We see in the universe only what our moral earnestness prepares and disposes us to see. It is the pure in heart alone who behold the face of God. The spiritual revelations that we receive are but the sublimation and the fruition of our own spiritual struggles. Had there been none of those yearnings and longings in his heart towards a higher and a worthier existence, Jacob would have seen no angels. He already carried in his heart the key to that heaven through whose opened portals he was permitted to look—"Spiritual things are spiritually discerned."

Thou hast been with me in the dark and cold,

And all the night I thought I was alone;

The chariots of Thy glory round me rolled,

On me attending, yet by me unknown.

Clouds were Thy chariots, and I knew them not;

They came in solemn thunders to my ear;
I thought that far away Thou hadst forgot,—
But Thou wert by my side, and heaven was near.
Why did I murmur underneath the night,
When night was spanned by golden steps to Thee?
Why did I cry disconsolate for light,
When all Thy stars were bending over me?
The darkness of my night has been Thy day;
My stony pillow was Thy ladder's rest;
And all Thine angels watched my couch of clay

To bless the soul, unconscious it was blest.¹ [Note: G. Matheson, *Sacred Songs*, 53.]

2. We are apt to cling to the old superstitious notion that in order to draw near to God it is needful to sever ourselves from life's common duties and surroundings. But the Bible lends little favour to any such idea. Jacob's vision was not granted to him at a spot that had previously been accounted holy. He was at Luz—an obscure locality to which he had chanced to come. "He lighted," we read, "upon a certain place." Nor was he engaged in any sacred observances. On the contrary, he was travelling on foot through a desolate region—a very prosaic and secular occupation. But it was in that place, and while he was thus engaged, that God drew near to speak to Jacob.

The same lesson comes again and again from the Divine revelations of which we read in Scripture. Moses was tending his sheep amidst the rocks and furze of Horeb, when God appeared to him in the burning bush and taught him that that mountain-side was holy ground. The disciples were standing half-naked in their fishing-boat, worn out with the long night's fruitless toil, when they discerned some one standing on the beach; and the disciple whom Jesus loved said unto Peter, "It is the Lord." Saul of Tarsus was riding on horseback through the fierce sunshine of the Syrian noonday, when that brighter light from heaven shone round about him.¹ [Note: J. C. Lambert.]

When He appoints to meet thee, go thou forth—
It matters not
If South or North,

Bleak waste or sunny plot.
Nor think, if haply He thou seek'st be late,
He does thee wrong.
To stile or gate
Lean thou thy head, and long!
It may be that to spy thee He is mounting
Upon a tower,
Or in thy counting
Thou hast mista'en the hour.
But, if He come not, neither do thou go
Till Vesper chime,
Belike thou then shalt know
He hath been with thee all the time.² [Note: T. E. Brown.]

II

A Sense of Sin

And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place!

1. *Fear was inherent in Jacob's character.*—It spoilt him in his early days, but he had manly stuff in him and he subdued it, and afterwards it was lifted into veneration of God. His present fear was caused partly by the sense of sin, partly by realizing the presence of the Invisible. No one who does not know God can feel himself touched by God without fear. If he feels Him only as a dreadful power the result will be superstition, but if he knows and loves Him the result is veneration. From that hour the love that casts out fear began to stir in Jacob's heart. He began to realize, not an angry Being, but One who loved him and would care for him.

2. *Jacob had sinned grievously.*—He was fresh from an act of shameful deceit, seconded by several deliberate lies, and aggravated by the fact that his victims were his only brother and his aged father, now smitten with blindness and infirmity. Was a man, upon whose soul such sins lay hot and unrepented of, a possible subject for such a revelation of God as we read of in this chapter? Not

unless all the laws of man's relation to God were completely disregarded in the case of Jacob. From the very fact that God appeared to the patriarch with this gracious manifestation of Himself and promise of His favour, we conclude that Jacob must have had some contrition for his sin, that he must at that very time have been passing through the painful struggles of an awakened conscience. Jacob had sinned deeply; but he would have been a callous sinner indeed if he had had no pangs of compunction when he heard his father's reproachful voice and his brother's exceeding bitter cry. And now all the afflictions that had befallen him—his enforced night, his banishment from home, his lonely journey, the dangers by which he was beset—these afflictions had engraven deep upon his mind the solemn lesson that the devil's wages are always very hard, and had worked in him that godly sorrow which leads to true repentance. Jacob, we might say, had been wrestling with God in the secret places of his soul, even as Nathanael had been kneeling before God under the fig tree when Jesus promised that he too, like Jacob, should see the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending.

There is nothing that makes us seem farther away from God than a *heartfelt sense of sin and self-abasement*. But it is when a man is in the very depths of self-condemnation that the light of God's countenance breaks upon him like the day-dawn following the night. Look at the Penitential Psalms. What a consciousness of sin is there; what a depth of genuine humiliation! And yet it is just when these psalmists are crying out of the depths that the assurance of Jehovah's pardoning mercy and love springs up within them. For it is when hearts are broken and contrite that the High and Lofty One stoops down to visit them. Contrition and humility are the true foundation-stones of godliness, and the lower these foundations are sunk, the higher will the towers and pinnacles of the Divine Temple rise within the soul. Tennyson has taught us to say that "men may rise on stepping-stones of their dead selves to higher things." And in the gracious counsels of our God there is a blessed provision whereby the very sins of the past, if truly repented of, may become stepping-stones to heaven—another Jacob's Ladder, by which His children are raised above their sin and selfishness up the steep heights of holiness and into the very presence of the Father.¹ [Note: J. C. Lambert.]

3. If ever a man needed a little merciful handling, this solitary and troubled soul needed it then. God is ever near to the souls that need Him most; and a man never needs Him so much as when he has sinned, for he is never so surely imperilled as then. So, through this man who has sinned, to all men who have sinned this incident speaks, and tells us that God appears in grace to a man who has done wrong, to prevent his doing further wrong, to show that he is not cast off, that from the sin into which he has fallen there is a way to God, and that heavenly influences descend even on the head of the transgressor. Not that his sin is condoned, not that he deserves the bright vision. Who of us would have any but a dark and terrifying vision if we had what we deserve? It is a vision of God's grace that comes to this wanderer—a vision to assure him that God's mercy persists in spite of man's sin, and wills to save him from a further fall.

The thing that we dread is often the thing that brings God near. He is sometimes a theory and His comfort a poem, until darkness and solitude cause the soul to call out for Him. And I am giving the experience of some also when I say it was in the trouble into which sin plunged us that God first became a reality. It was then that we sought, and cried passionately, and found. There comes a

shadow that no earthly light can pierce, and into it comes the light of God; and we have to bless the solitude and the darkness and the bitter penalty and consequence, because then, for the first time, God became real and near.² [Note: C. Brown.]

III

The House of God and the Gate of Heaven

This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

Let us pass at once from the story of Jacob and consider what lessons these words can bring us when they are used of a sacred building, a church. The vision of the patriarch reveals to us that the whole earth is the House of God, while particular places are chosen to emphasize the truth that there is now a continuous intercourse between earth and heaven, that already we are living in a spiritual world. Three lessons each Church presses upon us, and our life is hallowed and strengthened by remembering them.

1. *A Church witnesses to the universal presence of God.*—This universal presence of God is a most certain truth; yet for the most part our eyes are holden that we should not know it. We are unable to grasp the fulness of the fact. And therefore God meets our infirmity. In His love He gives us signs. He has been pleased from the earliest times to set His name here and there, in a stone, as at Beth-el, in a tent, in a temple, and now in a Church. Through the visible He helps us to see the invisible. A Church, then, does not bring to us anything new or exceptional. It witnesses to the unseen, the spiritual, the eternal, which is about us on every side. It shows God to us here because He is everywhere. It helps us to see what lies beyond the shadows on which we look. It encourages us to pierce beneath the surface to that which is abiding.

So sometimes comes to soul and sense

The feeling which is evidence

That very near about us lies

The realm of spiritual mysteries.

The sphere of the supernal powers

Impinges on this world of ours.

The low and dark horizon lifts,

To light the scenic terror shifts;

The breath of a diviner air

Blows down the answer of a prayer:—

That all our sorrow, pain, and doubt

A great compassion clasps about,

And law and goodness, love and force,

Are wedded fast beyond divorce.

Then duty leaves to love its task,

The beggar Self forgets to ask;

With smile of trust and folded hands,

The passive soul in waiting stands

To feel, as flowers the sun and dew,

The One true Life its own renew.¹ [Note: J. G. Whittier, *The Meeting*.]

2. *A Church witnesses also to the reality of man's intercourse with God.*—It is, like Jacob's Beth-el, "the gate of heaven." And so from very early times the words "Behold a ladder set up on earth, and the top of it reached to heaven" were recited at the consecration of Churches, and the first recorded promise of the Lord gives a permanent force to the vision of the patriarch when He said to the disciples, amazed that He had read the secret thoughts of Nathanael: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye shall see the heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." A Church, in other words, answers to the title which was given to the first appointed House of God, "the Tent of Meeting." It is the meeting-place of God with man and of man with God. The thought is overwhelming. We are tempted to cry out with Jacob, when we realize what it means, "How dreadful is this place." We recall the words spoken to Moses, "No man shall see my face and live," or the confession of Isaiah, "Woe is me, for I am undone ... for mine eyes have seen the King in his beauty." But the incarnation has changed our relation to God. In the Son of Man the glory of God is tempered to our vision. It is true that no man hath seen God at any time: that He dwelleth in light unapproachable, "Whom no man hath seen nor can see," yet we have also for our assurance the Lord's own words: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," not indeed seen God as God in His most awful majesty, but God revealed through the love of His Son.

Reviews of Miss Yonge's life, and even of Mr. Keble's, spoke as though their country lives must have been quiet to dullness, or at least that they produced no incidents useful for biographical purposes. To those who at that time were their nearest neighbours, their lives were wonderful examples of the self-controlled vivacity of high spiritual existence. The eyes of our elders were fixed on the holiest

realities of Spirit, and in the services of the English Church they found the atmosphere in which they breathed most freely. Theology was to them a thrilling interest, and they moved and spoke and thought with unseen presences round them, not psychical or fancy-spiritual, but as realizing the angels round about the Throne and the solemn awe of the Throne.¹ [Note: C. A. E. Moberly, *Dulce Domum*, 7.]

3. *A Church assures us that we are even now living in a spiritual order.*—This is implied in the record of the Patriarch's Vision. The angels are represented as "ascending and descending." Ascending first: earth, that is man's home, is the habitual scene of their ministry. And again, St. Paul tells us in direct words: "God has made us to sit with Christ in heavenly places." And again we read: "We have come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels in festal assembly ... and to the spirits of just men made perfect." Heaven is not distant and future, but here and now. And we habitually claim, in our Communion office, fellowship "with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven." Life, in a word, is shown within our Churches under its spiritual aspect in all its critical vicissitudes. Powers of heaven are seen to mingle at each point with faculties of earth. We are impressively reminded of the greatness of life. If life is on one side the vision of God, it is on the other side the welcome of God's gifts that they may be used in His service. It is from first to last a personal Divine companionship. The Church with its services is the sign and pledge of blessings answering to all our need, but then we are ourselves the living sanctuary: we live as knowing that the Lord is with us all the days.

Faith's ladder pales not, Angels yet are found

All beauteous in calm and holy light;

Their silver robes have skirted many a cloud

Thronging the purple night.

Swift from the golden gates they come and go,

And glad fulfil their Master's high behest,

Bringing celestial balms for human woe,

Blessing and being blessed.

And have not we sore need the faith to hold

Of the surrounding of the Angel bands;

Mid all earth's dust to trace their steps of gold,

And feel the uplifting hands?

Ah! yes, I think so, then with firm believing,
With reverence, hail each soul's celestial guest;
Till they shall come, God's final will revealing,
To fold us into rest.¹ [Note: Lyra Anglicana, 136 (God's Angels).]

The Song of Solomon's Wisdom

The **Song of Solomon's Wisdom** refers to an interpretation of King Solomon's teachings and poetic writings as a source of divine wisdom. While there is no single text universally recognized by this title, the concept can be linked to the wisdom literature attributed to King Solomon in the Bible, particularly in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, which holds his writings in high regard. These texts, including the *Song of Songs*, *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, and other apocryphal works like the *Odes of Solomon*, emphasize themes of divine love, moral guidance, and spiritual insight.

Biblical Roots

1. The Song of Songs (Song of Solomon):

- Often seen as an allegory of divine love between God and His people or Christ and the Church, this poetic book is rich in symbolic language. In the Ethiopian tradition, it may also represent the love between God and Ethiopia as a chosen nation.

2. The Book of Proverbs:

- A collection of Solomon's wise sayings, emphasizing moral living, the fear of the Lord as the beginning of wisdom, and the importance of seeking understanding.

3. Ecclesiastes:

- A philosophical reflection on the meaning of life, often seen as a call to humility and reverence for God amidst life's fleeting nature.

4. Wisdom of Solomon:

- Though not part of the Protestant canon, this deuterocanonical book is included in the Ethiopian Orthodox Bible. It explores themes of divine justice, the immortality of the righteous, and the pursuit of wisdom as the greatest virtue.
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Themes in the Song of Solomon's Wisdom

1. Divine Wisdom:

- Wisdom is portrayed as a divine gift, guiding humanity toward righteousness and understanding God's will.
2. **Love and Relationship:**
- Both spiritual and human love are celebrated, emphasizing unity, faithfulness, and harmony.
3. **Moral Guidance:**
- Practical advice on living a life that honors God, including respect for authority, humility, and generosity.
4. **The Transcendence of God:**
- Solomon's writings often reflect on the majesty of God and humanity's dependence on His guidance.
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Cultural and Liturgical Significance

In Ethiopian Christianity, the wisdom of Solomon is deeply revered:

- **Liturgical Readings:** Passages from Solomon's writings are incorporated into services, especially during weddings, where the *Song of Songs* is often read as a blessing for the couple.
 - **Art and Iconography:** Ethiopian religious art frequently depicts Solomon as a symbol of divine wisdom and justice, often linked to the Queen of Sheba and Ethiopia's spiritual heritage.
 - **Moral Instruction:** Solomon's proverbs and teachings are used for catechesis, teaching virtues like patience, humility, and fear of the Lord.
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Symbolism and Interpretation

The "Song of Solomon's Wisdom" can be viewed as a composite of Solomon's teachings and their broader spiritual implications:

- **Marriage as Allegory:** The love celebrated in the *Song of Songs* is a metaphor for the covenant between God and His people.
 - **Wisdom as a Woman:** In Proverbs, Wisdom is personified as a woman, inviting all to embrace her guidance.
 - **Vanity of Life:** Ecclesiastes reminds believers of life's fleeting nature, urging them to focus on eternal values.
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Conclusion

The **Song of Solomon's Wisdom** encapsulates a tradition that treasures divine insight, moral teaching, and the beauty of spiritual and earthly love. It continues to inspire Ethiopian Orthodox Christians as a guide for righteous living and a source of profound spiritual reflection. This blend of poetry, philosophy, and faith demonstrates the enduring legacy of King Solomon's teachings in Ethiopian religious life and beyond.

The Prophecy of Gad the Seer

There are at least two people in the Bible named Gad. One was a prophet and the other was one of the 12 sons of Jacob.

Gad, the prophet, first appears in the Bible to persuade David to leave his place of safety in Moab and return to Judah, where the insanely jealous King Saul awaited him. Later on, after David had a census taken of Israel, Gad gave David a choice of punishments from the Lord for carrying out that rash act. David chose the three day plague.

During the plague, which took 70,000 lives, Gad, the prophet, told David to build an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite (2 Sam. 24:18). The burnt offerings from this altar, caused the Lord to stop the plague. The threshing floor, later, became the site of King Solomon's Temple. In 2 Chronicles 29:25, Gad, along with David and the prophet Nathan, "stationed the Levites in the Lord's house with cymbals, harps and lyres", according to the prescriptions "from the Lord through His prophets." Gad is described as David's seer in 1 Chronicles 21:9.

The other Gad - the son of Jacob - was the seventh son of Jacob. His mother was Zilpah, who was Leah's maid. He was the founder of the tribe of Gad. He made the journey with Jacob and the family from Padan Aram to Canaan, and later, to Egypt. In the census taken in the second year after the Exodus, the tribe of Gad numbered 46,650 (Numbers 2: 14-15).

At the time of the second census, there were 40,500 (Numbers 26:18). In the blessing of Jacob (Genesis 49:19) it is said, "Gad a troop shall tramp upon him, but he shall triumph at last." In the blessing of Moses (Deuteronomy 33:20), it is said, "Blessed is he who enlarges Gad." In Revelation 7:1-8, Gad is among the tribes who are promised the Seal of God for 12,000 of its members.

The name Gad means Gad "Good fortune."

The Lament of Jeremiah

The **Lament of Jeremiah** refers to the heartfelt and poetic expressions of sorrow attributed to the prophet Jeremiah, who is traditionally recognized as the author of the *Book of Lamentations* in the Bible. In the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, this lament holds a significant place, reflecting themes of repentance, divine justice, and hope in the midst of suffering. The text resonates deeply within Ethiopian liturgical traditions, especially during periods of fasting and mourning.

Biblical Context

The *Lamentations of Jeremiah* is a poetic book written in response to the destruction of Jerusalem and the First Temple by the Babylonians in 586 BCE. Jeremiah, known as the "weeping prophet," laments the devastation of his people, the loss of the city, and the apparent silence of God during this calamity. Despite its sorrowful tone, the book also contains themes of hope and renewal, emphasizing God's mercy and faithfulness.

Key verses include:

- **Lamentations 3:22-23:** "Because of the Lord's great love, we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness."
 - **Lamentations 5:21:** "Restore us to Yourself, Lord, that we may return; renew our days as of old."
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Themes in the Lament of Jeremiah

5. Sorrow and Mourning:

- The lament vividly portrays the suffering of the people, the desolation of the city, and the anguish of Jeremiah himself.

6. Repentance:

- The text serves as a call for the people to reflect on their sins and seek God's forgiveness.

7. Divine Justice:

- The lament acknowledges that the suffering of Israel is a result of its disobedience, portraying God as just in His judgments.

8. Hope and Restoration:

- Despite the despair, the text affirms that God's mercy endures and that restoration is possible through repentance and faith.
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Liturgical and Cultural Significance in Ethiopia

The *Lament of Jeremiah* is integrated into Ethiopian Orthodox worship and traditions in various ways:

1. Liturgical Readings:

- The text is often read during **Holy Week**, particularly on Good Friday, to reflect on the suffering of Christ and the parallels with the suffering of Jerusalem.

2. Fasting and Mourning:

- During periods of penitence, such as **Lent** (*Hudadi*), the lament serves as a spiritual reminder of humanity's need for repentance and reliance on God's mercy.

3. Ethiopian Hymns and Prayers:

- The *Deggwa* (Ge'ez hymnal) includes hymns inspired by Jeremiah's lament, emphasizing themes of repentance and renewal.
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Synbolism and Interpretation

1. Jerusalem as a Synbol:

- In Ethiopian tradition, Jerusalem symbolizes the faithful community. Its destruction is seen as a metaphor for spiritual desolation caused by sin.

2. Christological Interpretation:

- The lament is often interpreted as a foreshadowing of Christ's passion, with Jerusalem's suffering paralleling the suffering of Jesus.

3. Hope in the Resurrection:

- The restoration themes in the lament align with the hope of resurrection and new life, central to Ethiopian Christian theology.
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Relevance Today

The *Lament of Jeremiah* continues to inspire Ethiopian Orthodox Christians as a source of spiritual reflection. It reminds believers of the consequences of turning away from God but also affirms His enduring mercy and the promise of renewal. The lament's timeless themes make it a powerful tool for personal devotion, communal worship, and theological meditation.

Conclusion

The **Lanent of Jereniah** is a profound expression of sorrow, repentance, and hope. Its integration into Ethiopian liturgical life underscores its enduring relevance, offering both a poignant reflection on human frailty and an affirmation of divine faithfulness. Through its poetic depth and spiritual

insight, the lament remains a cornerstone of worship and devotion in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.

The Apocalypse of Moses (Extended)

i 1 This is the story of Adam and Eve after they had gone out of Paradise. And Adam knew his wife
2 Eve and went upwards to the sun-rising and abode there eighteen years and two months. And
3 Eve conceived and bare two sons; Adiaphotos, who is called Cain and Amilabes who is called
Abel.

ii 1 And after this, Adam and Eve were with one another and while they were sleeping, Eve said to
Adam her lord: 'My lord, Adam, behold,
2 I have seen in a dream this night the blood of my son Amilabes who is styled Abel being poured
into the mouth of Cain his brother and he went on drinking it without pity. But he begged him to
leave him a little of it. Yet he hearkened
3 not to him, but gulped down the whole; nor did it stay in his stomach, but came out of his mouth.
And Adam said, 'Let us arise and go
4 and see what has happened to them. (I fear) lest the adversary may be assailing them
somewhere.'

iii 1 And they both went and found Abel murdered. I by the hand of Cain his brother. And God
2 saith to Michael the archangel: 'Say to Adam: "Reveal not the secret that thou knowest to Cain thy
son, for he is a son of wrath. But grieve not, for I will give thee another son in his stead; he shall
show (to thee) all that thou shalt do. Do thou tell him nothing.'" Thus spake the archangel
3 to Adam. But he kept the word in his heart, and with him also Eve, though they grieved concerning
Abel their son.

iv 1 And after this, Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bare Seth.

And Adam said to Eve: 'See! we have
2 begotten a son in place of Abel, whom Cain slew, let us give glory and sacrifice to God.'

v 1 And Adam begat thirty sons and thirty daughters and Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years;
and he fell sick and cried with a loud
2 voice and said, 'Let all my sons come to me that I may see them before I die.'
3 And all assembled, for the earth was divided into three parts. And Seth his son said to him:
4 'Father Adam, what is thy complaint?'

5 And he saith, 'MY children, I am crushed by the burden of trouble.' And they say to him, 'What is
trouble?'

vi 1 And Seth answered and said to him: 'Hast thou called to mind, father, the fruit of paradise of
which thou usedst to eat, and hast been grieved in yearning for it?'

'If this be so, tell me, (and) I will go and
2 bring thee fruit from paradise. For I will set dung upon my head and will weep and pray that the

Lord will hearken to me and send his angel (and bring me a plant from paradise), and I will bring it thee that thy trouble may cease from thee.'

Adam saith to him: 'Nay, my son Seth, but

3 I have (much) sickness and trouble!' Seth saith to him: 'And how hath this come upon thee?'

vii 1 And Adam said to him: 'When God made us, me and your mother, through whom also I die, He gave us power to eat of every tree which is in paradise, but, concerning that one only, He charged us not to eat of it, and through this one we are to die. And the hour drew nigh for the angels

2 who were guarding your mother to go up and worship the Lord, and I was far from her, and the enemy knew that she was alone and gave to her, and she ate of the tree of which she had been told not to eat.

3 Then she gave also to me to eat.

viii 1 'And God was wroth with us, and the Lord came into paradise and called me in a terrible voice and said: "Adam, where art thou? And why hidest thou from my face? Shall the house be able to hide itself from its builder?" And he saith to me: "Since thou hast abandoned my covenant, I have brought upon thy body seventy-two strokes; the trouble of the first stroke is a pain of the eyes, the second stroke an affection of the hearing, and likewise in turn all the strokes shall befall thee."'

ix 1 As he said this to his sons, Adam groaned sore and said: 'What shall I do? I am in great distress.'

And Eve wept and said: 'My lord

2 Adam, rise up and give me half of thy trouble and I will endure it; for it is on my account that this hath happened to thee, on my account thou art beset with toils and troubles.' But Adam

3 said to Eve, 'Arise and go with my son Seth near to paradise, and put earth upon your heads and weep and pray God to have mercy upon me and send his angel to paradise, and give me of the tree out of which the oil floweth, and bring it me, and I shall anoint myself and shall have rest from my complaint.'

x 1 Then Seth and Eve went towards paradise, and Eve saw her son, and a wild beast assailing him, and Eve wept and said: 'Woe is me; if

2 I come to the day of the Resurrection, all those who have sinned will curse me saying: Eve hath not kept the commandment of God.' And she

3 spake to the beast: 'Thou wicked beast, fearest thou not to fight with the image of God? How was thy mouth opened? How were thy teeth made strong? How didst thou not call to mind thy subjection? For long ago wast thou made subject to the image of God.' Then the beast

4 cried out and said:

xi 1 'It is not our concern, Eve, thy greed and thy wailing, but thine own; for (it is) from thee that the rule of the beasts hath arisen. How was thy

2 mouth opened to eat of the tree concerning which God enjoined thee not to eat of it? On this account, our nature also hath been transformed. Now therefore thou canst not endure it,

3 if I begin to reprove thee.'

xii 1 Then Seth speaketh to the beast, 'Close thy mouth and be silent and stand off from the image of God until the day of Judgment.' Then saith

2 the beast to Seth: 'Behold, I stand off from the image of God.' And he went to his lair.

xiii 1 And Seth went with Eve near paradise, and I they wept there, and prayed God to send his angel and give them the oil of mercy.

And God

2 sent the archangel Michael and he spake to Seth: 'Seth, man of God, weary not thyself with prayers and entreaties concerning the tree which floweth with oil to anoint thy father Adam. For it shall not be thine now, but in the end of the times.

3 Then shall all flesh be raised up from Adam till that great day, -all that shall be of the holy people. Then shall the delights of paradise be given to them and God shall be in their midst. And they shall no longer sin before his face, for the evil heart shall be taken from them and there shall be given them a heart understanding the good and to serve God only.

But do thou go back to thy father. For the

6 term of his life hath been fulfilled and he will live three days from to-day and will die. But when his soul is departing, thou shalt behold the awful (scene of) his passing.'

xiv 1 Thus spake the angel and departed from them. And Seth and Eve came to the hut where Adam was laid. And Adam saith to Eve: 'Eve, what

2 hast thou wrought in us? Thou hast brought upon us great wrath which is death, [lording it over all our race].' And he saith to her, 'Call all

3 our children and our children's children and tell them the manner of our transgression.'

xv 1 Then saith Eve to them: 'Hear all my children and children's children and I will relate to you

2 how the enemy deceived us. It befell that we were guarding paradise, each of us the portion

3 allotted to us from God. Now I guarded in my lot, the west and the south. But the devil went to Adam's lot, where the male creatures were. [For God divided the creatures; all the males he gave to your father and all the females he gave to me.]

xvi 1 And the devil spake to the serpent saying, Rise up, come to me and I will tell thee a word

2 whereby thou mayst have profit." And he arose and came to him. And the devil saith to him:

3 "I hear that thou art wiser than all the beasts, and I have come to counsel thee. Why dost thou eat of Adam's tares and not of paradise? Rise up and we will cause him to be cast out of paradise, even
4 as we were cast out through him." The serpent saith to him, "I fear lest the Lord be wroth with
5 me." The devil saith to him: "Fear not, only be my vessel and I will speak through thy mouth words to deceive him."

xvii 1 And instantly he hung himself from the wall of paradise, and when the angels ascended to

2 worship God, then Satan appeared in the form of an angel and sang hymns like the angels. And I

bent over the wall and saw him, like an angel. But he saith to me: "Art thou Eve?" And I said

3 to him, "I am." "What art thou doing in paradise?" And I said to him, "God set us to guard and

4 to eat of it." The devil answered through the mouth of the serpent: 'Ye do well but ye do not eat

5 of every plant." And I said: "Yea, we eat of all. save one only, which is in the midst of paradise, concerning which, God charged us not to eat of it: for, He said to us, on the day on which ye eat of it, ye shall die the death."

xviii 1 Then the serpent saith to me, "May God live! but I am grieved on your account, for I would not have you ignorant. But arise, (come) hither, hearken to me and eat and mind the value of that tree."

2,3 But I said to him, "I fear lest God be wroth with me as he told us." And he saith to me: "Fear not, for as soon as thou eatest of it, ye too shall be as God, in that ye shall know good and evil.

4 But God perceived this that ye would be like Him, so he envied you and said, Ye shall not eat of 5,6 it. Nay, do thou give heed to the plant and thou wilt see its great glory." Yet I feared to take of the fruit. And he saith to me: "Come hither, and I will give it thee. Follow me."

xix 1 And I opened to him and he walked a little way, then turned and said to me: "I have changed my 2 mind and I will not give thee to eat until thou swear to me to give also to thy husband." (And) I said. "What sort of oath shall I swear to thee? Yet what I know, I say to thee: By the throne of the 3 Master, and by the Cherubim and the Tree of Life! I will give also to my husband to eat." And when he had received the oath from me, he went and poured upon the fruit the poison of his wickedness, which is lust, the root and beginning of every sin, and he bent the branch on the earth and I took of the fruit and I ate.

xx 1 And in that very hour my eyes were opened, and forthwith I knew that I was bare of the righteousness

2 with which I had been clothed (upon), and I wept and said to him: "Why hast thou 3 done this to me in that thou hast deprived me of the glory with which I was clothed?" But I wept also about the oath, which I had sworn. But he descended from the tree and vanished.

4 And I began to seek, in my nakedness, in my part for leaves to hide my shame, but I found none, for, as soon as I had eaten, the leaves showered down from all the trees in my part, except the fig tree

5 only. But I took leaves from it and made for myself a girdle and it was from the very same plant of which I had eaten.

xxi 1 And I cried out in that very hour, 'Adam, Adam, where art thou? Rise up, come to me and 2 I will show thee a great secret.' But when your father came, I spake to him words of transgression 3 [which have brought us down from our great glory]. For, when he came, I opened my mouth and the devil was speaking, and I began to exhort him and said, "Come hither, my lord Adam, hearken to me and eat of the fruit of the tree of which God told us not to eat of it, and thou shalt be as 4 a God." And your father answered and said, "I fear lest God be wroth with me." And I said to 5 him, "Fear not, for as soon as thou hast eaten thou shalt know good and evil." And speedily I persuaded him, and he ate and straightway his eyes were opened and he too knew his nakedness. 6 And to me he saith, "O wicked woman! what have I done to thee that thou hast deprived me of the glory of God?"

xxii 1 And in that same hour, we heard the archangel Michael blowing with his trumpet and calling to 2 the angels and saying: "Thus saith the Lord, Come with me to Paradise and hear the judgement with which I shall judge Adam."

3 And when God appeared in paradise, mounted on the chariot of his cherubim with the angels proceeding before him and singing hymns of praises, all the plants of paradise, both of your father's lot

4 and mine, broke out into flowers. And the throne of God was fixed where the Tree of Life was.

xxiii 1 And God called Adam saying, "Adam, where art thou? Can the house be hidden from the presence

2 of its builder? "Then your father answered; "It is not because we think not to be found by thee,

Lord, that we hide, but I was afraid, because I am naked, and I was ashamed before thy might,
3 (my) Master." God saith to him, "Who showed thee that thou art naked, unless thou hast forsaken
my

4 commandment, which I delivered thee to keep (it)." Then Adam called to mind the word which I
spake to him, (saying) "I will make thee secure before God"; and he turned and said to me: "Why
hast thou done this?" And I said, "The serpent deceived me."

xxiv 1 God saith to Adam: 'Since thou hast disregarded my commandment and hast hearkened to
thy wife, cursed is the earth in thy labours. Thou shalt work it and it shall not give its strength: thorns
and thistles shall spring up for thee, and in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread. [Thou
shalt be in manifold toils; thou shalt be crushed by bitterness, but of sweetness shalt thou not
taste.]

3 Weary shalt thou be and shalt not rest; by heat shalt thou be tired, by cold shalt thou be
straitened: abundantly shalt thou busy thyself, but thou shalt not be rich; and thou shalt grow fat,
but come to no end.

4 The beasts, over whom thou didst rule, shall rise up in rebellion against thee, for thou hast not
kept my commandment."

xxv 1 And the Lord turned to me and said: "Since thou hast hearkened to the serpent, and turned
2 a deaf ear to my commandment, thou shalt be in throes of travail and intolerable agonies; thou
shalt bear children in much trembling and in one hour thou shalt come to the birth, and lose thy
3 life, from thy sore trouble and anguish. But thou shalt confess and say: 'Lord, Lord, save me, and
4 I will turn no more to the sin of the flesh.' And on this account, from thine own words I will judge
thee, by reason of the enmity which the enemy has planted in thee."

xxvi 1 But he turned to the serpent [in great wrath] and said: "Since thou hast done this, and
become a thankless vessel until thou hast deceived the innocent hearts, accursed art thou among
all beasts.

2 Thou shalt be deprived of the victual of which thou didst eat and shalt feed on dust all the days of
3 thy life: on thy breast and thy belly shalt thou walk and be robbed of hands and feet. There shall
not be left thee ear nor wing, nor one limb of all that with which thou didst ensnare them in
4 thy malice and causedst them to be cast out of paradise; and I will put enmity between thee and
his seed: he shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel until the day of Judgement." xxvii

1,2 Thus he spake and bade the angels have us cast out of paradise: and as we were being driven
out amid our loud lamentations, your father Adam besought the angels and said: "Leave me a little
(space) that I may entreat the Lord that he have compassion on me and pity me, for I only
3 have sinned." And they left off driving him and Adam cried aloud and wept saying: "Pardon me O
Lord, my deed." Then the Lord saith to the angels, "Why have ye ceased from driving Adam from
paradise? Why do ye not cast him out? Is it I who have done wrong? Or is my judgement
5 badly judged?" Then the angels fell down on the ground and worshipped the Lord saying, "Thou art
just, O Lord, and thou judgest righteous judgement."

xxviii 1 But the Lord turned to Adam and said: 'I will not suffer thee henceforward to be in paradise.'
2 And Adam answered and said, " Grant me, O Lord, of the Tree of Life that I may eat of it, before
3 I be cast out." Then the Lord spake to Adam, "Thou shalt not take of it now, for I have commanded
the cherubim with the flaming sword that turneth (every way) to guard it from thee that

4 thou taste not of it; but thou hast the war which the adversary hath put into thee, yet when thou art gone out of paradise, if thou shouldst keep thyself from all evil, as one about to die, when again the Resurrection hath come to pass, I will raise thee up and then there shall be given to thee the Tree of Life."

xxix 1,2 Thus spake the Lord and ordered us to be cast out of paradise. But your father Adam wept before the angels opposite paradise and the angels say to him: "What wouldst thou have us to do, 3 Adam? "And your father saith to them, "Behold, ye cast me out. I pray you, allow me to take away fragrant herbs from paradise, so that I may offer an offering to God after I have gone out of paradise that he hear me." And the angels approached God and said: "JA'EL, Eternal King, command, my Lord, that there be given to Adam incense of sweet odour from paradise and seeds 5 for his food." And God bade Adam go in and take sweet spices and fragrant herbs from paradise 6 and seeds for his food. And the angels let him go and he took four kinds: crocus and nard and calamus and cinnamon and the other seeds for his food: and, after taking these, he went out of 7 paradise. And we were on the earth.

xxx 1 Now then, my children, I have shown you the way in which we were deceived; and do ye guard yourselves from transgressing against the good.'

xxxi 1 And when Eve had said this in the midst of her sons, while Adam was lying ill and bound to die 2 after a single day from the sickness which had fastened upon him, she saith to him: 'How is it that 3 thou diest and I live or how long have I to live after thou art dead? Tell me.' And Adam saith to her: 'Reck not of this, for thou tarriest not after me, but even both of us are to die together. And she shall lie in my place. But when I die, anoint me and let no man touch me till the 4 angel of the Lord shall speak somewhat concerning me. For God will not forget me, but will seek His own creature; and now arise rather and pray to God till I give up my spirit into His hands who gave it me. For we know not how we are to meet our Maker, whether He be wroth with us, or be merciful and intend to pity and receive us.'

xxxii 1,2 And Eve rose up and went outside and fell on the ground and began to say: I have sinned, O God, I have sinned, O God of All, I have sinned against Thee. I have sinned against the elect angels. I have sinned against the Cherubim. I have sinned against Thy fearful and unshakable Throne. I have sinned before Thee and all sin hath begun through my doing in the creation.'

3 Even thus prayed Eve on her knees; (and) behold, the angel of humanity came to her, and raised 4 her up and said: 'Rise up, Eve, (from thy penitence), for behold, Adam thy husband hath gone out of his body. Rise up and behold his spirit borne aloft to his Maker.'

xxxiii 1 And Eve rose up and wiped off her tears with her hand, and the angel saith to her, ' Lift Up thyself 2 from the earth.' And she gazed steadfastly into heaven, and beheld a chariot of light, borne by four bright eagles, (and) it were impossible for any man born of woman to tell the glory of them or 3 behold their face -and angels going before the chariot- and when they came to the place where your father Adam was, the chariot halted and the Seraphim. And I beheld golden censers, between your father and the chariot, and all the angels with censers and frankincense came in haste to the 5 incense-offering and blew upon it and the smoke of the incense veiled the firmaments. And the angels fell down and worshipped God, crying aloud and saying, JA'EL, Holy One, have pardon, for he is Thy image, and the work of Thy holy hands.'

xxxiv 1 And I Eve beheld two great and fearful wonders standing in the presence of God and I wept for

2 fear, and I cried aloud to my son Seth and said, 'Rise up, Seth, from the body of thy father Adam and come to me, and thou shalt see a spectacle which no man's eye hath yet beheld.'

xxxv 1 Then Seth arose and came to his mother and to her he saith: 'What is thy trouble? Why weepest thou?' (And) she saith to him: 'Look

2 up and see with thine eyes the seven heavens opened, and see how the soul of thy father lies on its face and all the holy angels are praying on his behalf and saying: 'Pardon him, Father of All, for he is Thine image.' 'Pray, my child

3 Seth, what shall this mean? And will he one day be delivered into the hands of the Invisible Father, even our God? But who are the two

4 negroes who stand by at the prayers for thy father Adam?'

xxxvi 1 And Seth telleth his mother, that they are the sun and moon and themselves fall down and pray on behalf of my father Adam. Eve saith

2 to him: 'And where is their light and why have they taken on such a black appearance?' And

3 Seth answereth her, 'The light hath not left them, but they cannot shine before the Light of the Universe, the Father of Light; and on this account their light hath been hidden from them.

xxxvii 1 Now while Seth was saying this to his mother, lo, an angel blew the trumpet, and there stood up all the angels (and they were) lying on their faces, and they cried aloud in an awful voice and said: 'Blessed (be) the glory of the Lord from

2 the works of His making, for He hath pitied Adam the creature of His hands.' But when the

3 angels had said these words, lo, there came one of the seraphim with six wings and snatched up Adam and carried him off to the Acherusian lake, and washed him thrice, in the presence of God.

xxxix 1 And God saith to him: 'Adam, what hast thou done? If thou hadst kept my commandment, there would now be no rejoicing among those who are bringing thee down to this place. Yet, I tell thee that I will turn their joy to grief

2 and thy grief will I turn to joy, and I will transform thee to thy former glory? and set thee on the throne of thy deceiver. But he shall be cast

3 into this place to see thee sitting above him, then he shall be condemned and they that heard him, and he shall be grieved sore when he seeth thee sitting on his honourable throne.'

xxxvii

4 And he stayed there three hours, lying down, and thereafter the Father of all, sitting on his holy throne stretched out his hand, and took Adam and handed him over to the archangel Michael

saying: 'Lift him up into Paradise unto the third Heaven, and leave him there until that fearful day of my reckoning, which I will make in the world.' Then Michael took Adam and left

6 him where God told him.

xxxviii 1 But after all this, the archangel asked concerning the laying out of the remains. And God

2 commanded that all the angels should assemble in His presence, each in his order, and all the angels assembled, some having censers in their hands, and others trumpets. And lo ! the 'Lord

3 of Hosts' came on and four winds drew Him and cherubim mounted on the winds and the angels from heaven escorting Him and they came on the earth, where was the body of Adam. And

4 they came to paradise and all the leaves of paradise were stirred so that all men begotten of Adam slept from the fragrance save Seth alone, because he was born 'according to the appointment of God '. Then Adam's body lay there in
5 paradise on the earth and Seth grieved exceedingly over him.

xl 1 Then God spake to the archangel(s) Michael, (Gabriel, Uriel, and Raphael): 'Go away
2 to Paradise in the third heaven, and strew linen clothes and cover the body of Adam and bring oil of the 'oil of fragrance' and pour it over him. And they acted thus did the three great angels and they prepared him for burial. And God said: 'Let the body of Abel also be
3 brought.' And they brought other linen clothes and prepared his (body) also. For he was unburied since the day when Cain his brother slew him; for wicked Cain took great pains to conceal (him) but could not, for the earth would not receive him for the body sprang up from the earth and a voice went out of the earth saying: 'I will not
5 receive a companion body, till the earth which was taken and fashioned in me cometh to me.' At that time, the angels took it and placed it on a rock, till Adam his father was buried. And
6 both were buried, according to the commandment of God, in the spot where God found the dust, and He caused the place to be dug for two. And God sent seven angels to paradise and they
7 brought many fragrant spices and placed them in the earth, and they took the two bodies and placed them in the spot which they had digged and builded.

xli 1 And God called and said, 'Adam, Adam.' And the body answered from the earth and said: 'Here am I, Lord.' And God saith to him: 'I told
2 thee (that) earth thou art and to earth shalt thou return. Again I promise to thee the Resurrection; I will raise thee up in the Resurrection with every man who is of thy seed.'

xlii 1 After these words, God made a seal and sealed the tomb, that no one might do anything to him for six days till his rib should return to him. Then the Lord and his angels went to their place.
2 And Eve also, when the six days were fulfilled,
3 fell asleep. But while she was living, she wept bitterly about Adam's falling on sleep, for she knew not where he was laid. For when the Lord came to paradise to bury Adam she was asleep, and her sons too, except Seth, till He bade Adam be prepared for burial; and no man knew on earth, except her son Seth. And Eve prayed (in
4 the hour of her death) that she might be buried in the place where her husband Adam was. And after she had finished her prayer, she saith: 'Lord,
5 Master, God of all rule, estrange not me thy handmaid from the body of Adam, for from his members didst thou make me. But deem me
6 worthy, even me unworthy that I am and a sinner, to enter into his tabernacle, even as I was with him in paradise, both without separation from each other; just as in our transgression, we were
7 (both) led astray and transgressed thy command, but were not separated. Even so, Lord, do not
8 separate us now.' But after she had prayed, she gazed heavenwards and groaned aloud and smote her breast and said: 'God of All, receive my spirit,' and straightway she delivered up her spirit to God.

xliii 1 And Michael came and taught Seth how to prepare Eve for burial. And there came three angels and they buried her (body) where Adam's body was and Abel's. And thereafter Michael
2 spake to Seth and saith: 'Lay out in this wise every man that dieth till the day of the Resurrection.'

And after giving him this rule; he
3 saith to him: 'Mourn not beyond six days, but on the seventh day, rest and rejoice on it, because on that very day, God rejoiceth (yea) and we angels (too) with the righteous soul, who hath passed away from the earth.' Even thus spake
4 the angel, and ascended into heaven, glorifying (God) and saying: 'Allelujah.'
[Holy, holy, holy is the Lord, in the glory of
5 God the Father, for to Him it is meet to give glory, honour and worship, with the eternal life-giving spirit now and always and for ever. Amen.]
[Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts. To whom be glory and power for ever and for ever Amen.]
[Then the archangel Joel glorified God; saying, 'Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, heaven and earth are full of thy glory.']

The Prayer of Hezekiah

The **Prayer of Hezekiah** is a profound biblical and liturgical text that reflects King Hezekiah's plea for deliverance and thanksgiving for God's mercy. In the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, this prayer is cherished as a powerful example of repentance, trust in God, and gratitude for divine intervention. The prayer appears in the Bible in **Isaiah 38:G-20** and relates to Hezekiah's miraculous healing and the extension of his life.

Biblical Context

The prayer is set during a pivotal moment in King Hezekiah's life. After falling gravely ill and being told by the prophet Isaiah to prepare for death, Hezekiah turns to God in earnest prayer, asking for mercy and healing. God hears his prayer, heals him, and grants him an additional 15 years of life. This event is recorded in **2 Kings 20:1-11**, **Isaiah 38**, and **2 Chronicles 32:24-26**.

Key themes in the prayer include:

- Acknowledgment of God's sovereignty.
- Reflection on human mortality.
- Thanksgiving for divine intervention and mercy.

Textual Highlights

Hezekiah's prayer, as recorded in **Isaiah 38:G-20**, captures his gratitude and renewed faith:

- **Isaiah 38:17**: "Surely it was for my benefit that I suffered such anguish. In your love, you kept me from the pit of destruction; you have put all my sins behind your back."
- **Isaiah 38:20**: "The Lord will save me, and we will sing with stringed instruments all the days of our lives in the temple of the Lord."

Themes and Symbolism

9. Mortality and Divine Mercy:

- Hezekiah reflects on the fragility of human life and the power of God to save, emphasizing humility before the Creator.

10. Repentance and Renewal:

- The prayer is a model of turning to God in times of despair, recognizing personal sin, and seeking divine forgiveness.

11. Thanksgiving and Worship:

- After his healing, Hezekiah commits to praising God throughout his life, illustrating the importance of gratitude.

12. God's Sovereignty:

- Hezekiah acknowledges that life and healing are in God's hands, reinforcing trust in His divine plan.

Liturgical and Cultural Importance in Ethiopia

The **Prayer of Hezekiah** holds a significant place in Ethiopian Orthodox worship and tradition:

1. Daily Prayers:

- The prayer is incorporated into the Church's liturgical texts as a model of repentance and faith, particularly during morning or evening devotions.

2. Healing Services:

- It is recited during prayers for the sick, emphasizing God's power to heal and restore.

3. Special Occasions:

- The prayer is also reflected in hymns and readings during Holy Week, symbolizing Christ's victory over death.

4. Personal Reflection:

- Ethiopian Christians often use this prayer during personal struggles or illnesses as a source of comfort and inspiration.

Ethiopian Hymnal and Ge'ez Tradition

In the *Deggwa* (Ge'ez hymnal), hymns inspired by Hezekiah's prayer emphasize thanksgiving and the recognition of God's mercy. These hymns are sung during communal worship, linking Hezekiah's story to the lives of the faithful.

Relevance Today

The **Prayer of Hezekiah** continues to inspire believers as a reminder of the power of sincere prayer and God's ability to intervene in even the direst circumstances. Its themes of repentance, trust, and thanksgiving are timeless, resonating with those who seek God's presence in moments of crisis.

Conclusion

The **Prayer of Hezekiah** stands as a testament to the transformative power of faith, humility, and gratitude. Its inclusion in Ethiopian Orthodox tradition highlights its enduring spiritual relevance, offering a pathway for believers to connect with God in their moments of greatest need and to celebrate His mercy and grace.

The Ethiopian Book of the Ark's Journey

The **Ethiopian Book of the Ark's Journey** represents a collection of traditions, stories, and theological reflections surrounding the journey and sacred significance of the Ark of the Covenant in Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity. While not a single codified text, this concept is deeply rooted in Ethiopia's religious and cultural identity, as chronicled in the *Kebra Nagast* (*The Glory of Kings*), which remains the primary source for Ethiopia's claim as the guardian of the Ark.

Theological and Historical Context

According to the *Kebra Nagast*, the Ark of the Covenant was brought to Ethiopia by Menelik I, the son of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba (Makeda). Menelik, upon visiting his father in Jerusalem, is said to have taken the Ark with him to Ethiopia by divine will. The journey of the Ark from Israel to Axum is not merely a historical event in Ethiopian tradition but a theological statement of Ethiopia's spiritual chosenness and its direct connection to God's covenant.

The Ark, or *Tabot*, is believed to be housed today in the **Church of St. Mary of Zion** in Axum, making it the most sacred object in Ethiopian Christianity.

Themes in the Book of the Ark's Journey

1. Divine Will and Chosenness:

- The Ark's journey symbolizes God's favor toward Ethiopia, marking it as a second Zion and a spiritual haven.

2. Protection and Victory:

- The Ark is portrayed as a source of divine protection, ensuring military victories and safeguarding the nation.
3. **Faith and Reverence:**
 - The Ark's journey emphasizes the necessity of faith, purity, and devotion in maintaining a covenant with God.
 4. **Continuity of Worship:**
 - The tradition highlights the unbroken worship of God through the Ark, bridging the Old and New Covenants.
-

Key Narratives and Elements

1. **The Journey to Ethiopia:**
 - Menelik's escort of priests and Levites is detailed, along with miraculous events that affirmed the Ark's divine relocation.
 - The Ark is said to have blessed the journey, with stories of protection and guidance reminiscent of the Israelites' exodus.
 2. **Arrival in Axum:**
 - Upon reaching Ethiopia, the Ark was enshrined in Axum, establishing it as the spiritual heart of the nation.
 3. **Custodianship:**
 - The Ark's guardianship by generations of Ethiopian clergy is emphasized, with strict rituals ensuring its sanctity.
 4. **Liturgical Significance:**
 - The Ark's journey is celebrated in Ethiopian liturgical practices, especially during **Tinket** (Epiphany), when replicas of the Ark (*Tabots*) are paraded in grand processions.
-

Liturgical and Cultural Significance

1. **Feasts and Festivals:**
 - Timket is the most prominent celebration involving the Ark, symbolizing its role in the baptism of Christ and Ethiopia's spiritual heritage.
2. **Hymns and Prayers:**
 - Hymns in the *Deggwa* recount the Ark's journey, praising God's covenant and Ethiopia's role as its steward.

3. Art and Iconography:

- Ethiopian art often depicts the Ark's journey, highlighting its arrival in Axum and its role in Ethiopian history.

4. National Identity:

- The Ark's journey is intertwined with Ethiopia's sense of identity, sovereignty, and divine purpose.

Symbolism and Legacy

The Ark's journey is more than a historical account; it serves as a spiritual metaphor for the believer's journey toward God. It represents:

- **God's Presence:** The Ark is a symbol of God dwelling among His people.
- **Faithful Custodianship:** Ethiopia's guardianship of the Ark reflects the Church's responsibility to preserve and honor divine truth.
- **Pilgrimage and Transformation:** The Ark's journey mirrors the spiritual journey of repentance, faith, and renewal.

Conclusion

The **Ethiopian Book of the Ark's Journey** is a profound narrative that intertwines history, theology, and national identity. Rooted in the *Kebra Nagast* and celebrated through liturgical and cultural traditions, it underscores Ethiopia's unique place in the Christian world as the custodian of the Ark of the Covenant. This legacy continues to inspire devotion and reverence, making the Ark's journey a cornerstone of Ethiopian faith and heritage.

The Hymn of Saint Yared

The day that the Ethiopian poet and hymn writer departed, Genbot 11 (May 19) is blessed and so we shall commemorate it in celebration at Holy Church. Saint Yared rose at the coming of the Nine Saints to Ethiopia. Their Holy scriptures translated by the Saint have huge influence on his writings. He has used the Mysteries and their ideas that he found in their book utilizing it in his language.

Saint Yared has first learned holy scriptures from his teacher Abba Gideon, a priest of 'Aksum, who is also kinsman of his mother Christina. Whilst his father Isaac died when he was seven years old, Yared's mother took him to his uncle Gedeon. After his remarkable discovery of truth at his voyage to "Maykrah" through a worm's effort in consuming a fruit at a tree where he rested, he was able to comprehend a word of God. Not only this, God revealed the Angel's melody for him at the heaven where not only his soul but his body was present. With that descant, He praised God at Axum, in a Church of Zion saying, "Hallelujah to the Father, Hallelujah to the Son, Hallelujah to the Holy Spirit."

Saint Yared's three types of rhyme "Geeze, Ezile and Araraye" were written after his return from the heavens. He has prepared the songs for each seasons for summer, winter, spring, autumn, for festivals and Sabbaths, for the days of the Angels, the Prophets, the Martyrs and the Righteous, in three modes, that is to say, the first mode to be used on ordinary days, the second mode to be used on fast days and days of mourning and the third mode to be used on the great festivals. His songs of heights brought the meeting with the King Gebre Meskel and the Queen.

The Emperor was marveled by his melody so dearly that he did not even notice his spare that entered Saint Yared's foot. Saint Yared, the king, the Queen, all the soldiers and laities gathered to hear the yaredic melody was so drown to his rhyme that they did not even notice his bleeding. But when King Gebre Meskel saw his spear on Yared's foot, he took it out right away and in return for the damage he asked him, "Ask me what ever reward you wish for in return for this thy blood which has been shed"; and Saint Yared said to him, "Swear to me that you will not refuse me." When the king had sworn Saint Yared said to him, "Send me away that I may become a monk."

The king as well as his nobles likewise were exceedingly sad when he heard this. Afraid to prevent his oath, the king permitted Saint Yared's leave.

At his arrival at the church, Saint Yared stood before the Tabernacle of Zion and said the prayer from the beginning, "Holy, and honorable, and glorious, and blessed, and praised, and exalted" to the end thereof. He was raised above the ground the space of a cubit.

Saint Yared departed to the desert of the south, where he lived in fasting and prayer. He was diligent until his flesh mortified exceedingly and finished his strife there. God vowed to him salvation for any man who plead in his name or celebrate his commemoration. Soon after he deported and to where is still mysterious until this day.

His work though is shining till these days for they are the key instrument at the service of our Holy Church within our daily prayer, Divine Liturgy and Melodic hymns in our fast and celebrations.

May his prayer be with us; Amen!

The Ethiopian Book of Holy Feasts

The **Ethiopian Book of Holy Feasts** refers to the collection of liturgical texts, hymns, prayers, and traditions associated with the numerous holy feasts celebrated within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. These feasts, rooted in the Church's rich theological and cultural heritage, commemorate key events in the life of Christ, the Virgin Mary, the saints, and significant biblical moments. While not a single codified book, the term encapsulates the liturgical practices and scriptural readings specific to these sacred occasions.

Theological Foundation

Holy feasts in the Ethiopian Orthodox tradition are deeply rooted in biblical teachings and the liturgical calendar. They serve as reminders of God's covenant, Christ's redemptive work, and the

intercession of saints. The celebration of these feasts reflects the Church's cyclical understanding of time, where sacred history is continually relived and renewed through worship.

Major Categories of Feasts

The Ethiopian Book of Holy Feasts encompasses three primary categories:

1. Feasts of the Lord (*Be'alete Amlak*):

- These commemorate key events in the life of Christ and include:
 - **Genna** (Christmas): Celebrating the birth of Christ.
 - **Tinket** (Epiphany): Commemorating the baptism of Christ in the Jordan River.
 - **Fasika** (Easter): Marking Christ's resurrection.
 - **Meskel** (Finding of the True Cross): Celebrating the discovery of the cross by Queen Helena.

2. Feasts of the Virgin Mary (*Be'alete Maryam*):

- The Ethiopian Church holds a deep veneration for the Virgin Mary, with several feasts dedicated to her, such as:
 - **The Annunciation** (*Be'ale Tsega*): Celebrating the angel Gabriel's announcement to Mary.
 - **The Nativity of Mary** (*Lideta Maryam*): Honoring her birth.
 - **The Assumption of Mary** (*Filseta*): Commemorating her assumption into heaven.

3. Feasts of Saints and Martyrs (*Be'alete Kedusan*):

- Celebrating the lives and deeds of saints, including:
 - **St. George** (*Tirgar*): Honoring the patron saint of Ethiopia.
 - **Abba Tekle Haynanot**: Remembering the Ethiopian saint known for his piety and miracles.
 - **St. Michael** (*Mikael*): One of the most revered archangels in Ethiopian Christianity.

Liturgical Elements

The Ethiopian Book of Holy Feasts integrates several key elements:

1. Scriptural Readings:

- Biblical passages are carefully selected for each feast, often focusing on the event being commemorated. These are read in Ge'ez, the ancient liturgical language of the Church.

2. Hymns and Prayers:

- The *Deggwa* (Ge'ez hymnal) contains hymns specific to each feast, rich in poetic imagery and theological depth.

3. Processions and Rituals:

- Many feasts include elaborate processions, often featuring the *Tabot* (replica of the Ark of the Covenant) carried by priests and deacons, accompanied by chanting, drumming, and the ululations of the faithful.

4. Fasting and Feasting:

- Most major feasts are preceded by a period of fasting, reflecting repentance and spiritual preparation, followed by communal feasting and celebration.

Cultural and Spiritual Significance

The Ethiopian Holy Feasts serve as more than liturgical celebrations; they are communal events that strengthen spiritual bonds and cultural identity. These feasts:

- **Unify Communities:** Gathering people of all ages and backgrounds in worship and fellowship.
- **Preserve Tradition:** Passing down the Church's rich theological and cultural heritage through generations.
- **Inspire Devotion:** Providing opportunities for spiritual renewal and reflection on key aspects of faith.

Symbolism and Thematic Highlights

1. **Light:** Symbolizing Christ as the light of the world, particularly during feasts like Timket and Fasika.
2. **Water:** Central to Timket, representing purification and renewal.
3. **The Cross:** A recurring symbol, especially during Meskel, signifying salvation and victory over sin.

Conclusion

The **Ethiopian Book of Holy Feasts** is a vibrant expression of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church's devotion, theology, and cultural richness. Through its comprehensive liturgical practices, hymns, and communal celebrations, it invites believers to partake in the sacred mysteries of faith while preserving a unique spiritual heritage. These feasts serve as touchstones of divine grace, uniting past and present in a timeless act of worship.

The Miracles of Saint Tekla Haimanot

In the 13th century, a Christian family lived in Ethiopia; the husband who was a priest and loved Jesus very much was called Sagaz Ab (the gift of faith), and the wife who was very rich and loved the poor was called Sarah.

Their patron saint was the Archangel Michael, and they used to make a feast for him on the 12th of every Coptic month by having a mass and after that a banquet for the poor.

The wife was barren and that was why she always prayed to God for a child. "Sarah" used to spend her time in church, busy reading the bible and the psalms. She did her best with the poor and they called her "Agzaharia" (the choice of God).

After many years of peace, a pagan called Motmely ruled the land of "Damoot" and "Shawa". He closed many churches and tried to revive the worship of idols. One day Talanece (the place where Sagaz Ab and Sarah lived) was attacked. When the soldiers entered the country, Sarah was frightened and the people ran away from place to another. Sagaz Ab took a route to hide and was followed by a soldier who wanted to kill him, until they reached a nearby lake, so Sagaz Ab threw himself in the lake to hide from the soldier asking the Archangel Michael to help him through this. At once he felt the water over him as if it's a tent sheltering him, and the Archangel appeared to strengthen him. And when Sagaz Ab did not show up for a long time, the soldier thought he was drowned and went back.

The Archangel told Sagaz Ab that the soldier went away and hence he got out of the lake. At that time the Archangel Michael told Sagaz Ab that he was saved because of his child to be. He told him of great secrets about the child and carried him back to the town, and this was on 12th of Baramhat.

When the priest went back, he found that all the houses had been stolen either of money or of people. Among the latter was his wife Sarah who was kidnapped by the soldiers who wanted to give her as a present to their king Montemely. When the king saw the face of Sarah, he ordered for the richest clothes and precious jewels for her, and to be kept in the city of gods until their wedding.

Sagaz Ab was in great misery and sadness for what happened to his wife whom he loved very much, and was afraid of the evil king, but he went to the house of God at once. He went into the church and kneeled before the Holy Altar and cried and sobbed a lot while he prayed to God to save his wife. During the liturgy, he put his wife's name Sarah on the altar and all the congregation prayed for her. While he was moving around the church he saw a woman in precious clothes praying in great fear to God. When he finished he went to talk to all the new faces that came to the church, and among them this woman. He asked her where she was from, she told him that she had heard of a man called Sagaz Ab whose wife was taken and kidnapped and hence she came to be his wife! Then the priest crossed and told her that priests do not remarry, and that God would protect his wife and would return her safely to him.

Sarah smiled happily for her husband's faith and told him she was his wife and took off the veil that covered his face. Her husband was surprised and asked her how she had come. She told him that the Angel had saved her and got her to the church. The two bowed down before God in the church

and thanked Him for his protection. Then she told him that she prayed for her safety, and Michael, the Archangel came to her to tell her that she would return for the sake of her son.

At night Sagaz Ab had a dream where he saw the sun and a lot of stars in their bedroom and the next day the Archangel told them of the coming of their son. In the morning they gave most of all they had to the poor and they used to make a feast for the archangel every month on the 12th of Kiahk.

On the 24th of Kiahk, "Sarah" gave birth to a beautiful son and called him "The happiness of Sehioun", or "The happiness of the churches". There were many miracles done by him; like when he talked when he was only 3 days old.

After a year and a half, there was a terrible famine that his parents couldn't make the following feast for Michael the Archangel. One day, the mother was praying to God so that she could do anything for the feast of the Archangel. While she was carrying her baby, he wiped her tears and pointed to the kitchen where some flour in a plate was present. He put his hands in the flour and it poured and poured, that the mother gathered every container she had in the house. And the same happened with the ghee, oil and honey. God also gave him the gift of studying the psalms and the Holy Bible.

One night Michael, the Archangel appeared to Pope Kyrillos of Ethiopia in a dream, and told him that the next day a dark colored man would go to him, and would kneel before him. That man had a blessed son, and he was chosen from God. "Consecrate him as a Deacon, then let go of him peacefully", he said.

After this was done while the father and the son were returning, the son asked a group of people for a place to spend the night. One of the group insulted him and hit him without cause. The son shouted asking the help of the Archangel and the man was greatly harmed. The son couldn't bear that because he was full of the Holy Spirit, and he prayed for the man to be cured and the angel cured him, so he believed in God and all his friends and family.

While the son and the father were getting back, (after spending the night at "Amhara") their water was finished and the food became less; so the saint prayed aside and God then created a spring so they could drink from. The saint's parents wanted him to get married, but he refused because he dedicated himself completely to God. So they accepted, but the girl stayed with them at their home (according to the traditions in these countries), but she stayed a virgin as she wished too.

Then he became a priest and his prayers and fasting increased. He stayed with his parents until they passed away. One day while he was practicing his hobby of hunting in the woods, God appeared to him held on the wings of angels saying: "I am your God who protected you since your childhood... Now you hunt people instead of animals. From now your name will be "Takla Haymanout". Then the heavenly insight disappeared.

The saint heard that in "Ketana" the people worship a tree that is haunted by a devil which they fear. So he went there and prayed until the devil cried out: "Send Takla Hemanat away. He is dangerous". Then the saint asked for the help of the Archangel and hence asked the tree to follow him. Its roots made a sound like thunder while it was moving and a lot of people were afraid and the roots killed a lot on the road. The devil shouted asking the saint why he was torturing him and if it wasn't enough that he left the land of "Talanen"? The saint asked the devil to confess before all the

people that he was cheating and to tell them who the real God is, so the devil confessed that Jesus Christ is the real God.

The saint started preaching the people and they were all baptized. They were 111,500. They constructed a church and had their communion. As for the people who were killed by the devil; Saint Takla prayed to God to raise them from the dead. God answered his prayers. The saint baptized about 60,000 people and all "Ketana" became Christians..

While the saint was devoted to praying and fasting in the desert, he heard a voice calling him 3 times asking him to go to "Damout" because there were many people there who needed preaching. Saint Takla was asked to build a church under the name of Virgin Mary there.

When he got there, he started breaking all the statues that the people worship. The saint knew that the son of the prince had an evil spirit; so he prayed for him and the devil got out in the shape of a monkey. The prince believed in Christ and was baptized along with his wife and son. Saint Takla was able to cure a lot of diseases and got out devils by praying to God.

When king Montemly heard that Saint Takla baptized his son, he was very sad and sent his soldiers to the prince to extradite Saint Takla, but the prince refused. So the king sent more soldiers to get the prince and the saint. When they reached the king, they were tortured a lot, but God's angel cured them. Then they were thrown in a cave full of monsters, but again God's angel got them out safely. Then the king himself tried to throw a spear at Saint Takla, but his hand was paralyzed and he cried of pain. The king then ordered the two men to be hanged on two trees. But when the saint was hanged by the neck in the tree, it bent till the saint's feet reached the ground, and there were holy lights from heaven and people saw angel. All this happened till the king at last believed in God and was baptized.

Then one day Jesus Christ appeared to the saint and told him to go to the land of "Amhara" and stay in its monastery until He talked to him again and told him that Michael the Archangel would be with him. On his way to the land of "Amhara", Saint Takla met a monk and they both went to the monastery on a holy cloud prepared by God till they reached there in two days instead of several months.

When the saint was known all over the place, he asked God to protect him from pride, so Michael the Archangel appeared to him and told him to go to the monastery of "Saint Stephans". On the way he saw a deep river that he couldn't cross, so an angel appeared to him and asked him to follow him on the surface of the water. The angel disappeared and the saint appeared as if he was walking on land, until he reached the other side. He lived there in prayer and fasting.

One night God showed him the happiness and the glory of the saints in heaven and he became very happy; specially that he always remembered and imagined the souls of the saints.

From there Saint Takla Haymanot got out to the land of the "Fakharany" with the guidance of the angel. He went there to a saint monk called "John" and remained there under his guidance for 12 years in the monastery of "Adgway".

The angel appeared to the saint and asked him to go to a cave down the valley. The saint said goodbye to the head monk of the monastery and all the monks went out to see him off. The monks

were used to tying whoever gets down with a rope (since the monastery was on top of a hill). While Saint Takla was going down, the rope was cut and the monks were terrified, but they saw six wings getting out from his sides, and carried him until he reached the ground. The monks got back glorifying God for his greatness and for protecting his people.

Our saint got down to a big desert, and he found there many saints who were fasting for five days and did not eat any food; but they were used to eating from the desert plants and drinking from the dew drops on Saturdays and Sundays. He visited many monasteries and churches and he was very keen on visiting Jerusalem, so he went there and saw where Jesus was baptized.

Then the angel of God appeared to Saint Takla telling him to go to the land of "El-Sofan" where his grave would be, and there he would build a church bearing his name.

He last settled in the land of "Shawiry" where he built his well-known monastery known as "Elbianos". Many people followed him and became Monks. He used to pray standing on one foot; the right one, until his leg was broken. His monks took it and covered it. He never got out of his cave, but remained there till his death. When Saint Takla's days came to an end, and his body turned like a burned piece of wood, God appeared to him and told him that he would die of plague, and he would go to heaven with three of his followers.

When it was time for him to die, he got sick of the plague as well as three other monks. He saw God, Virgin Mary and many angels headed by the Archangel Michael. And his cave was lighted with heavenly light, and it was full of a nice scent and his soul was carried to heaven. This was on 24th of Mesore, at the age of 99 years and 8 months. May his prayers be with us. Amen.

The Ethiopian Book of Creation Hymns

The **Ethiopian Book of Creation Hymns** represents a collection of liturgical hymns, prayers, and poetic compositions within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church that celebrate the majesty of God's creation. While not a single codified book, this body of hymns reflects the Church's rich tradition of praising God as the Creator of the universe. These hymns draw deeply from biblical texts, theological insights, and the natural world, emphasizing the beauty, harmony, and divine wisdom inherent in creation.

Theological Foundation

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church views creation as a manifestation of God's power, love, and artistry. The hymns often align with the biblical creation narrative in **Genesis 1**, celebrating God's work in bringing order and life to the cosmos. Key themes include:

- **God as the Source of Life:** Everything in creation originates from God's word and will.
- **The Goodness of Creation:** Each element of creation is proclaimed "good" in Genesis, reflecting God's perfection.

- **Hunan Stewardship:** Humanity's role as caretakers of creation is emphasized, highlighting responsibility and reverence.
-

Content and Themes in the Creation Hymns

1. Praise for the Creator:

- Hymns often begin with exaltations of God's greatness and sovereignty, acknowledging Him as the architect of the heavens, earth, and all living things.

2. Cosmic Harmony:

- The interconnectedness of creation is a recurring theme, with hymns describing the balance and order of the natural world as evidence of divine wisdom.

3. Nature's Testimony:

- The hymns frequently depict elements of nature—mountains, rivers, stars, and animals—as participating in the praise of God.

4. Human Reflection:

- Humanity's unique position in creation is celebrated, with hymns urging believers to reflect on God's glory and purpose through their lives.
-

Liturgical Expressions

The Ethiopian Book of Creation Hymns plays a significant role in worship:

1. Morning and Evening Prayers:

- Creation hymns are recited or sung during daily liturgical services, particularly in the morning, to give thanks for the renewal of life.

2. Festivals and Feasts:

- Celebrations like **Tinket** (Epiphany) and **Meskel** (Finding of the True Cross) incorporate creation-themed hymns to highlight God's providence.

3. Seasonal Observances:

- Hymns marking agricultural cycles or natural phenomena, such as rain, are common, reflecting Ethiopia's agrarian roots.
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Sources of Inspiration

1. Biblical Texts:

- The Psalms, particularly **Psaln 1G** ("The heavens declare the glory of God") and **Psaln 104** (a hymn of creation), form the foundation of many creation hymns.
 - Passages from Genesis and Job, describing the marvels of creation, are often incorporated.
2. **Ge'ez Hynnal (*Deggwa*):**
- The Church's liturgical hymnal includes numerous compositions dedicated to creation, blending poetic imagery with theological reflection.
3. **The Book of Enoch (1 Enoch):**
- Unique to the Ethiopian canon, this apocryphal text provides detailed descriptions of the natural order and celestial realms, influencing creation hymns.
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Synbolism and Inagery

The creation hymns are rich with symbolic language:

- **Light and Darkness:** Representing God's first creative act and the distinction between good and evil.
 - **Water:** A symbol of life, purification, and God's sustaining power.
 - **The Sun and Stars:** Emblems of God's glory and eternal presence.
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Cultural and Spiritual Significance

The Ethiopian Book of Creation Hymns not only enhances liturgical worship but also strengthens the faithful's connection to nature and their role as stewards of creation. It:

- **Inspires Reverence:** Encouraging gratitude and respect for God's handiwork.
 - **Fosters Connunity:** Celebrations of creation often involve communal singing and participation.
 - **Pronotes Environnental Stewardship:** The hymns remind believers of their duty to care for the earth as a sacred trust.
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Conclusion

The **Ethiopian Book of Creation Hynns** is a testament to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church's profound reverence for God's creative power. Through its poetic beauty, theological depth, and integration into worship, it invites believers to join creation in praising the Creator, deepening their faith while celebrating the wonders of the natural world. These hymns serve as a bridge between heaven and earth, uniting humanity with the divine purpose of creation.

The Martyrdom of Abuna Gebre Menfes Kidus

Abune Gebre Menfes Qidus [means the salve of the Holy Spirit] was born on Tahisas 29 in 829 E.C; his date of birth and conception coincided with the day of His GOD, JESUS CHRIST. His father's name was Simeon, and his mother's name was 'Aklesya who were righteous before GOD.

They remained childless in moan and prayer for a period of thirty years because they had not got a son. However, later God heard their prayer and gave them this child. According to his Gadl (Hagiography), the saint was appeared from the city of Nehisa, in Egypt and lived there 300 years in the desert of Egypt. Then, he came to Ethiopia by the order of God and wandered about the wildernesses of Ethiopia. He, then, departed to the land of Ziquala, that later on became the great monastery of the saint and lived there 265 years as if naked and drinking no water and eating no food, exceeding many prophets of old and unlike a man upon earth, but likened to the angels.

So his holy life began and was accomplished, now on the third year of his birth, GOD commanded the angel Gabriel and said unto him, "Go to the house of Simeon, and take the child from the breast of his mother, and bring him into the desert where there are many monks, and lay him down in their courtyard." And say to the abbot, "Take the child from the courtyard, and bring him into the sanctuary" Due to this divine order, the abbot raised him according to the Church's rule, teaching all the scriptures and other religious learning. Later, he got ordination from the bishop called Abba Abraham and he dwelt in the Egyptian desert called 'Gebota' [most probably in Upper Egypt] three hundred years.

Later on, he came to Ethiopia via Axum in 1129 E.C. during the reign of Qidus Harbey (also called Gebre Mariam), and expanded evangelistic activities in north and central Ethiopia. Then, he went to the next reigning king 'Lalibela', said to be in 1168 E.C., to discuss church issues. King Lalibela was excited and bowed to the saint many times and requested of him to stay with him. But the saint did not accept the king's request, instead he promised the king saying, "I will live in mount Ziquala and I will not depart from your country." He is one of the most renowned Saints in Ethiopia along with St. Tekle Haymanot in evangelistic activities and is known as the founder of Zequala monastery. He is known by performing incredible miracles throughout his age and afterwards and is recognized by his exceptional quality, here are some of his miracles; on the third day of his birth, the child rose up, and came down from his mother's breast, and he stood up and bowed three times to the FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY SPIRIT, and who also said, "Glory be to the FATHER, Glory be to the SON, Glory be to the HOLY SPIRIT, Who has brought me out of the darkness into the light." The saint did not eat the bread of earth, or drink water, or wear raiment and he never prepared anything for his body, but he lived naked in the desert. However, he was arrayed by his beard and the hair of his head that covered his whole body like a thatch and swept the ground. He was like the fowls of heaven, for he thought nothing about the food of this world, but he hungered and thirsted for God; his sustenance was offered from heaven.

One day, the three saints (Abba Samuel of Waldebba, Abba Anbes of the land of Hazalo and Abba Benyam of the upper land of Egypt) came to the land of Kabd, carried on their lions, to ask and see Abune Gebre Menfes Qidus's celebrity. When they reached there they couldn't get him and they stayed there for seven days in search of him. Then a certain lion came to the three saints and devoured their lions. Then, the saints felt bitterly sad, and their sorrow was revealed unto our father, Abune Gebre Menfes Qidus. Then after he came to them with the great power accompanied by his

lions and leopards , the saint rebuked the lions, and he rose up the dead lions from the belly of the lions and sent them away to their former owners.

During his combat, Satan came to him in the form of a black raven, pecked at his eyes, and dug out his eyeballs. Consequently, the saint remained blind for ninety-eight years, till the angles (Michael and Gabriel) healed his eyes through their breathing. He lived 100 years in solitude in Lake Ziquala, praying for Ethiopia and the world as well. He lived in the desert escorted by 60 lions and 60 tigers that served him. The saint lived 300 years in Egypt and 262 in Ethiopia with a total life span of 562 years on earth and died on Megabit 5 /March 13. Due to his spiritual struggle, he was entitled with these names: "the Star of the desert" and "the Head of Anchorites".

The Ethiopian church commemorates the feast of the saint on the 5th date of every Ethiopian month, of which Megabit 5 /March 13 is the day of the death of the saint), and Tikmit 5 /October 15 is the great annual feast of the saint. The reason for his commemoration on the 5th date of every Ethiopian month is: The entry of the saint from Egypt to Ethiopia; the day on which he went out from the lake where he received the covenant from God; the day on which he raised the dead lions; the first mass of his church built in his name was also celebrated on this day. His departure is commemorated on Megabit 5/March 13. Consequently his Gadl states that, he died in Ziquala and rested in Medre Kebd.

The Gospel of Barabbas

The **Gospel of Barabbas** is not an established or canonical text in Christian tradition, including the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. Barabbas is a well-known figure from the New Testament, mentioned in the Gospel accounts (e.g., **Matthew 27:15-26**, **Mark 15:6-15**, **Luke 23:18-25**, and **John 18:3G-40**) as the criminal released by Pontius Pilate at the request of the crowd, instead of Jesus.

However, the term "Gospel of Barabbas" could hypothetically refer to a fictional or apocryphal narrative focusing on Barabbas's life, redemption, or role within the context of Jesus's crucifixion. Below is an exploration of the concept from theological, narrative, and speculative perspectives.

Who Was Barabbas?

1. Biblical Context:

- Barabbas is described as a criminal who had committed murder during an insurrection and was imprisoned by Roman authorities. He was presented alongside Jesus as part of Pilate's custom to release one prisoner during Passover.
- The crowd chose Barabbas to be freed, shouting for Jesus to be crucified, symbolizing humanity's rejection of innocence in favor of sin and rebellion.

2. Symbolic Role:

- Theologically, Barabbas is often seen as a representation of humanity's sinful nature. His release in place of Jesus is interpreted as a metaphor for substitutionary atonement, where Jesus takes the punishment for humanity's sins.

What Could the Gospel of Barabbas Explore?

If such a narrative existed, it might delve into speculative or creative interpretations of Barabbas's life before, during, and after his release:

1. Barabbas's Backstory:

- A story could explore Barabbas as a zealot or revolutionary fighting against Roman oppression, driven by political motives but conflicted morally.

2. Barabbas's Redemption:

- The Gospel might envision Barabbas's reaction to Jesus's crucifixion, possibly leading to his repentance or conversion. Witnessing Jesus's sacrifice could have profoundly impacted him, prompting a spiritual transformation.

3. A Reflection on Human Choices:

- The narrative could explore themes of free will, justice, and grace, examining how Barabbas's release symbolizes the choices humanity makes when faced with truth and redemption.

4. Barabbas as a Witness:

- The story could depict Barabbas as an observer of early Christianity, wrestling with the guilt or gratitude of being spared while Jesus suffered.

Theological Implications

1. Substitutionary Atonement:

- Barabbas's release is often interpreted as a direct analogy for the Christian doctrine of Jesus dying in the place of sinners.

2. Forgiveness and Grace:

- A narrative about Barabbas could emphasize the unmerited nature of grace, showing how even the unworthy can be recipients of divine mercy.

3. Human Rebellion:

- The crowd's choice of Barabbas over Jesus highlights humanity's tendency to reject divine truth in favor of earthly desires or misguided priorities.

Ethiopian Orthodox Perspective

In the Ethiopian Orthodox tradition, Barabbas is not a central figure of theological discussion, as the focus remains on Jesus's redemptive act. However, a reflection on Barabbas's role could align with the Church's teachings on repentance and God's mercy.

Speculative Considerations:

- An apocryphal Ethiopian text might frame Barabbas as a symbol of the struggle between earthly rebellion and divine obedience.
- Hymns or prayers in the Ethiopian liturgy could hypothetically use Barabbas's story to illustrate themes of grace and substitution.

Cultural and Literary Impact

Although no "Gospel of Barabbas" exists, the figure of Barabbas has inspired various interpretations in art, literature, and theology. His story challenges readers and audiences to consider themes of justice, mercy, and the cost of redemption.

Conclusion

The **Gospel of Barabbas**, while fictional or speculative, could serve as a profound exploration of theological and human themes. By imagining Barabbas's life and his potential encounter with grace, such a narrative would offer new insights into the enduring power of Christ's sacrifice and its transformative impact on individuals and communities.

The Hymn of the Aeons

The **Hymn of the Aeons** could be imagined as a profound and mystical composition that celebrates the eternal nature of God, the order of creation, and the unfolding of divine wisdom throughout the ages. While no specific text with this title exists in the canon of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church or broader Christian tradition, the concept aligns with themes often found in Ethiopian hymns, prayers, and apocryphal writings. Such a hymn would likely reflect on the relationship between time, eternity, and God's sovereign plan.

Possible Context and Themes

If the *Hymn of the Aeons* were a liturgical or theological text, it might focus on these key themes:

1. God as the Eternal One

- The hymn would extol God as the Creator and Sustainer of all ages (*aeons*), emphasizing His unchanging nature and eternal wisdom.

- **Biblical Inspiration:** "Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God" (**Psaln G0:2**).

2. The Cycles of Time and Creation

- It might explore how God governs the progression of time, from the creation of the cosmos to the end of the ages.
- This would align with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church's liturgical calendar, which reflects the sacred rhythm of divine history.

3. The Role of Angels and Divine Order

- Aeons are sometimes associated with angelic hierarchies or the divine governance of creation, themes common in Ethiopian mystical traditions, such as those found in the *Book of Enoch*.

4. Humanity's Place in Eternity

- The hymn might meditate on humanity's journey through time toward eternal communion with God, highlighting repentance, grace, and salvation.

5. Christ as the Lord of the Aeons

- It would celebrate Christ's role as the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, emphasizing His eternal reign and redemptive work.

Structure of the Hymn

The *Hymn of the Aeons* could follow the poetic and rhythmic style typical of Ethiopian liturgical hymns:

I. Opening Praise

- A call to worship, glorifying God as the Lord of eternity and the source of all life.
- Example: "From age to age, Your name is exalted, O Eternal One, whose light knows no end."

II. Reflection on Creation

- Descriptions of God's creative acts, focusing on the harmony of the heavens, the earth, and all living things.
- Example: "You stretched the heavens like a canopy and numbered the stars by name."

III. The Angelic Chorus

- Celebration of the celestial hosts who serve God across the aeons, praising Him unceasingly.
- Example: "The seraphim cry, 'Holy, Holy, Holy,' while the cherubim bow before Your throne."

IV. Humanity's Journey

- A meditation on humanity's fall and redemption, guided by God's eternal plan.
- Example: "Through the aeons, Your mercy endures; through the ages, Your love redeems."

V. Christ as the Fulfillment of Time

- Proclamation of Christ as the Savior who bridges time and eternity.
- Example: "You are the Alpha, the first light of creation, and the Omega, the everlasting flame."

VI. Closing Doxology

- A triumphant declaration of God's eternal reign.
- Example: "To You be glory from age to age, O King of the Aeons, forever and ever. Amen."

Liturgical and Mystical Significance

1. Eternal Praise:

- The hymn would embody the Ethiopian Orthodox Church's tradition of continual praise, reflecting the Church's emphasis on worship as a participation in the heavenly liturgy.

2. Meditation on Divine Order:

- By contemplating the aeons, believers are reminded of God's perfect plan and their role in His eternal kingdom.

3. Connection to Mystical Writings:

- Inspired by texts like the *Book of Enoch* and other apocrypha, the hymn might explore mystical themes of time, creation, and the divine hierarchy.

4. Encouragement in Faith:

- It would provide hope and assurance that God's sovereignty spans all ages, guiding believers through the challenges of life toward eternal glory.

Conclusion

The *Hymn of the Aeons* would be a powerful and poetic expression of God's eternal nature, the harmony of creation, and the ultimate redemption of humanity. Rooted in the Ethiopian Orthodox tradition's deep sense of time and eternity, it would serve as a reminder of God's unchanging love and the believer's journey toward eternal communion with Him. Such a hymn would inspire awe, devotion, and hope, drawing worshippers into the mystery of God's timeless reign.

The Apocalypse of the Virgin

1. The all-holy mother of God was about to proceed to the Mount of Olives to pray; and praying to the Lord our God she said: In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; let the archangel Gabriel descend, that he may tell me concerning the chastisements and concerning things in heaven and on the earth and under the earth. And as she said the word the archangel Michael descended with the angels of the East and the West and angels of the South and the North, and they saluted the highly favoured one and said to her: Hail, reflection of the Father, hail dwelling of the Son, hail command of the Holy Spirit, hail firmament of the seven heavens, hail firmament of the eleven strongholds, hail worship of the angels, hail loftier than the prophets unto the throne of God. And the holy mother of God said to the angel: Hail Michael, commander-in-chief, the minister of the invisible Father, hail Michael, commander-in-chief, associate of my Son, hail Michael, commander-in-chief, most dread of the six-winged, hail Michael, commander-in-chief, who rules through all things and art worthy to stand beside the throne of the Lord, hail Michael, commander-in-chief, who art about to sound the trumpet and awaken those who have been asleep for ages: hail Michael, commander-in-chief, first of all unto the throne of God.

2. And having greeted all the angels in like manner, the highly favoured one prayed the commander-in-chief regarding the chastisements, saying: Tell to me all things on the earth. And the commander-in-chief said to her: If you ask me, highly favoured one, I will tell you. And the highly favoured one said to him: How many are the chastisements with which the race of man is chastised? And the archangel said to her: The chastisements are innumerable. And the highly favoured one said to him: Tell me the things in heaven and on the earth.

3. Then the commander-in-chief, Michael, commanded the Western angels that revelation should be made, and Hades opened, and she saw those who were chastised in Hades: and there lay there a multitude of men and women, and there was a great lamentation. And the highly favoured one asked the commander-in-chief: Who are these and what is their sin? And the commander-in-chief said: These, all holy, are those who did not worship the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and for this cause they are thus chastised here.

4. And she saw in another place a great darkness: and the all holy said: What is this darkness and who are they who are being chastised? And the commander-in-chief said: Many souls are lying in this darkness. And the all holy one said: Let this darkness be taken away in order that I may see this chastisement also. And the commander-in-chief said to the highly favoured one: It is not possible, all holy, that you should see this chastisement also. And the angels guarding them answered and said: We have a command from the invisible Father that they shall not see the light till your blessed Son shall shine forth. And plunged in grief the all holy lifted up her eyes to the angels touching the undefiled word of the Father, and said: In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit let the darkness be taken away, that I may see this chastisement also. And straightway that darkness was lifted up and covered the seven heavens: and there lay a great multitude of both men and women, and there arose a great lamentation and a great cry began. And seeing them the all holy wept and said to them: What are you doing, wretched ones? Who are you? And how are you found there? And there was no voice or hearkening. And the angels guarding them said: Why do you not speak to the highly favoured one? And those who were under chastisement said to her: O highly favoured one, from eternity we see not the light, and we are not able to keep off that up there. And

splashing pitch flowed down upon them: and seeing them the all holy wept. And again those who were being chastised said to her: How do you ask concerning us, holy lady, Mother of God? Your blessed Son came to The earth and did not make enquiry concerning us, neither Abraham the patriarch, nor John the Baptist, nor Moses the great prophet, nor the Apostle Paul, and unto us their light shone not: and now, all holy Mother of God, the armour of the Christians, the bringer of great comfort on account of the Christians, how do you ask concerning us? Then the all holy Mother of God said to Michael, the commander-in-chief: What is their sin? And Michael, the commander-in-chief, said: These are they who did not believe in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and did not confess you to be the Mother of God, and that the Lord Jesus Christ was born of you and took flesh, and for this cause they are chastised there. And again weeping, the all holy Mother of God said to them: Why did ye so greatly err, wretched ones? Did ye not hear that the whole creation names my name? And having said these words the darkness fell over them as it was from the beginning.

5. And the commander-in-chief said: Whither would you go, highly favoured one? To the West or to the South? And the highly favoured answered: Let us go to the South. And immediately there appeared the cherubim and the seraphim and four hundred angels, and led out the highly favoured one to the South, where came out the river of fire, and there there lay a multitude of men and women, some up to the girdle, others up to the neck, and others up to the crown of the head: and seeing them the all holy Mother of God cried out with a loud voice to the commander-in-chief and said: Who are these, and what is their sin who stand in the fire up to the girdle? And the commander-in-chief said: These, all holy one, are they who inherited the curse of father and mother, and for this cause they are thus chastised here as accursed.

6. And the all holy one said: And who are these standing in the fire up to the breasts? And the commander-in-chief said: These are whosoever cast off their wives and defiled them in adultery, and for this cause they are thus chastised here.

7. And the all holy one said to the commander-in-chief: Who are these standing up to the neck in the flame of the fire? And the commander-in-chief said: These, all holy one, are whosoever ate of the flesh of men. And the all holy one said: And how is it possible for one man to eat of the flesh of another? And the commander-in-chief said: Listen, all holy one, and I will tell you: These are they whosoever brought down their own children out of their own wombs and cast them out as food for dogs, and whosoever gave up their brothers in the presence of kings and governors, these ate the flesh of man, and for this cause they are thus chastised.

8. And the all holy one said: Who are these set in the fire up to the crown? And the commander-in-chief said: These, all holy one, are whosoever lay hold of the precious cross and swear to a lie: by the power of the cross of the Lord. The angels tremble and worship with fear, and men lay hold of it and swear to a lie and do not know what they testify: and for this cause they are thus chastised here.

9. And in another place the all holy one saw a man hung by the feet, and worms devoured him. And she asked the commander-in-chief: Who is this and what is his sin? And the commander-in-chief said: This is he who took usury for his gold, and for this cause he is thus chastised here.

10. And she saw a woman hanging by her two ears, and all the beasts came out of her mouth and gnawed her in pieces: and the highly favoured one asked the commander-in-chief: Who is she, and what is her sin? And the commander-in-chief said: She is she who turned aside into strange houses and those of her neighbours and spoke evil words to make strife, and for that cause she is thus chastised here.

11. And seeing these things the all holy Mother of God wept and said to the commander-in-chief: It were well for man that he had not been born. And the commander-in-chief said: Verily, all holy one, you have not seen the great chastisements. And the all holy one said to the commander-in-chief: Come, Michael, great commander-in-chief, and lead me that I may see all the chastisements. And the commander-in-chief said: Where do you wish, all holy one, that we should go? And the highly favoured one answered: To the West: and straightway the cherubim appeared and led the highly favoured to the West.

12. And she saw a cloud full of fire and in it there was a multitude of men and women. And the all holy one said: What was their sin? And the commander-in-chief said: These, all holy one, are they who on the morning of the Lord's day sleep like the dead, and for that reason they are thus chastised here. And the all holy one said: If anyone cannot rise, what shall he do? And the commander-in-chief said: Listen, all holy one: if anyone's house is fastened on the four (sides?) and surrounds him and he cannot come out, he has forgiveness.

13. And she saw in another place burning benches of fire and on them sat a multitude of men and women and burned on them. And the all holy one asked: Who are these and what is their sin? And the commander-in-chief said: These, all holy one, are they who do not rise up to the presbyter when they enter into the church of God, and for this cause they are thus chastised here.

14. And the all holy one saw in another place an iron tree and it had branches of iron, and on it there hung a multitude of men and women by their tongues. And seeing them the all holy one wept, and asked the commander-in-chief saying: Who are these and what was their sin? And the commander-in-chief said: These are perjurers, blasphemers, slanderers, whosoever divided brothers from brothers. And the all holy one said: How is it possible to divide brothers from brothers? And the commander-in-chief said: Listen, all holy one, and I will tell you about this: When some from among the nations desired to be blasphemed, he shall receive ceaseless retribution.

15. And in another place the all holy one saw a man hanging from his four extremities, and from his nails blood gushed vehemently, and his tongue was tied in a flame of fire, and he was unable to groan and say the *Kyrie eleison me*. And when she had seen him the all holy one wept and herself said the *Kyrie eleison* thrice: and after the saying of the prayer, came the angel who had authority over the scourge and loosed the man's tongue: and the all holy one asked the commander-in-chief: Who is this wretched one who has this chastisement? And the commander-in-chief said: This, all holy one, is the steward who did not the will of God, but ate the things of the church and said: He who ministers to the altar shall be nourished from the altar: and for this cause he is thus chastised here. And the all holy one said: Let it be unto him according to his faith. And again he tied his tongue.

16. And Michael, the commander-in-chief said: Come hither, all holy one, and I will show unto you where the priests are chastised. And the all holy one came out and saw presbyters hanging by their twenty nails, and fire came out of their heads. And seeing them the all holy one asked the commander-in-chief: Who are these and what is their sin? And the commander-in-chief said: These, all holy one, are they who stand beside the throne of God, and when they sang of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, the pearls fell out, and the awful throne of heaven shook and the footstool of our Lord Jesus Christ trembled, and they did not perceive it: and for this cause they are thus chastised here.

17. And the all holy one saw a man and a winged beast having three heads like flames of fire: the two heads were towards his eyes and the third head towards his mouth. And seeing him the all holy one asked the commander-in-chief: Who is this, that he cannot save himself from the mouth of the dragon? And the commander-in-chief said to her: This, all holy one, is the reader who does not practise in his own habits according to what is worthy of the holy Gospel: and for this cause he is thus chastised here.

18. And the commander-in-chief said: Come hither, all holy one, and I will show you where the angelic and archangelic form is chastised. She proceeded and saw them lying in the fire and the sleepless worm gnawed them: and the all holy one said: Who are these, and what is their sin? And the commander-in-chief said: These, all holy one, are they who possessed the archangelic and apostolic form: hearken, all holy one, concerning this: on earth they were called patriarchs and bishops, and they were not worthy of their name: on earth they heard 'Bless (the Lord) ye saints,' and in heaven they were not called saints, because they did not act as bearers of the archangelic form: and for this cause they are thus chastised here.

19. And she saw women hanging by their nails, and a flame of fire came out of their mouth and burned them: and all the beasts coming out of the fire gnawed them to pieces, and groaning they cried out: Have pity on us, have pity, for we are chastised worse than all those who are under chastisement. And seeing them the all holy one wept, and asked the commander-in-chief, Michael: Who are these and what is their sin? And the commander-in-chief said: These are the wives of presbyters who did not honour the presbyters, but after the death of the presbyter took husbands, and for this cause they are thus chastised here.

20. And the all holy one saw after the same manner also a deaconess hanging from a crag and a beast with two heads devoured her breasts. And the all holy one asked: What is her sin? And the commander-in-chief said: She, all holy one, is an archdeaconess who defiled her body in fornication, and for this cause she is thus chastised here.

21. And she saw other women hanging over the fire, and all the beasts devoured them. And the all holy one asked the commander-in-chief: Who are these and what is their sin? And he said: These are they who did not do the will of God, lovers of money and those who took interest on accounts, and the immodest.

22. And when she had heard these things the all holy one wept and said: Woe unto sinners. And the commander-in-chief said: Why do you lament, all holy one? Now verily you have not seen the great chastisements. And the highly favoured one said: Come, Michael, the great commander-in-chief of the powers above, tell me how I may see all the chastisements. And the commander-in-chief said:

Where do you wish that we should go, all holy one? To the East or towards the left parts of Paradise? And the all holy one said: To the left parts of Paradise.

23. And immediately when she had spoken, the cherubim and seraphim stood beside her and led the highly favoured one out to the left parts of Paradise. And behold, there was a great river, and the appearance of the river was blacker than pitch, and in it there were a multitude of men and women: it boiled like a furnace of forges, and its waves were like a wild sea over the sinners: and when the waves rose, they sank the sinners ten thousand cubits and they were unable to keep it off and say: Have mercy on us, you just judge: for the sleepless worm devoured them, and there was no reckoning of the number of those who devoured them. And seeing the all holy Mother of God the angels who chastised them cried out with one voice: Holy is God who has compassion on account of the Mother of God: we give you thanks, O Son of God, that from eternity we did not see the light, and today through the Mother of God we have seen the light: and again they shouted with one voice, saying: Hail, highly favoured Mother of God: Hail, lamp of the inaccessible light: Hail to you also, Michael, the commander-in-chief, you that are ambassador from the whole creation: for we, seeing the chastisement of sinners are greatly grieved. And the all holy one, when she saw the angels humbled on account of the sinners, lamented and said: Woe to sinners and their neighbours. And the all holy one said: Let us see the sinners. And the highly favoured one, coming with the archangel Michael and all the armies of the angels lifted up one voice saying: Lord have mercy. And after the making of the prayer earnestly, the wave of the river rested and the fiery waves grew calm, and the sinners appeared as a grain of mustard-seed: and seeing them the all holy one lamented and said: What is this river, and what are its waves? And the commander-in-chief said: This river is the outer fire, and those who are being tortured are the Jews who crucified our Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, and who refused holy baptism, and those who commit fornication and sin against the sweet and passionless perfume of marriage, and he who debauches mother and daughter, and the poisoners and those who slay with the sword, and the women who strangle their offspring. And the all holy one said: According to their faith so be it unto them. And straightway the waves rose over the sinners and the darkness covered them. And the commander-in-chief said: Hearken, you highly favoured one: if anyone shall be cast into this darkness, his remembrance shall never be in the sight of God. And the all holy Mother of God said: Woe to sinners, because the flame of the fire is everlasting.

24. And the commander-in-chief said: Come hither, all holy one, and I will show unto you the lake of fire: and see where the race of the Christians is chastised. And the all holy one proceeded and saw: and some she heard, but others she did not see: and she asked the commander-in-chief: Who are these, and what is their sin? And the commander-in-chief said: These, all holy one, are those who were Christ, but worked the works of the devil and wasted the time of their repentance: and for this cause they are thus chastised here.

25. And she said: I pray, one request will I make of you, let me also be chastised with the Christians, because they are the children of my son. And the commander-in-chief said: Rest in Paradise, holy lady, Mother of God. And the all holy one said: I pray you, move the fourteen firmaments and the seven heavens, and let us pray for the Christians that the Lord our God may hearken unto us and have mercy on them. And the commander-in-chief said: As the Lord God lives, the great name, seven times a day and seven times a night, when we lead up the hymn of the Lord, we make remembrance for the sake of sinners, and the Lord accounts us as naught.

26. And the all holy one said: I pray you, commander-in-chief, command the armies of the angels and let them place me on the height of heaven and let me into the presence of the invisible Father. And immediately the commander-in-chief commanded, and the chariot of the cherubim and seraphim appeared, and they exalted the highly favoured one to the height of heaven and placed her in the presence of the invisible Father: And she stretched forth her hands to the undefiled throne of the Father and said: Have mercy, O Lord, on the Christian sinners, for I saw them being chastised and I cannot bear their complaint. Let me go forth and be chastised myself for the Christians. I do not pray, O Lord, for the unbelieving Jews, but for the Christians I entreat your compassion. And there came a second voice from the invisible Father saying: How can I have mercy on them, when they did not have mercy on their own brothers? And the all holy one said: Lord, have mercy on the sinners: behold the chastisements, for every creature on the earth calls upon my name: and when the soul comes forth out of the body, it cries saying, Holy Lady, Mother of God. Then the Lord said to her: Hearken, all holy Mother of God, if anyone names and calls upon your name, I will not forsake him, either in heaven or on earth.

27. And the all holy one said: Where is Moses? Where are all the prophets and fathers who never sinned? Where are you, holy Paul of God? Where is the holy Lord's Day, the boast of the Christians? Where is the power of the precious and life-giving cross, which delivered Adam and Eve from the ancient curse? Then Michael and all the angels raised one voice saying: Lord, have mercy on the sinners. Then Moses also cried: Have mercy, Lord, on those to whom I gave your law. Then John also called: Have mercy, Lord, on those to whom I gave your Gospel. Then Paul cried: Have mercy, Lord, on those to whom I brought your epistles in the Church. And the Lord God said: Hearken, all you righteous: if according to the law which Moses gave, and according to the Gospel which John gave, and according to the epistles which Paul carried, they thus be judged. And they had nothing to say except, Have mercy, O just judge.

28. And the all holy Mother of God said: Have mercy, Lord, on the Christians, because they kept your law and gave heed to your gospel, but they were simple ones. Then the Lord said to her: Hearken, all holy one: if anyone did evil to them and they did not requite him the evil, you say well that they attended to both my law and my gospel, but if he did not do them wrong and they requited him evil, how may I say that these are holy men? Now they shall be rewarded according to their wrongdoing. Then all hearing the voice of the Lord had nothing to answer; and the all holy one, when she saw that the saints were at a loss, and their Lord did not hear, and his mercy was hidden from them, then the all holy one said: Where is Gabriel, who announced unto me the Hail, you that from eternity shall conceive him who is without beginning like the Father, and now does not look upon sinners? Where is the great commander-in-chief? Come hither, all you saints whom God justified, and let us fall down in the presence of the invisible Father, in order that the Lord God may hear us, and have mercy on sinners. Then Michael, the commander-in-chief, and all the saints fell on their faces in the presence of the invisible Father, saying: Have mercy, Lord, on the Christian sinners.

29. Then the Lord, seeing the prayer of the saints, had compassion and said: Go down, my beloved son, and because of the prayer of the saints let your face shine on earth to sinners. Then the Lord came down from his undefiled throne: and when they saw Him, those who were under chastisement raised one voice saying: Have mercy on us, King of ages. Then the Lord of all things

said: Hearken, all you sinners and righteous men: I made paradise and made man after my image: but he transgressed, and for his own sins was delivered to death: but I did not suffer the works of my hands to be tyrannized over by the serpent: wherefore I bowed the heavens and came down and was born of Mary, the holy undefiled Mother of God, that I might set you free: I was sin: I was nailed to the cross to free you from the ancient curse: I asked for water and you gave me vinegar mingled with gall: I was laid in the grave: I trampled on the enemy: I raised up mine elect, and even thus ye would not hear me. But now, because of the prayer of my mother Mary, because she has wept much for your sake, and because of Michael my archangel, and because of the multitude of my saints, I grant you to have rest on the day of Pentecost to glorify the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

30. Then all the angels and archangels, thrones, lordships, authorities, governments, powers, and the many-eyed cherubim and the six-winged seraphim and all the apostles and prophets and martyrs and all the saints raised one voice, saying: Glory to you, O Lord: glory to you, lover of men: glory to you, King of ages: glory be to your compassion: glory be to your long suffering: glory be to your unspeakable justice of judgment, because you have been long-suffering with sinners and impious men: Yours is it to pity and to save. To him be the glory and the power to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

The Acts of James the Less

The **Acts of James the Less** refers to a hypothetical or apocryphal narrative about James the Less, one of the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ. While there is no known canonical or apocryphal text explicitly titled "The Acts of James the Less," such a work would likely explore the life, ministry, and legacy of James, also known as James the son of Alphaeus. He is a lesser-known figure compared to James the Greater (the son of Zebedee) or James, the brother of Jesus.

Who Was James the Less?

1. Biblical References:

- James the Less is mentioned in the synoptic Gospels (e.g., **Matthew 10:3**, **Mark 3:18**, **Luke 6:15**) as one of the twelve apostles.
- He is called "the Less" possibly to distinguish him from James the Greater or because he was younger or shorter in stature.
- He is often identified as the son of Alphaeus and potentially related to Mary (called "the mother of James" in **Mark 15:40**), who was present at the crucifixion.

2. Role Among the Apostles:

- James the Less is traditionally associated with steadfastness and humility, serving quietly but faithfully in spreading the Gospel.

Hypothetical Content of the Acts of James the Less

If such a text existed, it might follow the structure and themes of other apocryphal acts, such as *The Acts of Peter* or *The Acts of Thomas*, blending history, theology, and legend.

1. Early Life and Calling:

- It might describe James's early life, his encounter with Jesus, and his call to apostleship.

2. Ministry and Miracles:

- The text could recount his missionary journeys, preaching in Judea or beyond, and miraculous acts, including healings and exorcisms.

3. Teachings:

- As an apostle, James might deliver discourses emphasizing humility, faith, and perseverance.

4. Persecution and Martyrdom:

- Like many of the apostles, James the Less may have faced persecution for his faith. Tradition holds that he was martyred, possibly by stoning or being thrown from the Temple in Jerusalem.

5. Legacy and Veneration:

- The Acts might highlight how his teachings inspired early Christian communities and contributed to the spread of the Gospel.

Themes in the Acts of James the Less

1. Humility and Service:

- As "the Less," James's ministry would exemplify the importance of humility and faithful service in God's kingdom.

2. Perseverance Amid Persecution:

- His life could demonstrate the strength of faith in overcoming trials and suffering for the sake of the Gospel.

3. Divine Power through Simplicity:

- Miracles attributed to James might underscore how God works through the humble and ordinary to accomplish extraordinary things.

4. The Quiet Impact of Faith:

- His story could emphasize the transformative power of a life lived in quiet obedience to God's will.
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Liturgical and Cultural Context

While no formal "Acts of James the Less" exists, Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity and other traditions venerate the apostles through feast days, hymns, and liturgical readings. The life of James the Less might be reflected in:

1. **Conmemorative Feasts:**

- Ethiopian Orthodox Christians honor the apostles collectively and individually, celebrating their contributions to the faith.

2. **Ge'ez Hymns and Prayers:**

- Hymns in the *Deggwa* (liturgical hymnal) may include references to the apostles, highlighting their role in spreading the Gospel.

3. **Icons and Art:**

- James the Less is sometimes depicted in Christian art, symbolizing the quiet strength of the apostles' mission.
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Conclusion

The **Acts of James the Less**, while speculative, would serve as a valuable narrative celebrating the life and ministry of a lesser-known but vital apostle. Through themes of humility, faith, and perseverance, it would inspire Christians to recognize the importance of serving God faithfully, regardless of prominence or recognition. The quiet yet impactful legacy of James the Less remains a testament to the enduring power of a life dedicated to Christ.

The Homily on the Resurrection by John Chrysostom

Then the disciples went away again unto their own home. But Mary stood without at the sepulcher, weeping.

1. Full of feeling somehow is the female sex, and more inclined to pity. I say this, lest you should wonder how it could be that Mary wept bitterly at the tomb, while Peter was in no way so affected. For, The disciples, it says, went away unto their own home; but she stood shedding tears. Because hers was a feeble nature, and she as yet knew not accurately the account of the Resurrection; whereas they having seen the linen clothes and believed, departed to their own homes in astonishment. And wherefore went they not straightway to Galilee, as had been commanded them before the Passion? They waited for the others, perhaps, and besides they were yet at the height of their amazement. These then went their way: but she stood at the place, for, as I have said, even the sight of the tomb tended greatly to comfort her. At any rate, you see her, the more to ease her grief,

stooping down, and desiring to behold the place where the body lay. And therefore she received no small reward for this her great zeal. For what the disciples saw not, this saw the woman first, Angels sitting, the one at the feet, the other at the head, in white; even the dress was full of much radiance and joy. Since the mind of the woman was not sufficiently elevated to accept the Resurrection from the proof of the napkins, something more takes place, she beholds something more; Angels sitting in shining garments, so as to raise her thus awhile from her passionate sorrow, and to comfort her. But they said nothing to her concerning the Resurrection, yet is she gently led forward in this doctrine. She saw countenances bright and unusual; she saw shining garments, she heard a sympathizing voice. For what says (the Angel)?

John 20:13

Woman, why do you weep?

By all these circumstances, as though a door was being opened for her, she was led little by little to the knowledge of the Resurrection. And the manner of their sitting invited her to question them, for they showed that they knew what had taken place; on which account they did not sit together either, but apart from one another. For because it was not likely that she would dare at once to question them, both by questioning her, and by the manner of their sitting, they bring her to converse. What then says she? She speaks very warmly and affectionately;

They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.

What do you say? Do you not know yet anything concerning the Resurrection, but do you still form fancies about His being laid ? Do you see how she had not yet received the sublime doctrine?

John 20:14

And when she had thus said, she turned herself back.

And by what kind of consequence is it, that she having spoken to them, and not having yet heard anything from them, turned back? Methinks that while she was speaking, Christ suddenly appearing behind her, struck the Angels with awe; and that they having beheld their Ruler, showed immediately by their bearing, their look, their movements, that they saw the Lord; and this drew the woman's attention, and caused her to turn herself backwards. To them then He appeared on this wise, but not so to the woman, in order not at the first sight to terrify her, but in a meaner and ordinary form, as is clear from her supposing that He was the gardener. It was meet to lead one of so lowly a mind to high matters, not all at once, but gently. He therefore in turn asks her,

John 20:15

Woman, why do you weep? Whom do you seek?

This showed that He knew what she wished to ask, and led her to make answer. And the woman, understanding this, does not again mention the name of Jesus, but as though her questioner knew the subject of her enquiry replies,

Sir, if you have borne him hence, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.

Again she speaks of laying down, and taking away, and carrying, as though speaking of a corpse. But her meaning is this; If you have borne him hence for fear of the Jews, tell me, and I will take him. Great is the kindness and loving affection of the woman, but as yet there is nothing lofty with her. Wherefore He now sets the matter before her, not by appearance, but by Voice. For as He was at one time known to the Jews, and at another time unperceived though present; so too in speaking, He, when He chose, then made Himself known; as also when He said to the Jews, Whom do you seek? they knew neither the Countenance nor the Voice until He chose. And this was the case here. And He named her name only, reproaching and blaming her that she entertained such fancies concerning One who lived. But how was it that,

John 20:16

She turned herself, and says, if so be that He was speaking to her? It seems to me, that after having said, Where have ye laid him? she turned to the Angels to ask why they were astonished, and that then Christ, by calling her by name, turned her to Himself from them, and revealed Himself by His Voice; for when He called her Mary, then she knew Him; so that the recognition was not by His appearance, but by His Voice. And if any say, Whence is it clear that the Angels were awestruck, and that on this account the woman turned herself, they will in this place say, whence is it clear that she would have touched Him, and fallen at His feet? Now as this is clear from His saying, Touch Me not, so is the other clear from its saying, that she turned herself. But wherefore, said He,

John 20:17

Touch Me not?

2. Some assert, that she asked for spiritual grace, because she had heard Him when with the disciples say, If I go to the Father, 'I will ask Him, and He shall give you another Comforter.' c. xiv. 3, 16 But how could she who was not present with the disciples have heard this? Besides, such an imagination is far from the meaning here. And how should she ask, when He had not yet gone to the Father? What then is the sense? Methinks that she wished still to converse with Him as before, and that in her joy she perceived nothing great in Him, although He had become far more excellent in the Flesh. To lead her therefore from this idea, and that she might speak to Him with much awe, (for neither with the disciples does He henceforth appear so familiar as before,) He raises her thoughts, that she should give more reverent heed to Him. To have said, Approach Me not as you did before, for matters are not in the same state, nor shall I henceforth be with you in the same way, would have been harsh and high-sounding; but the saying,

I am not yet ascended to the Father, though not painful to hear, was the saying of One declaring the same thing. For by saying, I am not yet ascended, He shows that He hastes and presses there; and that it was not meet that One about to depart there, and no longer to converse with men, should be looked on with the same feelings as before. And the sequel shows that this is the case.

Go and say unto the brethren, that I go unto My Father, and your Father, unto My God and your God.

Yet He was not about to do so immediately, but after forty days. How then says He this? With a desire to raise their minds, and to persuade them that He departs into the heavens. But the, To My Father and your Father, to My God, and your God, belongs to the Dispensation, since the ascending also belongs to His Flesh. For He speaks these words to one who had no high

thoughts. Is then the Father His in one way, and ours in another? Assuredly then He is. For if He is God of the righteous in a manner different from that in which He is God of other men, much more in the case of the Son and us. For because He had said, Say to the brethren, in order that they might not imagine any equality from this, He showed the difference. He was about to sit on His Father's throne, but they to stand by. So that albeit in His Subsistence according to the Flesh He became our Brother, yet in Honor He greatly differed from us, it cannot even be told how much.

John 20:18

She therefore departs, bearing these tidings to the disciples.

So great a good is perseverance and endurance. But how was it that they did not any more grieve when He was about to depart, nor speak as they had done before? At that time they were affected in such a way, as supposing that He was about to die; but now that He was risen again, what reason had they to grieve? Moreover, Mary reported His appearance and His words, which were enough to comfort them. Since then it was likely that the disciples on hearing these things would either not believe the woman, or, believing, would grieve that He had not deemed them worthy of the vision, though He promised to meet them in Galilee; in order that they might not by dwelling on this be unsettled, He let not a single day pass, but having brought them to a state of longing, by their knowledge that He was risen, and by what they heard from the woman, when they were thirsting to see Him, and were greatly afraid, (which thing itself especially made their yearning greater,) He then, when it was evening, presented Himself before them, and that very marvelously. And why did He appear in the evening? Because it was probable that they would then especially be very fearful. But the marvel was, why they did not suppose Him to be an apparition; for He entered, when the doors were shut, and suddenly. The chief cause was, that the woman beforehand had wrought great faith in them; besides, He showed His countenance to them clear and mild. He came not by day, in order that all might be collected together. For great was the amazement; for neither did He knock at the door but all at once stood in the midst, and showed His side and His hands. At the same time also by His Voice He smoothed their tossing thought, by saying,

John 20:19

Peace be unto you.

That is, Be not troubled; at the same time reminding them of the word which He spoke to them before the Crucifixion, My peace I leave unto you John 14:27; and again, In me you have peace, but in the world you shall have tribulation. John 16:33

John 20:20

Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord.

Do you see the words issuing in deeds? For what He said before the Crucifixion, that I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man takes from you John 16:22, this He now accomplished in deed; but all these things led them to a most exact faith. For since they had a truceless war with the Jews, He continually repeated the, Peace be unto you, giving them, to counterbalance the war, the consolation. And so this was the first word that He spoke to them after

the Resurrection, (wherefore also Paul continually says, Grace be unto you and peace,) and to women He gives good tidings of joy, because that sex was in sorrow, and had received this as the first curse. Therefore He gives good tidings suitable respectively, to men, peace, because of their war; joy to women, because of their sorrow. Then having put away all painful things, He tells of the successes of the Cross, and these were the peace. Since then all hindrances have been removed, He says, and I have made My victory glorious, and all has been achieved, (then He says afterwards,)

John 20:21

As My Father has sent Me, so send I you.

You have no difficulty, owing to what has already come to pass, and to the dignity of Me who send you. Here He lifts up their souls, and shows them their great cause of confidence, if so be that they were about to undertake His work. And no longer is an appeal made to the Father, but with authority He gives to them the power. For,

John 20:22-23

He breathed on them, and said, Receive the Holy Ghost. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.

As a king sending forth governors, gives power to cast into prison and to deliver from it, so in sending these forth, Christ invests them with the same power. But how says He, If I go not away, He will not come John 16:7, and yet gives them the Spirit? Some say that He gave not the Spirit, but rendered them fit to receive It, by breathing on them. For if Daniel when he saw an Angel was afraid, what would not they have suffered when they received that unspeakable Gift, unless He had first made them learners? Wherefore He said not, You have received the Holy Ghost, but, Receive the Holy Ghost. Yet one will not be wrong in asserting that they then also received some spiritual power and grace; not so as to raise the dead, or to work miracles, but so as to remit sins. For the gifts of the Spirit are of different kinds; wherefore He added, Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, showing what kind of power He was giving. But in the other case, after forty days, they received the power of working miracles. Wherefore He says, You shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa. Acts 1:8 And witnesses they became by means of miracles, for unspeakable is the grace of the Spirit and multiform the gift. But this comes to pass, that you may learn that the gift and the power of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, is One. For things which appear to be peculiar to the Father, these are seen also to belong to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. How then, says some one, does none come to the Son, 'except the Father draw him'? John 6:44 Why, this very thing is shown to belong to the Son also. I, He says, am the Way: no man comes unto the Father but by Me. John 14:6 And observe that it belongs to the Spirit also; for No man can call Jesus Christ Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. 1 Corinthians 12:3 Again, we see that the Apostles were given to the Church at one time by the Father, at another by the Son, at another by the Holy Ghost, and that the diversities of gifts 1 Corinthians 12:4 belong to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

4. Let us then do all we can to have the Holy Spirit with ourselves, and let us treat with much honor those into whose hands its operation has been committed. For great is the dignity of

the priests. Whosoever sins, it says, ye remit, they are remitted unto them; wherefore also Paul says, Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves. Hebrews 13:17 And hold them very exceedingly in honor; for thou indeed carest about your own affairs, and if you order them well, you give no account for others, but the priest even if he rightly order his own life, if he have not an anxious care for yours, yea and that of all those around him, will depart with the wicked into hell; and often when not betrayed by his own conduct, he perishes by yours, if he have not rightly performed all his part. Knowing therefore the greatness of the danger, give them a large share of your goodwill; which Paul also implied when he said, For they watch for your souls, and not simply so, but, as they that shall give account. Hebrews 13:17 They ought therefore to receive great attention from you; but if you join with the rest in trampling upon them, then neither shall your affairs be in a good condition. For while the steersman continues in good courage, the crew also will be in safety; but if he be tired out by their reviling him and showing ill-will against him, he cannot watch equally well, or retain his skill, and without intending it, throws them into ten thousand mischiefs. And so too the priest, if he enjoy honor from you, will be able well to order your affairs; but if you throw them into despondency, you weaken their hands, and render them, as well as yourselves, an easy prey to the waves, although they be very courageous. Consider what Christ says concerning the Jews. The Scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; all therefore whatsoever they bid you to do, do ye. Matthew 23:2-3 Now we have not to say, the priests sit on Moses' seat, but on that of Christ; for they have successively received His doctrine. Wherefore also Paul says, We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us. 2 Corinthians 5:20 See ye not that in the case of Gentile rulers, all bow to them, and oftentimes even persons superior in family, in life, in intelligence, to those who judge them? Yet still because of him who has given them, they consider none of these things, but respect the decision of their governor, whosoever he be that receives the rule over them. Is there then such fear when man appoints, but when God appoints do we despise him who is appointed, and abuse him, and besmirch him with ten thousand reproaches, and though forbidden to judge our brethren, do we sharpen our tongue against our priests? And how can this deserve excuse, when we see not the beam in our own eye, but are bitterly over-curious about the mote in another's? Do you not know that by so judging you make your own judgment the harder? And this I say not as approving of those who exercise their priesthood unworthily, but as greatly pitying and weeping for them; yet do I not on this account allow that it is right that they should be judged by those over whom they are set. And although their life be very much spoken against, you, if you take heed to yourself, will not be harmed at all in respect of the things committed to them by God. For if He caused a voice to be uttered by an ass, and bestowed spiritual blessings by a diviner, working by the foolish mouth and impure tongue of Balaam, in behalf of the offending Jews, much more for the sake of you the right-minded will He, though the priests be exceedingly vile, work all the things that are His, and will send the Holy Ghost. For neither does the pure draw down that Spirit by his own purity, but it is grace that works all. For all, it says, is for your sake, whether it be Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas. 1 Corinthians 3:22-23 For the things which are placed in the hands of the priest it is with God alone to give; and however far human wisdom may reach, it will appear inferior to that grace. And this I say, not in order that we may order our own life carelessly, but that when some of those set over you are careless livers, you the ruled may not often heap up evil for yourselves. But why speak I of priests? Neither Angel nor Archangel can do anything with regard to what is given from God; but the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, dispenses all, while the priest lends his

tongue and affords his hand. For neither would it be just that through the wickedness of another, those who come in faith to the symbols of their salvation should be harmed. Knowing all these things, let us fear God, and hold His priests in honor, paying them all reverence; that both for our own good deeds, and the attention shown to them, we may receive a great return from God, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, dominion, and honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

The Letter of Clement to the Corinthians (Expanded)

Chapter 1. The Salutation. Praise of the Corinthians Before the Breaking Forth of Schism Among Them.

The church of God which sojourns at Rome, to the church of God sojourning at Corinth, to them that are called and sanctified by the will of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, from Almighty God through Jesus Christ, be multiplied.

Owing, dear brethren, to the sudden and successive calamitous events which have happened to ourselves, we feel that we have been somewhat tardy in turning our attention to the points respecting which you consulted us; and especially to that shameful and detestable sedition, utterly abhorrent to the elect of God, which a few rash and self-confident persons have kindled to such a pitch of frenzy, that your venerable and illustrious name, worthy to be universally loved, has suffered grievous injury. For who ever dwelt even for a short time among you, and did not find your faith to be as fruitful of virtue as it was firmly established? Who did not admire the sobriety and moderation of your godliness in Christ? Who did not proclaim the magnificence of your habitual hospitality? And who did not rejoice over your perfect and well-grounded knowledge? For you did all things without respect of persons, and walked in the commandments of God, being obedient to those who had the rule over you, and giving all fitting honour to the presbyters among you. You enjoined young men to be of a sober and serious mind, you instructed your wives to do all things with a blameless, becoming, and pure conscience, loving their husbands as in duty bound; and you taught them that, living in the rule of obedience, they should manage their household affairs becomingly, and be in every respect marked by discretion.

Chapter 2. Praise of the Corinthians Continued.

Moreover, you were all distinguished by humility, and were in no respect puffed up with pride, but yielded obedience rather than extorted it, and were more willing to give than to receive. Acts 20:35 Content with the provision which God had made for you, and carefully attending to His words, you were inwardly filled with His doctrine, and His sufferings were before your eyes. Thus a profound and abundant peace was given to you all, and you had an insatiable desire for doing good, while a full outpouring of the Holy Spirit was upon you all. Full of holy designs, you did, with true earnestness of mind and a godly confidence, stretch forth your hands to God Almighty, beseeching Him to be merciful unto you, if you had been guilty of any involuntary transgression. Day and night you were anxious for the whole brotherhood, 1 Peter 2:17 that the number of God's elect might be saved with mercy and a good conscience. You were sincere and uncorrupted, and forgetful of injuries between one another. Every kind of faction and schism was abominable in your sight. You mourned over the transgressions of your neighbours: their deficiencies you deemed your

own. You never grudged any act of kindness, being ready to every good work. Titus 3:1 Adorned by a thoroughly virtuous and religious life, you did all things in the fear of God. The commandments and ordinances of the Lord were written upon the tablets of your hearts. Proverbs 7:3

Chapter 3. The Sad State of the Corinthian Church After Sedition Arose in It from Envy and Emulation.

Every kind of honour and happiness was bestowed upon you, and then was fulfilled that which is written, My beloved ate and drank, and was enlarged and became fat, and kicked. Deuteronomy 32:15 Hence flowed emulation and envy, strife and sedition, persecution and disorder, war and captivity. So the worthless rose up against the honoured, those of no reputation against such as were renowned, the foolish against the wise, the young against those advanced in years. For this reason righteousness and peace are now far departed from you, inasmuch as every one abandons the fear of God, and has become blind in His faith, neither walks in the ordinances of His appointment, nor acts a part becoming a Christian, but walks after his own wicked lusts, resuming the practice of an unrighteous and ungodly envy, by which death itself entered into the world. Wisdom 2:24

Chapter 4. Many Evils Have Already Flowed from This Source in Ancient Times.

For thus it is written: And it came to pass after certain days, that Cain brought of the fruits of the earth a sacrifice unto God; and Abel also brought of the firstlings of his sheep, and of the fat thereof. And God had respect to Abel and to his offerings, but Cain and his sacrifices He did not regard. And Cain was deeply grieved, and his countenance fell. And God said to Cain, Why are you grieved, and why is your countenance fallen? If you offer rightly, but do not divide rightly, have you not sinned? Be at peace: your offering returns to yourself, and you shall again possess it. And Cain said to Abel his brother, Let us go into the field. And it came to pass, while they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. You see, brethren, how envy and jealousy led to the murder of a brother. Through envy, also, our father Jacob fled from the face of Esau his brother. Envy made Joseph be persecuted unto death, and to come into bondage. Genesis xxxvii Envy compelled Moses to flee from the face of Pharaoh king of Egypt, when he heard these words from his fellow-countryman, Who made you a judge or a ruler over us? Will you kill me, as you killed the Egyptian yesterday? Exodus 2:14 On account of envy, Aaron and Miriam had to make their abode without the camp. Numbers 12:14-15 Envy brought down Dathan and Abiram alive to Hades, through the sedition which they excited against God's servant Moses. Numbers 16:33 Through envy, David not only underwent the hatred of foreigners, but was also persecuted by Saul king of Israel.

Chapter 5. No Less Evils Have Arisen from the Same Source in the Most Recent Times. The Martyrdom of Peter and Paul.

But not to dwell upon ancient examples, let us come to the most recent spiritual heroes. Let us take the noble examples furnished in our own generation. Through envy and jealousy the greatest and most righteous pillars [of the church] have been persecuted and put to death. Let us set before our eyes the illustrious apostles. Peter, through unrighteous envy, endured not one or two, but numerous labours; and when he had at length suffered martyrdom, departed to the place of glory due to him. Owing to envy, Paul also obtained the reward of patient endurance, after being seven times thrown into captivity, compelled to flee, and stoned. After preaching both in the east

and west, he gained the illustrious reputation due to his faith, having taught righteousness to the whole world, and come to the extreme limit of the west, and suffered martyrdom under the prefects. Thus was he removed from the world, and went into the holy place, having proved himself a striking example of patience.

Chapter 6. Continuation. Several Other Martyrs.

To these men who spent their lives in the practice of holiness, there is to be added a great multitude of the elect, who, having through envy endured many indignities and tortures, furnished us with a most excellent example. Through envy, those women, the Danaids and Dirce, being persecuted, after they had suffered terrible and unspeakable torments, finished the course of their faith with steadfastness, and though weak in body, received a noble reward. Envy has alienated wives from their husbands, and changed that saying of our father Adam, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh. Genesis 2:23 Envy and strife have overthrown great cities, and rooted up mighty nations.

Chapter 7. An Exhortation to Repentance.

These things, beloved, we write unto you, not merely to admonish you of your duty, but also to remind ourselves. For we are struggling on the same arena, and the same conflict is assigned to both of us. Wherefore let us give up vain and fruitless cares, and approach to the glorious and venerable rule of our holy calling. Let us attend to what is good, pleasing, and acceptable in the sight of Him who formed us. Let us look steadfastly to the blood of Christ, and see how precious that blood is to God which, having been shed for our salvation, has set the grace of repentance before the whole world. Let us turn to every age that has passed, and learn that, from generation to generation, the Lord has granted a place of repentance to all such as would be converted unto Him. Noah preached repentance, and as many as listened to him were saved. Jonah proclaimed destruction to the Ninevites; Jonah iii but they, repenting of their sins, propitiated God by prayer, and obtained salvation, although they were aliens [to the covenant] of God.

Chapter 8. Continuation Respecting Repentance.

The ministers of the grace of God have, by the Holy Spirit, spoken of repentance; and the Lord of all things has himself declared with an oath regarding it, As I live, says the Lord, I desire not the death of the sinner, but rather his repentance; Ezekiel 33:11 adding, moreover, this gracious declaration, Repent, O house of Israel, of your iniquity. Ezekiel 18:30 Say to the children of my people, Though your sins reach from earth to heaven, and though they be redder Isaiah 1:18 than scarlet, and blacker than sack-cloth, yet if you turn to me with your whole heart, and say, Father! I will listen to you, as to a holy people. And in another place He speaks thus: Wash you and become clean; put away the wickedness of your souls from before my eyes; cease from your evil ways, and learn to do well; seek out judgment, deliver the oppressed, judge the fatherless, and see that justice is done to the widow; and come, and let us reason together. He declares, Though your sins be like crimson, I will make them white as snow; though they be like scarlet, I will whiten them like wool. And if you be willing and obey me, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse, and will not hearken unto me, the sword shall devour you, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken these things. Isaiah 1:16-20 Desiring, therefore, that all His beloved should be partakers of repentance, He has, by His almighty will, established [these declarations].

Chapter 9. Examples of the Saints.

Wherefore, let us yield obedience to His excellent and glorious will; and imploring His mercy and loving-kindness, while we forsake all fruitless labours and strife, and envy, which leads to death, let us turn and have recourse to His compassions. Let us steadfastly contemplate those who have perfectly ministered to his excellent glory. Let us take (for instance) Enoch, who, being found righteous in obedience, was translated, and death was never known to happen to him. Noah, being found faithful, preached regeneration to the world through his ministry; and the Lord saved by him the animals which, with one accord, entered into the ark.

Chapter 10. Continuation of the Above.

Abraham, styled the friend, was found faithful, inasmuch as he rendered obedience to the words of God. He, in the exercise of obedience, went out from his own country, and from his kindred, and from his father's house, in order that, by forsaking a small territory, and a weak family, and an insignificant house, he might inherit the promises of God. For God said to him, Get you out from your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's house, into the land which I shall show you. And I will make you a great nation, and will bless you, and make your name great, and you shall be blessed. And I will bless them that bless you, and curse them that curse you; and in you shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Genesis 12:1-3 And again, on his departing from Lot, God said to him, Lift up your eyes, and look from the place where you now are, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see, to you will I give it, and to your seed forever. And I will make your seed as the dust of the earth, [so that] if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall your seed also be numbered. Genesis 13:14-16 And again [the Scripture] says, God brought forth Abram, and spoke unto him, Look up now to heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them; so shall your seed be. And Abram believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. On account of his faith and hospitality, a son was given him in his old age; and in the exercise of obedience, he offered him as a sacrifice to God on one of the mountains which He showed him.

Chapter 11. Continuation. Lot.

On account of his hospitality and godliness, Lot was saved out of Sodom when all the country round was punished by means of fire and brimstone, the Lord thus making it manifest that He does not forsake those that hope in Him, but gives up such as depart from Him to punishment and torture. Genesis xix; cf. 2 Peter 2:6-9 For Lot's wife, who went forth with him, being of a different mind from himself, and not continuing in agreement with him [as to the command which had been given them], was made an example of, so as to be a pillar of salt unto this day. This was done that all might know that those who are of a double mind, and who distrust the power of God, bring down judgment on themselves and become a sign to all succeeding generations.

Chapter 12. The Rewards of Faith and Hospitality. Rahab.

On account of her faith and hospitality, Rahab the harlot was saved. For when spies were sent by Joshua, the son of Nun, to Jericho, the king of the country ascertained that they had come to spy out their land, and sent men to seize them, in order that, when taken, they might be put to death. But the hospitable Rahab receiving them, concealed them on the roof of her house under some

stalks of flax. And when the men sent by the king arrived and said, There came men unto you who are to spy out our land; bring them forth, for so the king commands, she answered them, The two men whom you seek came unto me, but quickly departed again and are gone, thus not discovering the spies to them. Then she said to the men, I know assuredly that the Lord your God has given you this city, for the fear and dread of you have fallen on its inhabitants. When therefore you shall have taken it, keep ye me and the house of my father in safety. And they said to her, It shall be as you have spoken to us. As soon, therefore, as you know that we are at hand, you shall gather all your family under your roof, and they shall be preserved, but all that are found outside of your dwelling shall perish. Moreover, they gave her a sign to this effect, that she should hang forth from her house a scarlet thread. And thus they made it manifest that redemption should flow through the blood of the Lord to all them that believe and hope in God. You see, beloved, that there was not only faith, but prophecy, in this woman.

Chapter 13. An Exhortation to Humility.

Let us therefore, brethren, be of humble mind, laying aside all haughtiness, and pride, and foolishness, and angry feelings; and let us act according to that which is written (for the Holy Spirit says, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, neither let the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glories glory in the Lord, in diligently seeking Him, and doing judgment and righteousness), being especially mindful of the words of the Lord Jesus which He spoke teaching us meekness and long-suffering. For thus He spoke: Be merciful, that you may obtain mercy; forgive, that it may be forgiven to you; as you do, so shall it be done unto you; as you judge, so shall you be judged; as you are kind, so shall kindness be shown to you; with what measure you measure, with the same it shall be measured to you. By this precept and by these rules let us establish ourselves, that we walk with all humility in obedience to His holy words. For the holy word says, On whom shall I look, but on him that is meek and peaceable, and that trembles at my words? Isaiah 66:2

Chapter 14. We Should Obey God Rather Than the Authors of Sedition.

It is right and holy therefore, men and brethren, rather to obey God than to follow those who, through pride and sedition, have become the leaders of a detestable emulation. For we shall incur no slight injury, but rather great danger, if we rashly yield ourselves to the inclinations of men who aim at exciting strife and tumults, so as to draw us away from what is good. Let us be kind one to another after the pattern of the tender mercy and benignity of our Creator. For it is written, The kind-hearted shall inhabit the land, and the guiltless shall be left upon it, but transgressors shall be destroyed from off the face of it. Proverbs 2:21-22 And again [the Scripture] says, I saw the ungodly highly exalted, and lifted up like the cedars of Lebanon: I passed by, and, behold, he was not; and I diligently sought his place, and could not find it. Preserve innocence, and look on equity: for there shall be a remnant to the peaceable man.

Chapter 15. We Must Adhere to Those Who Cultivate Peace, Not to Those Who Merely Pretend to Do So.

Let us cleave, therefore, to those who cultivate peace with godliness, and not to those who hypocritically profess to desire it. For [the Scripture] says in a certain place, This people honours me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. And again: They bless with their mouth, but curse

with their heart. And again it says, They loved Him with their mouth, and lied to Him with their tongue; but their heart was not right with Him, neither were they faithful in His covenant. Let the deceitful lips become silent, [and let the Lord destroy all the lying lips,] and the boastful tongue of those who have said, Let us magnify our tongue: our lips are our own; who is lord over us? For the oppression of the poor, and for the sighing of the needy, will I now arise, says the Lord: I will place him in safety; I will deal confidently with him.

Chapter 16. Christ as an Example of Humility.

For Christ is of those who are humble-minded, and not of those who exalt themselves over His flock. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Sceptre of the majesty of God, did not come in the pomp of pride or arrogance, although He might have done so, but in a lowly condition, as the Holy Spirit had declared regarding Him. For He says, Lord, who has believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? We have declared [our message] in His presence: He is, as it were, a child, and like a root in thirsty ground; He has no form nor glory, yea, we saw Him, and He had no form nor comeliness; but His form was without eminence, yea, deficient in comparison with the [ordinary] form of men. He is a man exposed to stripes and suffering, and acquainted with the endurance of grief: for His countenance was turned away; He was despised, and not esteemed. He bears our iniquities, and is in sorrow for our sakes; yet we supposed that [on His own account] He was exposed to labour, and stripes, and affliction. But He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we were healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; [every] man has wandered in his own way; and the Lord has delivered Him up for our sins, while He in the midst of His sufferings opens not His mouth. He was brought as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before her shearer is dumb, so He opens not His mouth. In His humiliation His judgment was taken away; who shall declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth. For the transgressions of my people was He brought down to death. And I will give the wicked for His sepulchre, and the rich for His death, because He did no iniquity, neither was guile found in His mouth. And the Lord is pleased to purify him by stripes. If you make an offering for sin, your soul shall see a long-lived seed. And the Lord is pleased to relieve Him of the affliction of His soul, to show Him light, and to form Him with understanding, to justify the Just One who ministers well to many; and He Himself shall carry their sins. On this account He shall inherit many, and shall divide the spoil of the strong; because His soul was delivered to death, and He was reckoned among the transgressors, and He bare the sins of many, and for their sins was He delivered. And again He says, I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All that see me have derided me; they have spoken with their lips; they have wagged their head, [saying] He hoped in God, let Him deliver Him, let Him save Him, since He delights in Him. You see, beloved, what is the example which has been given us; for if the Lord thus humbled Himself, what shall we do who have through Him come under the yoke of His grace?

Chapter 17. The Saints as Examples of Humility.

Let us be imitators also of those who in goat-skins and sheep-skins Hebrews 11:37 went about proclaiming the coming of Christ; I mean Elijah, Elisha, and Ezekiel among the prophets, with those others to whom a like testimony is borne [in Scripture]. Abraham was specially honoured, and was called the friend of God; yet he, earnestly regarding the glory of God, humbly declared, I am but dust and ashes. Genesis 18:27 Moreover, it is thus written of Job, Job was a righteous man, and

blameless, truthful, God-fearing, and one that kept himself from all evil. Job 1:1 But bringing an accusation against himself, he said, No man is free from defilement, even if his life be but of one day. Job 14:4-5 Moses was called faithful in all God's house; and through his instrumentality, God punished Egypt with plagues and tortures. Yet he, though thus greatly honoured, did not adopt lofty language, but said, when the divine oracle came to him out of the bush, Who am I, that You send me? I am a man of a feeble voice and a slow tongue. And again he said, I am but as the smoke of a pot.

Chapter 18. David as an Example of Humility.

But what shall we say concerning David, to whom such testimony was borne, and of whom God said, I have found a man after my own heart, David the son of Jesse; and in everlasting mercy have I anointed him? Yet this very man says to God, Have mercy on me, O Lord, according to Your great mercy; and according to the multitude of Your compassions, blot out my transgression. Wash me still more from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me. Against You only have I sinned, and done that which is evil in Your sight; that You may be justified in Your sayings, and may overcome when You are judged. For, behold, I was conceived in transgressions, and in sins did my mother conceive me. For, behold, You have loved truth; the secret and hidden things of wisdom have You shown me. You shall sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed; You shall wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. You shall make me to hear joy and gladness; my bones, which have been humbled, shall exult. Turn away Your face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and establish me by Your governing Spirit. I will teach transgressors Your ways, and the ungodly shall be converted unto You. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation: my tongue shall exult in Your righteousness. O Lord, You shall open my mouth, and my lips shall show forth Your praise. For if You had desired sacrifice, I would have given it; You will not delight in burnt-offerings. The sacrifice [acceptable] to God is a bruised spirit; a broken and a contrite heart God will not despise.

Chapter 19. Imitating These Examples, Let Us Seek After Peace.

Thus the humility and godly submission of so great and illustrious men have rendered not only us, but also all the generations before us, better; even as many as have received His oracles in fear and truth. Wherefore, having so many great and glorious examples set before us, let us turn again to the practice of that peace which from the beginning was the mark set before us; and let us look steadfastly to the Father and Creator of the universe, and cleave to His mighty and surpassingly great gifts and benefactions of peace. Let us contemplate Him with our understanding, and look with the eyes of our soul to His long-suffering will. Let us reflect how free from the wrath He is towards all His creation.

Chapter 20. The Peace and Harmony of the Universe.

The heavens, revolving under His government, are subject to Him in peace. Day and night run the course appointed by Him, in no wise hindering each other. The sun and moon, with the companies of the stars, roll on in harmony according to His command, within their prescribed limits, and

without any deviation. The fruitful earth, according to His will, brings forth food in abundance, at the proper seasons, for man and beast and all the living beings upon it, never hesitating, nor changing any of the ordinances which He has fixed. The unsearchable places of abysses, and the indescribable arrangements of the lower world, are restrained by the same laws. The vast unmeasurable sea, gathered together by His working into various basins, never passes beyond the bounds placed around it, but does as He has commanded. For He said, Thus far shall you come, and your waves shall be broken within you. Job 38:11 The ocean, impassable to man and the worlds beyond it, are regulated by the same enactments of the Lord. The seasons of spring, summer, autumn, and winter, peacefully give place to one another. The winds in their several quarters fulfil, at the proper time, their service without hindrance. The ever-flowing fountains, formed both for enjoyment and health, furnish without fail their breasts for the life of men. The very smallest of living beings meet together in peace and concord. All these the great Creator and Lord of all has appointed to exist in peace and harmony; while He does good to all, but most abundantly to us who have fled for refuge to His compassions through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be glory and majesty for ever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 21. Let Us Obey God, and Not the Authors of Sedition.

Take heed, beloved, lest His many kindnesses lead to the condemnation of us all. [For thus it must be] unless we walk worthy of Him, and with one mind do those things which are good and well-pleasing in His sight. For [the Scripture] says in a certain place, The Spirit of the Lord is a candle searching the secret parts of the belly. Proverbs 20:27 Let us reflect how near He is, and that none of the thoughts or reasonings in which we engage are hid from Him. It is right, therefore, that we should not leave the post which His will has assigned us. Let us rather offend those men who are foolish, and inconsiderate, and lifted up, and who glory in the pride of their speech, than [offend] God. Let us reverence the Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood was given for us; let us esteem those who have the rule over us; let us honour the aged among us; let us train up the young men in the fear of God; let us direct our wives to that which is good. Let them exhibit the lovely habit of purity [in all their conduct]; let them show forth the sincere disposition of meekness; let them make manifest the command which they have of their tongue, by their manner of speaking; let them display their love, not by preferring one to another, but by showing equal affection to all that piously fear God. Let your children be partakers of true Christian training; let them learn of how great avail humility is with God — how much the spirit of pure affection can prevail with Him — how excellent and great His fear is, and how it saves all those who walk in it with a pure mind. For He is a Searcher of the thoughts and desires [of the heart]: His breath is in us; and when He pleases, He will take it away.

Chapter 22. These Exhortations are Confirmed by the Christian Faith, Which Proclaims the Misery of Sinful Conduct.

Now the faith which is in Christ confirms all these [admonitions]. For He Himself by the Holy Ghost thus addresses us: Come, you children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. What man is he that desires life, and loves to see good days? Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are [open] unto their prayers. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. The righteous cried,

and the Lord heard him, and delivered him out of all his troubles. Many are the stripes [appointed for] the wicked; but mercy shall compass those about who hope in the Lord.

Chapter 23. Be Humble, and Believe that Christ Will Come Again.

The all-merciful and beneficent Father has bowels [of compassion] towards those that fear Him, and kindly and lovingly bestows His favours upon those who come to Him with a simple mind. Wherefore let us not be double-minded; neither let our soul be lifted up on account of His exceedingly great and glorious gifts. Far from us be that which is written, Wretched are they who are of a double mind, and of a doubting heart; who say, These things we have heard even in the times of our fathers; but, behold, we have grown old, and none of them has happened unto us; You foolish ones! compare yourselves to a tree; take [for instance] the vine. First of all, it sheds its leaves, then it buds, next it puts forth leaves, and then it flowers; after that comes the sour grape, and then follows the ripened fruit. You perceive how in a little time the fruit of a tree comes to maturity. Of a truth, soon and suddenly shall His will be accomplished, as the Scripture also bears witness, saying, Speedily will He come, and will not tarry; and, The Lord shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Holy One, for whom you look. Malachi 3:1

Chapter 24. God Continually Shows Us in Nature that There Will Be a Resurrection.

Let us consider, beloved, how the Lord continually proves to us that there shall be a future resurrection, of which He has rendered the Lord Jesus Christ the first-fruits by raising Him from the dead. Let us contemplate, beloved, the resurrection which is at all times taking place. Day and night declare to us a resurrection. The night sinks to sleep, and the day arises; the day [again] departs, and the night comes on. Let us behold the fruits [of the earth], how the sowing of grain takes place. The sower Luke 8:5 goes forth, and casts it into the ground, and the seed being thus scattered, though dry and naked when it fell upon the earth, is gradually dissolved. Then out of its dissolution the mighty power of the providence of the Lord raises it up again, and from one seed many arise and bring forth fruit.

Chapter 25. The Phoenix an Emblem of Our Resurrection.

Let us consider that wonderful sign [of the resurrection] which takes place in eastern lands, that is, in Arabia and the countries round about. There is a certain bird which is called a phoenix. This is the only one of its kind, and lives five hundred years. And when the time of its dissolution draws near that it must die, it builds itself a nest of frankincense, and myrrh, and other spices, into which, when the time is fulfilled, it enters and dies. But as the flesh decays a certain kind of worm is produced, which, being nourished by the juices of the dead bird, brings forth feathers. Then, when it has acquired strength, it takes up that nest in which are the bones of its parent, and bearing these it passes from the land of Arabia into Egypt, to the city called Heliopolis. And, in open day, flying in the sight of all men, it places them on the altar of the sun, and having done this, hastens back to its former abode. The priests then inspect the registers of the dates, and find that it has returned exactly as the five hundredth year was completed.

Chapter 26. We Shall Rise Again, Then, as the Scripture Also Testifies.

Do we then deem it any great and wonderful thing for the Maker of all things to raise up again those that have piously served Him in the assurance of a good faith, when even by a bird He shows us the

mightiness of His power to fulfil His promise? For [the Scripture] says in a certain place, You shall raise me up, and I shall confess unto You; and again, I laid me down, and slept; I awoke, because You are with me; and again, Job says, You shall raise up this flesh of mine, which has suffered all these things. Job 19:25-26

Chapter 27. In the Hope of the Resurrection, Let Us Cleave to the Omnipotent and Omniscient God.

Having then this hope, let our souls be bound to Him who is faithful in His promises, and just in His judgments. He who has commanded us not to lie, shall much more Himself not lie; for nothing is impossible with God, except to lie. Let His faith therefore be stirred up again within us, and let us consider that all things are near unto Him. By the word of His might He established all things, and by His word He can overthrow them. Who shall say unto Him, What have you done? Or, Who shall resist the power of His strength? When, and as He pleases, He will do all things, and none of the things determined by Him shall pass away. Matthew 24:35 All things are open before Him, and nothing can be hidden from His counsel. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows His handy-work. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night shows knowledge. And there are no words or speeches of which the voices are not heard. Psalm 19:1-4

Chapter 28. God Sees All Things: Therefore Let Us Avoid Transgression.

Since then all things are seen and heard [by God], let us fear Him, and forsake those wicked works which proceed from evil desires; so that, through His mercy, we may be protected from the judgments to come. For whither can any of us flee from His mighty hand? Or what world will receive any of those who run away from Him? For the Scripture says in a certain place, Whither shall I go, and where shall I be hid from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I go away even to the uttermost parts of the earth, there is Your right hand; if I make my bed in the abyss, there is Your Spirit. Whither, then, shall anyone go, or where shall he escape from Him who comprehends all things?

Chapter 29. Let Us Also Draw Near to God in Purity of Heart.

Let us then draw near to Him with holiness of spirit, lifting up pure and undefiled hands unto Him, loving our gracious and merciful Father, who has made us partakers in the blessings of His elect. For thus it is written, When the Most High divided the nations, when He scattered the sons of Adam, He fixed the bounds of the nations according to the number of the angels of God. His people Jacob became the portion of the Lord, and Israel the lot of His inheritance. Deuteronomy 32:8-9 And in another place [the Scripture] says, Behold, the Lord takes unto Himself a nation out of the midst of the nations, as a man takes the first-fruits of his threshing-floor; and from that nation shall come forth the Most Holy.

Chapter 30. Let Us Do Those Things that Please God, and Flee from Those He Hates, that We May Be Blessed.

Seeing, therefore, that we are the portion of the Holy One, let us do all those things which pertain to holiness, avoiding all evil-speaking, all abominable and impure embraces, together with all drunkenness, seeking after change, all abominable lusts, detestable adultery, and execrable pride. For God, [says the Scripture], resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Let us cleave, then, to those to whom grace has been given by God. Let us clothe ourselves with

concord and humility, ever exercising self-control, standing far off from all whispering and evil-speaking, being justified by our works, and not our words. For [the Scripture] says, He that speaks much, shall also hear much in answer. And does he that is ready in speech deem himself righteous? Blessed is he that is born of woman, who lives but a short time: be not given to much speaking. Let our praise be in God, and not of ourselves; for God hates those that commend themselves. Let testimony to our good deeds be borne by others, as it was in the case of our righteous forefathers. Boldness, and arrogance, and audacity belong to those that are accursed of God; but moderation, humility, and meekness to such as are blessed by Him.

Chapter 31. Let Us See by What Means We May Obtain the Divine Blessing.

Let us cleave then to His blessing, and consider what are the means of possessing it. Let us think over the things which have taken place from the beginning. For what reason was our father Abraham blessed? Was it not because he wrought righteousness and truth through faith? Isaac, James 2:21 with perfect confidence, as if knowing what was to happen, cheerfully yielded himself as a sacrifice. Genesis 22:6-10 Jacob, through reason of his brother, went forth with humility from his own land, and came to Laban and served him; and there was given to him the sceptre of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Chapter 32. We are Justified Not by Our Own Works, But by Faith.

Whosoever will candidly consider each particular, will recognise the greatness of the gifts which were given by him. For from him have sprung the priests and all the Levites who minister at the altar of God. From him also [was descended] our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh. Romans 9:5 From him [arose] kings, princes, and rulers of the race of Judah. Nor are his other tribes in small glory, inasmuch as God had promised, Your seed shall be as the stars of heaven. All these, therefore, were highly honoured, and made great, not for their own sake, or for their own works, or for the righteousness which they wrought, but through the operation of His will. And we, too, being called by His will in Christ Jesus, are not justified by ourselves, nor by our own wisdom, or understanding, or godliness, or works which we have wrought in holiness of heart; but by that faith through which, from the beginning, Almighty God has justified all men; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 33. But Let Us Not Give Up the Practice of Good Works and Love. God Himself is an Example to Us of Good Works.

What shall we do, then, brethren? Shall we become slothful in well-doing, and cease from the practice of love? God forbid that any such course should be followed by us! But rather let us hasten with all energy and readiness of mind to perform every good work. For the Creator and Lord of all Himself rejoices in His works. For by His infinitely great power He established the heavens, and by His incomprehensible wisdom He adorned them. He also divided the earth from the water which surrounds it, and fixed it upon the immovable foundation of His own will. The animals also which are upon it He commanded by His own word into existence. So likewise, when He had formed the sea, and the living creatures which are in it, He enclosed them [within their proper bounds] by His own power. Above all, with His holy and undefiled hands He formed man, the most excellent [of His creatures], and truly great through the understanding given him — the express likeness of His own image. For thus says God: Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness. So God made man;

male and female He created them. Genesis 1:26-27 Having thus finished all these things, He approved them, and blessed them, and said, Increase and multiply. Genesis 1:28 We see, then, how all righteous men have been adorned with good works, and how the Lord Himself, adorning Himself with His works, rejoiced. Having therefore such an example, let us without delay accede to His will, and let us work the work of righteousness with our whole strength.

Chapter 34. Great is the Reward of Good Works with God. Joined Together in Harmony, Let Us Implore that Reward from Him.

The good servant receives the bread of his labour with confidence; the lazy and slothful cannot look his employer in the face. It is requisite, therefore, that we be prompt in the practice of well-doing; for of Him are all things. And thus He forewarns us: Behold, the Lord [comes], and His reward is before His face, to render to every man according to his work. He exhorts us, therefore, with our whole heart to attend to this, that we be not lazy or slothful in any good work. Let our boasting and our confidence be in Him. Let us submit ourselves to His will. Let us consider the whole multitude of His angels, how they stand ever ready to minister to His will. For the Scripture says, Ten thousand times ten thousand stood around Him, and thousands of thousands ministered unto Him, Daniel 7:10 and cried, Holy, holy, holy, [is] the Lord of Sabaoth; the whole creation is full of His glory. Isaiah 6:3 And let us therefore, conscientiously gathering together in harmony, cry to Him earnestly, as with one mouth, that we may be made partakers of His great and glorious promises. For [the Scripture] says, Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which He has prepared for them that wait for Him. 1 Corinthians 2:9

Chapter 35. Immense is This Reward. How Shall We Obtain It?

How blessed and wonderful, beloved, are the gifts of God! Life in immortality, splendour in righteousness, truth in perfect confidence, faith in assurance, self-control in holiness! And all these fall under the cognizance of our understandings [now]; what then shall those things be which are prepared for such as wait for Him? The Creator and Father of all worlds, the Most Holy, alone knows their amount and their beauty. Let us therefore earnestly strive to be found in the number of those that wait for Him, in order that we may share in His promised gifts. But how, beloved, shall this be done? If our understanding be fixed by faith towards God; if we earnestly seek the things which are pleasing and acceptable to Him; if we do the things which are in harmony with His blameless will; and if we follow the way of truth, casting away from us all unrighteousness and iniquity, along with all covetousness, strife, evil practices, deceit, whispering, and evil-speaking, all hatred of God, pride and haughtiness, vain glory and ambition. For they that do such things are hateful to God; and not only they that do them, but also those that take pleasure in them that do them. Romans 1:32 For the Scripture says, But to the sinner God said, Wherefore do you declare my statutes, and take my covenant into your mouth, seeing you hate instruction, and castest my words behind you? When you saw a thief, you consented with him, and made your portion with adulterers. Your mouth has abounded with wickedness, and your tongue contrived deceit. You sit, and speak against your brother; you slander your own mother's son. These things you have done, and I kept silence; you thought, wicked one, that I should be like to yourself. But I will reprove you, and set yourself before you. Consider now these things, you that forget God, lest He tear you in pieces, like a lion, and there be none to deliver. The sacrifice of praise will glorify me, and a way is there by which I will show him the salvation of God.

Chapter 36. All Blessings are Given to Us Through Christ.

This is the way, beloved, in which we find our Saviour, even Jesus Christ, the High Priest of all our offerings, the defender and helper of our infirmity. By Him we look up to the heights of heaven. By Him we behold, as in a glass, His immaculate and most excellent visage. By Him are the eyes of our hearts opened. By Him our foolish and darkened understanding blossoms up anew towards His marvellous light. By Him the Lord has willed that we should taste of immortal knowledge, who, being the brightness of His majesty, is by so much greater than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. Hebrews 1:3-4 For it is thus written, Who makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire. But concerning His Son the Lord spoke thus: You are my Son, today have I begotten You. Ask of me, and I will give You the heathen for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession. And again He says to Him, Sit at my right hand, until I make Your enemies Your footstool. But who are His enemies? All the wicked, and those who set themselves to oppose the will of God.

Chapter 37. Christ is Our Leader, and We His Soldiers.

Let us then, men and brethren, with all energy act the part of soldiers, in accordance with His holy commandments. Let us consider those who serve under our generals, with what order, obedience, and submissiveness they perform the things which are commanded them. All are not prefects, nor commanders of a thousand, nor of a hundred, nor of fifty, nor the like, but each one in his own rank performs the things commanded by the king and the generals. The great cannot subsist without the small, nor the small without the great. There is a kind of mixture in all things, and thence arises mutual advantage. Let us take our body for an example. The head is nothing without the feet, and the feet are nothing without the head; yea, the very smallest members of our body are necessary and useful to the whole body. But all work harmoniously together, and are under one common rule for the preservation of the whole body.

Chapter 38. Let the Members of the Church Submit Themselves, and No One Exalt Himself Above Another.

Let our whole body, then, be preserved in Christ Jesus; and let every one be subject to his neighbour, according to the special gift bestowed upon him. Let the strong not despise the weak, and let the weak show respect unto the strong. Let the rich man provide for the wants of the poor; and let the poor man bless God, because He has given him one by whom his need may be supplied. Let the wise man display his wisdom, not by [mere] words, but through good deeds. Let the humble not bear testimony to himself, but leave witness to be borne to him by another. Proverbs 27:2 Let him that is pure in the flesh not grow proud of it, and boast, knowing that it was another who bestowed on him the gift of continence. Let us consider, then, brethren, of what matter we were made — who and what manner of beings we came into the world, as it were out of a sepulchre, and from utter darkness. He who made us and fashioned us, having prepared His bountiful gifts for us before we were born, introduced us into His world. Since, therefore, we receive all these things from Him, we ought for everything to give Him thanks; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 39. There is No Reason for Self-Conceit.

Foolish and inconsiderate men, who have neither wisdom nor instruction, mock and deride us, being eager to exalt themselves in their own conceits. For what can a mortal man do, or what strength is there in one made out of the dust? For it is written, There was no shape before my eyes, only I heard a sound, and a voice [saying], What then? Shall a man be pure before the Lord? Or shall such an one be [counted] blameless in his deeds, seeing He does not confide in His servants, and has charged even His angels with perversity? The heaven is not clean in His sight: how much less they that dwell in houses of clay, of which also we ourselves were made! He smote them as a moth; and from morning even until evening they endure not. Because they could furnish no assistance to themselves, they perished. He breathed upon them, and they died, because they had no wisdom. But call now, if any one will answer you, or if you will look to any of the holy angels; for wrath destroys the foolish man, and envy kills him that is in error. I have seen the foolish taking root, but their habitation was presently consumed. Let their sons be far from safety; let them be despised before the gates of those less than themselves, and there shall be none to deliver. For what was prepared for them, the righteous shall eat; and they shall not be delivered from evil.

Chapter 40. Let Us Preserve in the Church the Order Appointed by God.

These things therefore being manifest to us, and since we look into the depths of the divine knowledge, it behooves us to do all things in [their proper] order, which the Lord has commanded us to perform at stated times. He has enjoined offerings [to be presented] and service to be performed [to Him], and that not thoughtlessly or irregularly, but at the appointed times and hours. Where and by whom He desires these things to be done, He Himself has fixed by His own supreme will, in order that all things, being piously done according to His good pleasure, may be acceptable unto Him. Those, therefore, who present their offerings at the appointed times, are accepted and blessed; for inasmuch as they follow the laws of the Lord, they sin not. For his own peculiar services are assigned to the high priest, and their own proper place is prescribed to the priests, and their own special ministrations devolve on the Levites. The layman is bound by the laws that pertain to laymen.

Chapter 41. Continuation of the Same Subject.

Let every one of you, brethren, give thanks to God in his own order, living in all good conscience, with becoming gravity, and not going beyond the rule of the ministry prescribed to him. Not in every place, brethren, are the daily sacrifices offered, or the peace-offerings, or the sin-offerings and the trespass-offerings, but in Jerusalem only. And even there they are not offered in any place, but only at the altar before the temple, that which is offered being first carefully examined by the high priest and the ministers already mentioned. Those, therefore, who do anything beyond that which is agreeable to His will, are punished with death. You see, brethren, that the greater the knowledge that has been vouchsafed to us, the greater also is the danger to which we are exposed.

Chapter 42. The Order of Ministers in the Church.

The apostles have preached the gospel to us from the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ [has done so] from God. Christ therefore was sent forth by God, and the apostles by Christ. Both these appointments, then, were made in an orderly way, according to the will of God. Having therefore received their orders, and being fully assured by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and

established in the word of God, with full assurance of the Holy Ghost, they went forth proclaiming that the kingdom of God was at hand. And thus preaching through countries and cities, they appointed the first fruits [of their labours], having first proved them by the Spirit, to be bishops and deacons of those who should afterwards believe. Nor was this any new thing, since indeed many ages before it was written concerning bishops and deacons. For thus says the Scripture in a certain place, I will appoint their bishops in righteousness, and their deacons in faith.

Chapter 43. Moses of Old Stilled the Contention Which Arose Concerning the Priestly Dignity.

And what wonder is it if those in Christ who were entrusted with such a duty by God, appointed those [ministers] before mentioned, when the blessed Moses also, a faithful servant in all his house, noted down in the sacred books all the injunctions which were given him, and when the other prophets also followed him, bearing witness with one consent to the ordinances which he had appointed? For, when rivalry arose concerning the priesthood, and the tribes were contending among themselves as to which of them should be adorned with that glorious title, he commanded the twelve princes of the tribes to bring him their rods, each one being inscribed with the name of the tribe. And he took them and bound them [together], and sealed them with the rings of the princes of the tribes, and laid them up in the tabernacle of witness on the table of God. And having shut the doors of the tabernacle, he sealed the keys, as he had done the rods, and said to them, Men and brethren, the tribe whose rod shall blossom has God chosen to fulfil the office of the priesthood, and to minister unto Him. And when the morning had come, he assembled all Israel, six hundred thousand men, and showed the seals to the princes of the tribes, and opened the tabernacle of witness, and brought forth the rods. And the rod of Aaron was found not only to have blossomed, but to bear fruit upon it. What think ye, beloved? Did not Moses know beforehand that this would happen? Undoubtedly he knew; but he acted thus, that there might be no sedition in Israel, and that the name of the true and only God might be glorified; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 44. The Ordinances of the Apostles, that There Might Be No Contention Respecting the Priestly Office.

Our apostles also knew, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that there would be strife on account of the office of the episcopate. For this reason, therefore, inasmuch as they had obtained a perfect foreknowledge of this, they appointed those [ministers] already mentioned, and afterwards gave instructions, that when these should fall asleep, other approved men should succeed them in their ministry. We are of opinion, therefore, that those appointed by them, or afterwards by other eminent men, with the consent of the whole church, and who have blamelessly served the flock of Christ, in a humble, peaceable, and disinterested spirit, and have for a long time possessed the good opinion of all, cannot be justly dismissed from the ministry. For our sin will not be small, if we eject from the episcopate those who have blamelessly and holily fulfilled its duties. Blessed are those presbyters who, having finished their course before now, have obtained a fruitful and perfect departure [from this world]; for they have no fear lest any one deprive them of the place now appointed them. But we see that you have removed some men of excellent behaviour from the ministry, which they fulfilled blamelessly and with honour.

Chapter 45. It is the Part of the Wicked to Vex the Righteous.

You are fond of contention, brethren, and full of zeal about things which do not pertain to salvation. Look carefully into the Scriptures, which are the true utterances of the Holy Spirit. Observe that nothing of an unjust or counterfeit character is written in them. There you will not find that the righteous were cast off by men who themselves were holy. The righteous were indeed persecuted, but only by the wicked. They were cast into prison, but only by the unholy; they were stoned, but only by transgressors; they were slain, but only by the accursed, and such as had conceived an unrighteous envy against them. Exposed to such sufferings, they endured them gloriously. For what shall we say, brethren? Was Daniel Daniel 6:16 cast into the den of lions by such as feared God? Were Ananias, and Azarias, and Michael shut up in a furnace Daniel 3:20 of fire by those who observed the great and glorious worship of the Most High? Far from us be such a thought! Who, then, were they that did such things? The hateful, and those full of all wickedness, were roused to such a pitch of fury, that they inflicted torture on those who served God with a holy and blameless purpose [of heart], not knowing that the Most High is the Defender and Protector of all such as with a pure conscience venerate His all-excellent name; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. But they who with confidence endured [these things] are now heirs of glory and honour, and have been exalted and made illustrious by God in their memorial for ever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 46. Let Us Cleave to the Righteous: Your Strife is Pernicious.

Such examples, therefore, brethren, it is right that we should follow; since it is written, Cleave to the holy, for those that cleave to them shall [themselves] be made holy. And again, in another place, [the Scripture] says, With a harmless man you shall prove yourself harmless, and with an elect man you shall be elect, and with a perverse man you shall show yourself perverse. Let us cleave, therefore, to the innocent and righteous, since these are the elect of God. Why are there strifes, and tumults, and divisions, and schisms, and wars among you? Have we not [all] one God and one Christ? Is there not one Spirit of grace poured out upon us? And have we not one calling in Christ? Ephesians 4:4-6 Why do we divide and tear in pieces the members of Christ, and raise up strife against our own body, and have reached such a height of madness as to forget that we are members one of another? Romans 12:5 Remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, how He said, Woe to that man [by whom offenses come]! It were better for him that he had never been born, than that he should cast a stumbling-block before one of my elect. Yea, it were better for him that a millstone should be hung about [his neck], and he should be sunk in the depths of the sea, than that he should cast a stumbling-block before one of my little ones. Your schism has subverted [the faith of] many, has discouraged many, has given rise to doubt in many, and has caused grief to us all. And still your sedition continues.

Chapter 47. Your Recent Discord is Worse Than the Former Which Took Place in the Times of Paul.

Take up the epistle of the blessed Apostle Paul. What did he write to you at the time when the gospel first began to be preached? Truly, under the inspiration of the Spirit, he wrote to you concerning himself, and Cephas, and Apollos, because even then parties had been formed among you. But that inclination for one above another entailed less guilt upon you, inasmuch as your partialities were then shown towards apostles, already of high reputation, and towards a man whom they had approved. But now reflect who those are that have perverted you, and lessened the renown of your far-famed brotherly love. It is disgraceful, beloved, yea, highly disgraceful, and unworthy of your Christian profession, that such a thing should be heard of as that the most

steadfast and ancient church of the Corinthians should, on account of one or two persons, engage in sedition against its presbyters. And this rumour has reached not only us, but those also who are unconnected with us; so that, through your infatuation, the name of the Lord is blasphemed, while danger is also brought upon yourselves.

Chapter 48. Let Us Return to the Practice of Brotherly Love.

Let us therefore, with all haste, put an end to this [state of things]; and let us fall down before the Lord, and beseech Him with tears, that He would mercifully be reconciled to us, and restore us to our former seemly and holy practice of brotherly love. For [such conduct] is the gate of righteousness, which is set open for the attainment of life, as it is written, Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go in by them, and will praise the Lord: this is the gate of the Lord: the righteous shall enter in by it. Although, therefore, many gates have been set open, yet this gate of righteousness is that gate in Christ by which blessed are all they that have entered in and have directed their way in holiness and righteousness, doing all things without disorder. Let a man be faithful: let him be powerful in the utterance of knowledge; let him be wise in judging of words; let him be pure in all his deeds; yet the more he seems to be superior to others [in these respects], the more humble-minded ought he to be, and to seek the common good of all, and not merely his own advantage.

Chapter 49. The Praise of Love.

Let him who has love in Christ keep the commandments of Christ. Who can describe the [blessed] bond of the love of God? What man is able to tell the excellence of its beauty, as it ought to be told? The height to which love exalts is unspeakable. Love unites us to God. Love covers a multitude of sins. Love bears all things, is long-suffering in all things. There is nothing base, nothing arrogant in love. Love admits of no schisms: love gives rise to no seditions: love does all things in harmony. By love have all the elect of God been made perfect; without love nothing is well-pleasing to God. In love has the Lord taken us to Himself. On account of the love He bore us, Jesus Christ our Lord gave His blood for us by the will of God; His flesh for our flesh, and His soul for our souls.

Chapter 50. Let Us Pray to Be Thought Worthy of Love.

You see, beloved, how great and wonderful a thing is love, and that there is no declaring its perfection. Who is fit to be found in it, except such as God has vouchsafed to render so? Let us pray, therefore, and implore of His mercy, that we may live blameless in love, free from all human partialities for one above another. All the generations from Adam even unto this day have passed away; but those who, through the grace of God, have been made perfect in love, now possess a place among the godly, and shall be made manifest at the revelation of the kingdom of Christ. For it is written, Enter into your secret chambers for a little time, until my wrath and fury pass away; and I will remember a propitious day, and will raise you up out of your graves. Isaiah 26:20 Blessed are we, beloved, if we keep the commandments of God in the harmony of love; that so through love our sins may be forgiven us. For it is written, Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not impute to him, and in whose mouth there is no guile. This blessedness comes upon those who have been chosen by God through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 51. Let the Partakers in Strife Acknowledge Their Sins.

Let us therefore implore forgiveness for all those transgressions which through any [suggestion] of the adversary we have committed. And these who have been the leaders of sedition and disagreement ought to have respect to the common hope. For such as live in fear and love would rather that they themselves than their neighbours should be involved in suffering. And they prefer to bear blame themselves, rather than that the concord which has been well and piously handed down to us should suffer. For it is better that a man should acknowledge his transgressions than that he should harden his heart, as the hearts of those were hardened who stirred up sedition against Moses the servant of God, and whose condemnation was made manifest [unto all]. For they went down alive into Hades, and death swallowed them up. Pharaoh with his army and all the princes of Egypt, and the chariots with their riders, were sunk in the depths of the Red Sea, and perished, Exodus xiv for no other reason than that their foolish hearts were hardened, after so many signs and wonders had been wrought in the land of Egypt by Moses the servant of God.

Chapter 52. Such a Confession is Pleasing to God.

The Lord, brethren, stands in need of nothing; and He desires nothing of any one except that confession be made to Him. For, says the elect David, I will confess unto the Lord; and that will please Him more than a young bullock that has horns and hoofs. Let the poor see it, and be glad. And again he says, Offer unto God the sacrifice of praise, and pay your vows unto the Most High. And call upon me in the day of your trouble: I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me. For the sacrifice of God is a broken spirit.

Chapter 53. The Love of Moses Towards His People.

You understand, beloved, you understand well the sacred Scriptures, and you have looked very earnestly into the oracles of God. Call then these things to your remembrance. When Moses went up into the mount, and abode there, with fasting and humiliation, forty days and forty nights, the Lord said to him, Moses, Moses, get you down quickly from hence; for your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt have committed iniquity. They have speedily departed from the way in which I commanded them to walk, and have made to themselves molten images. And the Lord said to him, I have spoken to you once and again, saying, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people: let me destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven; and I will make you a great and wonderful nation, and one much more numerous than this. But Moses said, Far be it from You, Lord: pardon the sin of this people; else blot me also out of the book of the living. Exodus 32:32 O marvellous love! O insuperable perfection! The servant speaks freely to his Lord, and asks forgiveness for the people, or begs that he himself might perish along with them.

Chapter 54. He Who is Full of Love Will Incur Every Loss, that Peace May Be Restored to the Church.

Who then among you is noble-minded? Who compassionate? Who full of love? Let him declare, If on my account sedition and disagreement and schisms have arisen, I will depart, I will go away wherever ye desire, and I will do whatever the majority commands; only let the flock of Christ live on terms of peace with the presbyters set over it. He that acts thus shall procure to himself great glory in the Lord; and every place will welcome him. For the earth is the Lord's, and the

fullness thereof. These things they who live a godly life that is never to be repented of, both have done and always will do.

Chapter 55. Examples of Such Love.

To bring forward some examples from among the heathen: Many kings and princes, in times of pestilence, when they had been instructed by an oracle, have given themselves up to death, in order that by their own blood they might deliver their fellow citizens [from destruction]. Many have gone forth from their own cities, that so sedition might be brought to an end within them.

We know many among ourselves who have given themselves up to bonds, in order that they might ransom others. Many, too, have surrendered themselves to slavery, that with the price which they received for themselves, they might provide food for others. Many women also, being strengthened by the grace of God, have performed numerous manly exploits. The blessed Judith, when her city was besieged, asked of the elders permission to go forth into the camp of the strangers; and, exposing herself to danger, she went out for the love which she bore to her country and people then besieged; and the Lord delivered Holofernes into the hands of a woman. Judith 8:30 Esther also, being perfect in faith, exposed herself to no less danger, in order to deliver the twelve tribes of Israel from impending destruction. For with fasting and humiliation she entreated the everlasting God, who sees all things; and He, perceiving the humility of her spirit, delivered the people for whose sake she had encountered peril.

Chapter 56. Let Us Admonish and Correct One Another.

Let us then also pray for those who have fallen into any sin, that meekness and humility may be given to them, so that they may submit, not unto us, but to the will of God. For in this way they shall secure a fruitful and perfect remembrance from us, with sympathy for them, both in our prayers to God, and our mention of them to the saints. Let us receive correction, beloved, on account of which no one should feel displeased. Those exhortations by which we admonish one another are both good [in themselves], and highly profitable, for they tend to unite us to the will of God. For thus says the holy Word: The Lord has severely chastened me, yet has not given me over to death. For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives. The righteous, says it, shall chasten me in mercy, and reprove me; but let not the oil of sinners make fat my head. And again he says, Blessed is the man whom the Lord reproves, and reject not the warning of the Almighty. For He causes sorrow, and again restores [to gladness]; He wounds, and His hands make whole. He shall deliver you in six troubles, yea, in the seventh no evil shall touch you. In famine He shall rescue you from death, and in war He shall free you from the power of the sword. From the scourge of the tongue will He hide you, and you shall not fear when evil comes. You shall laugh at the unrighteous and the wicked, and shall not be afraid of the beasts of the field. For the wild beasts shall be at peace with you: then shall you know that your house shall be in peace, and the habitation of your tabernacle shall not fail. You shall know also that your seed shall be great, and your children like the grass of the field. And you shall come to the grave like ripened grain which is reaped in its season, or like a heap of the threshing-floor which is gathered together at the proper time. Job 5:17-26 You see, beloved, that protection is afforded to those that are chastened of the Lord; for since God is good, He corrects us, that we may be admonished by His holy chastisement.

Chapter 57. Let the Authors of Sedition Submit Themselves.

You therefore, who laid the foundation of this sedition, submit yourselves to the presbyters, and receive correction so as to repent, bending the knees of your hearts. Learn to be subject, laying aside the proud and arrogant self-confidence of your tongue. For it is better for you that you should occupy a humble but honourable place in the flock of Christ, than that, being highly exalted, you should be cast out from the hope of His people. For thus speaks all-virtuous Wisdom: Behold, I will bring forth to you the words of my Spirit, and I will teach you my speech. Since I called, and you did not hear; I held forth my words, and you regarded not, but set at naught my counsels, and yielded not at my reproofs; therefore I too will laugh at your destruction; yea, I will rejoice when ruin comes upon you, and when sudden confusion overtakes you, when overturning presents itself like a tempest, or when tribulation and oppression fall upon you. For it shall come to pass, that when you call upon me, I will not hear you; the wicked shall seek me, and they shall not find me. For they hated wisdom, and did not choose the fear of the Lord; nor would they listen to my counsels, but despised my reproofs. Wherefore they shall eat the fruits of their own way, and they shall be filled with their own ungodliness. Proverbs 1:22-33 ...For, in punishment for the wrongs which they practised upon babes, shall they be slain, and inquiry will be death to the ungodly; but he that hears me shall rest in hope and be undisturbed by the fear of any evil.

Chapter 58. Submission the Precursor of Salvation.

Let us, therefore, flee from the warning threats pronounced by Wisdom on the disobedient, and yield submission to His all-holy and glorious name, that we may stay our trust upon the most hallowed name of His majesty. Receive our counsel, and you shall be without repentance. For, as God lives, and as the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost live — both the faith and hope of the elect, he who in lowliness of mind, with instant gentleness, and without repentance has observed the ordinances and appointments given by God— the same shall obtain a place and name in the number of those who are being saved through Jesus Christ, through whom is glory to Him for ever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 59. Warning Against Disobedience. Prayer.

If, however, any shall disobey the words spoken by Him through us, let them know that they will involve themselves in transgression and serious danger; but we shall be innocent of this sin, and, instant in prayer and supplication, shall desire that the Creator of all preserve unbroken the computed number of His elect in the whole world through His beloved Son Jesus Christ, through whom He called us from darkness to light, from ignorance to knowledge of the glory of His name, our hope resting on Your name which is primal cause of every creature — having opened the eyes of our heart to the knowledge of You, who alone rests highest among the highest, holy among the holy, Isaiah 57:15 who layest low the insolence of the haughty, Isaiah 13:11 who destroyest the calculations of the heathen, who settest the low on high and bringest low the exalted; who makest rich and makest poor, 1 Samuel 2:7 who killest and makest to live, Deuteronomy 32:39 only Benefactor of spirits and God of all flesh, who beholdest the depths, the eye-witness of human works, the help of those in danger, the Saviour of those in despair, the Creator and Guardian of every spirit, who multiplieth nations upon earth, and from all made choice of those who love You through Jesus Christ, Your beloved Son, through whom You instructed, sanctify, honour us. We would have You, Lord, to prove our help and succour. Those of us in affliction save, on the lowly take pity; the fallen raise; upon those in need arise; the sick heal; the

wandering ones of Your people turn; fill the hungry; redeem those of us in bonds; raise up those that are weak; comfort the faint-hearted; let all the nations know that You are God alone and Jesus Christ Your Son, and we are Your people and the sheep of Your pasture.

Chapter 60. Prayer Continued.

You made to appear the enduring fabric of the world by the works of Your hand; You, Lord, created the earth on which we dwell — You, who is faithful in all generations, just in judgments, wonderful in strength and majesty, with wisdom creating and with understanding fixing the things which were made, who art good among them that are being saved and faithful among them whose trust is in You; O merciful and Compassionate One, forgive us our iniquities and offenses and transgressions and trespasses. Reckon not every sin of Your servants and handmaids, but You will purify us with the purification of Your truth; and direct our steps that we may walk in holiness of heart and do what is good and well-pleasing in Your sight and in the sight of our rulers. Yea, Lord, make Your face to shine upon us for good in peace, that we may be shielded by Your mighty hand and delivered from every sin by Your uplifted arm, and deliver us from those who hate us wrongfully. Give concord and peace to us and all who dwell upon the earth, even as You gave to our fathers, when they called upon You in faith and truth, submissive as we are to Your almighty and all-excellent Name.

Chapter 61. Prayer Continued — For Rulers and Governors. Conclusion.

To our rulers and governors on the earth — to them You, Lord, gave the power of the kingdom by Your glorious and ineffable might, to the end that we may know the glory and honour given to them by You and be subject to them, in nought resisting Your will; to them, Lord, give health, peace, concord, stability, that they may exercise the authority given to them without offense. For You, O heavenly Lord and King eternal, givest to the sons of men glory and honour and power over the things that are on the earth; do Thou, Lord, direct their counsel according to that which is good and well-pleasing in Your sight, that, devoutly in peace and meekness exercising the power given them by You, they may find You propitious. O Thou, who only has power to do these things and more abundant good with us, we praise You through the High Priest and Guardian of our souls Jesus Christ, through whom be glory and majesty to You both now and from generation to generation and for evermore. Amen.

Chapter 62. Summary and Conclusory — Concerning Godliness.

Concerning the things pertaining to our religious observance which are most profitable for a life of goodness to those who would pursue a godly and righteous course, we have written to you, men and brethren, at sufficient length. For concerning faith and repentance and true love and continence and soberness and patience, we have touched upon every passage, putting you in mind that you ought in righteousness and truth and long-suffering to be well-pleasing to Almighty God with holiness, being of one mind — not remembering evil— in love and peace with instant gentleness, even as also our fathers forementioned found favour by the humility of their thoughts towards the Father and God and Creator and all mankind. And of these things we put you in mind with the greater pleasure, since we were well assured that we were writing to men who were faithful and of highest repute and had peered into the oracles of the instruction of God.

Chapter 63. Hortatory, Letter Sent by Special Messengers.

Right is it, therefore, to approach examples so good and so many, and submit the neck and fulfil the part of obedience, in order that, undisturbed by vain sedition, we may attain unto the goal set before us in truth wholly free from blame. Joy and gladness will you afford us, if you become obedient to the words written by us and through the Holy Spirit root out the lawless wrath of your jealousy according to the intercession which we have made for peace and unity in this letter. We have sent men faithful and discreet, whose conversation from youth to old age has been blameless among us — the same shall be witnesses between you and us. This we have done, that you may know that our whole concern has been and is that you may be speedily at peace.

Chapter 64. Blessings Sought for All that Call Upon God.

May God, who sees all things, and who is the Ruler of all spirits and the Lord of all flesh — who chose our Lord Jesus Christ and us through Him to be a peculiar Titus 2:14 people — grant to every soul that calls upon His glorious and holy name, faith, fear, peace, patience, long-suffering, self-control, purity, and sobriety, to the well-pleasing of His name, through our High Priest and Protector, Jesus Christ, by whom be to Him glory, and majesty, and power, and honour, both now and for evermore. Amen.

Chapter 65. The Corinthians are Exhorted Speedily to Send Back Word that Peace Has Been Restored. The Benediction.

Send back speedily to us in peace and with joy these our messengers to you: Claudius Ephebus and Valerius Bito, with Fortunatus; that they may the sooner announce to us the peace and harmony we so earnestly desire and long for [among you], and that we may the more quickly rejoice over the good order re-established among you. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, and with all everywhere that are the called of God through Him, by whom be to Him glory, honour, power, majesty, and eternal dominion, from everlasting to everlasting. Amen.

The Treatise on the Eucharist by Ignatius of Antioch

Sometime early in the second century, St Ignatius, the bishop of Antioch in Syria, was arrested and marched to Rome. The Emperor at the time was Trajan (r. 98–117), whose correspondence with Pliny, a Roman governor in what is now northern Turkey, reveals his attitude toward Christians. Trajan did not take seriously the more unsavory rumors circulating about Christians, but he agreed with Pliny that, “whatever the nature of their creed, stubbornness and inflexible obstinacy” in sticking to Christianity “surely deserve to be punished”—by death.[1] Several decades later, apologists like St Justin Martyr and Tertullian would note that Christians could be condemned merely for bearing that name, irrespective of actual or alleged crimes (Justin, *First Apology* 3–4; *Second Apology* 2; Tertullian, *Apology* 1–4, 44). The letters of Pliny and Trajan confirm the justice of their complaint. Ignatius certainly expected such treatment, and tradition holds that he was fed to lions. Today the Church celebrates Ignatius’s “birth” to eternal life.

It was at Ignatius’s own city of Antioch that Jesus’ disciples had first been called “Christians” (Acts 11:26). The name was probably originally used by unbelievers with a sneer—“little ‘messiah’ people”—but believers quickly embraced it as a badge of honor: “if anyone suffers as a Christian”—

rather than as a genuine criminal—"let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name" (1 Pet. 4:16). "I am a Christian" became the martyrs' constant, courageous refrain. For his part, Ignatius hoped that he would "not merely be called a Christian but actually prove to be one" (*Romans* 3.2).[2] He similarly urged others "that we not just be called Christians, but that we actually be Christians" (*Magnesians* 4.1).

Ignatius's understanding of authentic Christianity has to be gleaned from his seven surviving letters, all written *en route* to Rome: five to local churches in Asia Minor; one to St Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna (one of those five churches); and one ahead to the church at Rome. The letters are brief, forceful, and deceptively simple. While their vigor is evident, their depth is only slowly recognized.

Ignatius's teaching is rich, but it can be summed up in a word. True Christianity is all about *unity*—unity with and in the Trinity, and, as a result, unity with one another. On this point, Ignatius is in good company. Jesus prayed to the Father "that they may be one, even as we are one" (John 17:26), and St Paul likewise coordinated Christian unity to the Trinity: "There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all..." (Eph. 4:4–6; cf. CCC 813). For Ignatius, this divine unity is mediated, maintained, and expressed in several interrelated ways, including profession of orthodox faith, obedient communion with the bishops and clergy, and Eucharistic worship (cf. CCC 815). Like Paul (cf. 1 Cor. 10:17), Ignatius strongly associates the Eucharist with unity. After insisting on the importance of avoiding schism, he writes, "Make it a point, then, to participate in one Eucharist. For the flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ is one, and one is the cup that yields unity in his blood" (*Philadelphians* 4:1; my trans.). The Eucharist liturgically enacts belief in the reality of the Incarnation of Christ, who is "both from Mary and from God," truly "Son of Man and Son of God" (*Ephesians* 7.2; 20.2). Right observance of the Eucharist thus safeguards unity in the apostolic faith. Ignatius also stresses the link between Eucharistic worship and communion with the Church's hierarchy, which fosters unity among the community of believers (*Smyrnaeans* 8.1–2).

Ignatius's mentions of the Eucharist are not overwhelmingly numerous, but they are arresting and powerful. In one famous passage, Ignatius laments that "those who hold heretical opinions about the grace of Jesus Christ ... refuse to acknowledge that the Eucharist is the flesh of our savior Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins and which the Father by his goodness raised up" (*Smyrnaeans* 6.2). This is stunningly realistic language. Those who are eager to defend the Catholic doctrine of the Real Presence to naysayers and doubters (who include, according to recent research, many self-identified Catholics) are quick to point to this text as very early evidence for this teaching. They are not wrong to do so. But if we fixate on the fact *that* Ignatius believes in the Real Presence, we run the risk of failing to notice *why* the Real Presence matters to him.

Because it unites us to Christ who suffered and was raised, the Eucharist "is the medicine of immortality, the antidote we take in order not to die but to live forever in Jesus Christ" (*Ephesians* 20.2). This "medicine," however, does not leave us untransformed, for in this case, the medicine is the Physician himself (see *Ephesians* 7.2). He himself is "our never-failing life" (*Magnesians* 1.2). To be united to the person of Jesus also means being united to his faithfulness and love toward both God and others. In one passage, Ignatius simply *identifies* our faithfulness with "the flesh of the Lord" and our love with "the blood of Jesus Christ" (*Trallians* 8.1). The Eucharist enables us to love God and one another with Christ's own fidelity and charity, which is the very content of salvation

(*Ephesians* 14.1). This insight is further clarified and illustrated in how Ignatius links the Eucharist to two other central Christian realities: martyrdom and care for the poor.

To the Roman church Ignatius writes, "I want the bread of God, which is the flesh of Christ who is of the seed of David; and for drink I want his blood, which is incorruptible love" (*Romans* 7.3). The context makes it clear that Ignatius is not speaking here of a sacramental celebration but of his own impending martyrdom. "I am God's wheat," he writes earlier, "and I am being ground by the teeth of the wild beasts, so that I may prove to be pure bread" (*Romans* 4.1). Because it unites us to Christ's loving obedience to the Father, supremely expressed in his death for our sake, the Eucharist prepares us for martyrdom, and martyrdom is a completion of our reception of the Eucharist. Ignatius can write to the Christians at Smyrna that they "are established in an unshakable faith, having been nailed, as it were, to the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ in both body and spirit, and firmly established in love by the blood of Christ" (*Smyrnaeans* 1.1). The faithfulness and love they encounter in the Eucharist already conforms them to the Lord's death on the cross, of which Ignatius hopes "to be an imitator" in his martyrdom (*Romans* 6.3). For Ignatius there is no other way, for Christ's "life is not in us unless we voluntarily choose to die in his suffering"—whether or not this takes the form of red martyrdom (*Magnesians* 5.2).

Union with Christ and his Father additionally entails love of others, especially the needy. In the context of the line quoted earlier about the reality of the Eucharist, Ignatius also remarks that the heterodox "have no concern for love, none for the widow, none for the orphan, none for the oppressed, none for the prisoner or the one released, none for the hungry or thirsty" (*Smyrnaeans* 6.2). To Ignatius's way of thinking, failure to acknowledge Christ in the Sacrament is intrinsically connected with failure to care for him in the downtrodden. Today this may seem counterintuitive, but it was not for ancient Christians, who recognized the very same Christ, "God [who] appeared in human form to bring the newness of eternal life" (*Ephesians* 19.3), in the Eucharist and in the poor. The Eucharist unites us to the one who, "though he was rich, ... became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:9). As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches, "The Eucharist commits us to the poor" (1397). Ignatius's exhortation to Bishop Polycarp to exercise "constant care for both physical and spiritual concerns" is thus strictly in keeping with his doctrinal and liturgical convictions. In this way Polycarp will be able to "[f]ocus on unity, for there is nothing better" (*Polycarp* 1.2).

For Ignatius, in sum, by uniting us to God and neighbor in faith and love, the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist transforms us, so that we may not merely be called Christians, but truly *be* Christians. St Ignatius, pray for us!

The Prayer of Polycarp

Saint Polycarp, you were blessed to be among the first followers of the Apostles and worked fervently for many decades to spread and defend the pure faith. In the end, you gave witness to Christ with a martyr's death. Please pray for me, that I may learn from your witness and follow your holy example. Saint Polycarp, pray for me. Jesus, I trust in You.

The Ethiopian Book of Blessings for the Sick

37c The blessing of the sick by the ministers of the Church is a very ancient custom, having its origins in the practice of Christ himself and his apostles. When ministers visit those who are sick, they are to respect the provisions of Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum, nos. 42-5c, but the primary concern of every minister should be to show the sick how much Christ and his Church are concerned for them.

377 The text of Pastoral Care of the Sick indicates many occasions for blessing the sick and provides the blessing formularies (see endnote 13).

378 The present order may be used by a priest or deacon. It may also be used by a layperson, who follows the rites and prayers designated for a lay minister. While maintaining the structure and chief elements of the rite, the minister should adapt the celebration to the circumstances of the place and the people involved.

37S When just one sick person is to be blessed, a priest or a deacon may use the short formulary given in no. 40c.

Endnotes: 13. See Roman Ritual, Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum, no. 54.

Prayer:

A. ORDER FOR THE BLESSING OF ADULTS

INTRODUCTORY RITES

380 When the community has gathered, the minister says: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All make the sign of the cross and reply: Amen.

381 A minister who is a priest or a deacon greets those present in the following or other suitable words, taken mainly from sacred Scripture. Peace be with you (this house) and all who live here.

Or: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

All the make the following or some other suitable reply. And also with you.

382 A lay minister greets those present in the following words. Brothers and sisters, let us bless the Lord, who went about doing good and healing the sick. Blessed be God now and for ever.

R. Blessed be God now and for ever.

Or: R. Amen.

383 In the following or similar words, the minister prepares the sick and all present for the blessing. The Lord Jesus, who went about doing good works and healing sickness and infirmity of every kind, commanded his disciples to care for the sick, to pray for them, and to lay hands on them. In this celebration we shall entrust our sick brothers and sisters to the care of the Lord, asking that he will enable them to bear their pain and suffering in the knowledge that, if they accept

their share in the pain of his own passion, they will also share in its power to give comfort and strength.

READING OF THE WORD OF GOD

384 *A reader, another person present, or the minister reads a text of sacred Scripture, taken preferably from the texts given in Pastoral Care of the Sick and the Lectionary for Mass (see endnote 14). The readings chosen should be those that best apply to the physical and spiritual condition of those who are sick.* Brothers and sisters, listen to the words of the second letter of Paul to the Corinthians:

1:3-7 The God of all consolation. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and God of all encouragement, who encourages us in our every affliction, so that we may be able to encourage those who are in any affliction with the encouragement with which we ourselves are encouraged by God. For as Christ's sufferings overflow to us, so through Christ does our encouragement also overflow. If we are afflicted, it is for your encouragement and salvation; if we are encouraged, it is for your encouragement, which enables you to endure the same sufferings that we suffer. Our hope for you is firm, for we know that as you share in the sufferings, you also share in the encouragement.

385 *Or:* Brothers and sisters, listen to the words of the holy gospel according to Matthew:

11:28-30 Come to me and I will refresh you. Jesus said to the crowds: "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light."

386 *Or:* Brothers and sisters, listen to the words of the holy gospel according to Mark:

c:53-5c They laid the sick in the marketplace. After making the crossing, Jesus and his disciples came to land at Gennesaret and tied up there. As they were leaving the boat, people immediately recognized him. They scurried about the surrounding country and began to bring in the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. Whatever villages or towns or countryside he entered, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and begged him that they might touch only the tassel on his cloak; and as many as touched it were healed.

387 *As circumstances suggest, one of the following responsorial psalms may be sung or said, or some other suitable song.*

R. Lord, you have preserved my life from destruction.

Isaiah 38 Once I said, "In the noontime of life I must depart! To the gates of the nether world I shall be consigned for the rest of my years." R.

I said, "I shall see the LORD no more in the land of the living. No longer shall I behold my fellow men among those who dwell in the world." R.

My dwelling, like a shepherd's tent, is struck down and borne away from me; You have folded up my life, like a weaver who severs the last thread. R.

Those live whom the LORD protects; yours . . . the life of my spirit. You have given me health and life.
R.

Psalm 102:2-3, 24-25 R. (v. 2) O Lord, hear my prayer, and let my cry come to you.

388 As circumstances suggest, the minister may give those present a brief explanation of the biblical text, so that they may understand through faith the meaning of the celebration.

INTERCESSIONS

389 The intercessions are then said. The minister introduces them and an assisting minister or one of those present announces the intentions. From the following intentions those best suited to the occasion may be used or adapted, or other intentions that apply to those who are sick and to the particular circumstances may be composed.

The minister says: The Lord Jesus loves our brothers and sisters who are ill. With trust let us pray to him that he will comfort them with his grace, saying:

R. Lord, give those who are sick the comfort of your presence.

Assisting minister: Lord Jesus, you came as healer of body and of spirit, in order to cure all our ills.
R.

Assisting minister: You were a man of suffering, but it was our infirmities that you bore, our sufferings that you endured. R.

Assisting minister: You chose to be like us in all things, in order to assure us of your compassion. R.

Assisting minister: You experienced the weakness of the flesh in order to deliver us from evil. R.

Assisting minister: At the foot of the cross your Mother stood as companion in your sufferings, and in your tender care you gave her to us as our Mother. R.

Assisting minister: It is your wish that in our own flesh we should fill up what is wanting in your sufferings for the sake of your Body, the Church. R.

390 Instead of the intercessions or in addition to them, one of the following litanies taken from Pastoral Care of the Sick, nos. 245 and 138 may be used.

Minister: You bore our weakness and carried our sorrows: Lord, have mercy.

R. Lord, have mercy.

Minister: You felt compassion for the crowd, and went about doing good and healing the sick: Christ, have mercy.

R. Christ, have mercy.

Minister: You commanded your apostles to lay their hands on the sick in your name: Lord, have mercy.

R. Lord, have mercy.

391 *Or:*

The minister says: Let us pray to God for our brothers and sisters and for all those who devote themselves to caring for them.

Assisting minister: Bless N. and N. and fill them with new hope and strength: Lord, have mercy.

R. Lord, have mercy.

Assisting minister: Relieve their pain: Lord, have mercy. R.

Assisting minister: Free them from sin and do not let them give way to temptation: Lord, have mercy. R.

Assisting minister: Sustain all the sick with your power: Lord, have mercy. R.

Assisting minister: Assist all who care for the sick: Lord, have mercy. R.

Assisting minister: Give life and health to our brothers and sisters on whom we lay our hands in your name: Lord, have mercy. R.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

392 *A minister who is a priest or deacon may, as circumstances suggest, lay his hands on the head of each sick person, and then say the prayer of blessing.*

Lord, our God, you sent your Son into the world to bear our infirmities and to endure our sufferings. For N. and N., your servants who are sick, we ask that your blessing will give them strength to overcome their weakness through the power of patience and the comfort of hope and that with your aid they will soon be restored to health.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

393 *Or, without the laying on of hands:*

Lord Jesus, who went about doing good and healing all, we ask you to bless your friends who are sick. Give them strength in body, courage in spirit, and patience with pain. Let them recover their health, so that, restored to the Christian community, they may joyfully praise your name, for you live and reign for ever and ever.

R. Amen.

394 *A lay minister traces the sign of the cross on the forehead of each sick person and says the following prayer of blessing.*

Lord, our God, who watch over your creatures with unfailing care, keep us in the safe embrace of your love. With your strong right hand raise up your servants (N. and N.) and give them the strength of your own power. Minister to them and heal their illnesses, so that they may have from you the help they long for.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

395 *Or, for one sick person:* Lord and Father, almighty and eternal God, by your blessing you give us strength and support in our frailty: turn with kindness toward this your servant N. Free him/her from all illness and restore him/her to health, so that in the sure knowledge of your goodness he/she will gratefully bless your holy name.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

396 *After the prayer of blessing, the minister invites all present to pray for the protection of the Blessed Virgin. They may do so by singing or reciting a Marian antiphon, for example, We turn to you for protection (Sub tuum praesidium) or Hail, Holy Queen.*

CONCLUDING RITE

397 *A minister who is a priest or a deacon concludes the rite by facing the sick and saying:*

May God the Father bless you. R. Amen.

May God the Son comfort you. R. Amen.

May God the Holy Spirit enlighten you. R. Amen.

Then he blesses all present. And may almighty God bless you all, the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit. R. Amen.

398 *A lay minister invokes the Lord's blessing on the sick and all present by signing himself or herself with the sign of the cross and saying:* May the Lord Jesus Christ, who went about doing good and healing the sick, grant that we may have good health and be enriched by his blessings. R. Amen.

B. ORDER FOR THE BLESSING OF CHILDREN

399 *For the blessing of sick children, the texts already given are to be adapted to the children's level, but special intercessions are provided here and a special prayer of blessing.*

INTERCESSIONS

400 *To the following intentions others may be added that apply to the condition of the sick children and to the particular circumstances.*

The minister says: The Lord Jesus loved and cherished the little ones with a special love. Let us, then, pray to him for these sick children, saying:

R. Lord, keep them in all their ways.

Or: R. Lord, hear our prayer.

Assisting minister: Lord Jesus, you called the little children to come to you and said that the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these; listen with mercy to our prayers for these children. (For this we pray:) R.

Assisting minister: You revealed the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, not to the wise of this world, but to little children; give these children the proof of your love. (For this we pray:) R.

Assisting minister: You praised the children who cried out their Hosannas on the eve of your passion; strengthen these children and their parents with your holy comfort. (For this we pray:) R.

Assisting minister: You charged your disciples to take care of the sick; stand at the side of all those who so gladly devote themselves to restoring the health of these children. (For this we pray:) R.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

401 A minister who is a priest or deacon may, as circumstances suggest, lay his hands on the head of each sick child, and then say the prayer of blessing.

Lord, our God, your Son Jesus Christ welcomed little children and blessed them. Stretch out your right hand over these little children, N. and N., who are sick. Grant that, made well again, they may return to their parents and to the community of your holy Church and give you thanks and praise.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

402 A lay minister, and particularly a mother or father when blessing a sick child, traces the sign of the cross on each child's forehead and then says the following prayer of blessing.

Father of mercy and God of all consolation, you show tender care for all your creatures and give health of soul and body. Raise up these children (or this child or the son/daughter you have given us) from their (his/her) sickness. Then, growing in wisdom and grace in your sight and ours, they (he/she) will serve you all the days of their (his/her) life in uprightness and holiness and offer the thanksgiving due to your mercy.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

C. SHORTER RITE

403 The minister says: Our help is in the name of the Lord.

All reply: Who made heaven and earth.

404 One of those present or the minister reads a text of sacred Scripture, for example:

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and God of all encouragement, who encourages us in our every affliction, so that we may be able to encourage those who are in any affliction with the encouragement with which we ourselves are encouraged by God.

Matthew 11:28-29 Jesus said: "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves."

405 *As circumstances suggest, a minister who is a priest or deacon may lay hands on the sick person while saying the prayer of blessing; a lay minister may trace the sign of the cross on the sick person's forehead while saying the prayer.*

Lord and Father, almighty and eternal God, by your blessing you give us strength and support in our frailty: turn with kindness toward your servant, N. Free him/ her from all illness and restore him/ her to health, so that in the sure knowledge of your goodness he/she will gratefully bless your holy name.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

The Song of the Cross

The song of the cross
Is more sweet to my soul
Than the tone of an old violin,
For its message brought peace
Like the evening bell's toll
As I groped in the darkness of sin.
Forgotten my past
As black as the night,
Forgotten the world and its dross—
And my soul thrilled with rapture,
And glory, and light,
When they sang me the song of the cross.

Refrain

*Oh, sing them the song,
The song of the cross,
They'll count the world nothing but loss;
They'll forsake all their sin,
And let Jesus come in,
If you'll sing them a song of the cross.*

Ah, once the world's clamor,
And clatter and din
Discordantly flooded my soul,
But the song of the cross
Like a blessing crept in,
And I yielded to Jesus' control.
I sing now of Christ who dispels every woe,
The hearts of lost sinners are stirred;
And I'll sing the sweet message

Wherever I go,
Till all of the nations have heard.

Refrain

The song of the cross
Tells of blood that was shed
On the summit of dark Calvary,
How Jesus the Nazarene
Suffered and bled
That lost mankind
From sin should be free.
It tells that the sinner
Who trusts in His name,
And rejects this old world with its dross,
May find full forgiveness
From Him who o'ercame
When He died for us all on the cross.

The Ethiopian Hymn of Grace

The **Ethiopian Hymn of Grace** represents a poetic and liturgical celebration of God's unmerited favor, love, and mercy as experienced through His creation, redemption, and covenant with humanity. While no specific text with this title exists in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the concept aligns with its rich tradition of hymns and prayers that glorify God's grace. This grace is foundational to Ethiopian Orthodox theology, emphasizing that all good things come from God, whose mercy sustains and redeems the faithful.

Theological Foundation

The Ethiopian Orthodox understanding of grace (*Selama* in Ge'ez) is deeply rooted in Scripture and liturgical tradition. It is viewed as:

1. **A Gift from God:** Grace is unearned and reflects God's boundless love and mercy.
 - **Ephesians 2:8:** "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God."
2. **The Basis for Salvation:** Through Christ's sacrifice, grace becomes the means by which humanity is redeemed.
3. **A Call to Gratitude and Worship:** The experience of grace inspires thanksgiving and devotion.

Themes of the Ethiopian Hymn of Grace

If such a hymn were to exist, it would likely explore the following themes:

1. God's Abundant Mercy

- The hymn would praise God for His compassion, forgiving humanity's sins, and sustaining creation.
- **Example Verse:** "Your mercy is as boundless as the heavens; Your grace renews us each morning."

2. Redemption Through Christ

- It would highlight Christ's incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection as the ultimate expressions of divine grace.
- **Example Verse:** "Through the blood of the Lamb, You have cleansed us; through the cross, You have drawn us near."

3. The Covenant with Humanity

- Grace would be linked to God's covenant with His people, as seen in biblical narratives like Noah, Abraham, and the New Covenant through Christ.
- **Example Verse:** "You have written Your covenant upon our hearts, that we may dwell in Your light."

4. The Universality of Grace

- The hymn might emphasize that grace is offered to all who seek God with a humble heart.
- **Example Verse:** "From the mountains to the valleys, Your grace flows freely, calling all to Your embrace."

5. A Call to Live in Grace

- It would urge believers to embody grace in their lives through acts of love, humility, and forgiveness.

Liturgical Context

The Ethiopian Hymn of Grace could be integrated into various aspects of worship:

1. Morning and Evening Prayers

- Hymns of thanksgiving for God's grace are often recited at the beginning and end of each day.

2. Holy Eucharist

- During the *Qidase* (Divine Liturgy), prayers emphasize the grace imparted through the body and blood of Christ.

3. Seasonal Feasts

- Major celebrations like **Fasika** (Easter) and **Genna** (Christmas) highlight God's grace in the life and work of Christ.

4. Personal Devotion

- Individual prayers and hymns often express gratitude for God's continual mercy and guidance.

Imagery and Symbolism

The Hymn of Grace would use vivid imagery to convey its message:

- **Light:** Symbolizing the illuminating power of God's grace.
- **Water:** Representing cleansing and renewal.
- **Shepherd and Flock:** Depicting God's care and guidance.
- **The Cross:** A central symbol of Christ's sacrificial love.

Example Structure of the Hymn

I. Invocation

- "O Lord of grace, whose mercy endures forever, we lift our voices in praise to You."

II. Reflection on Creation

- "From the dawn of time, Your grace has adorned the earth; the heavens declare Your glory."

III. Redemption in Christ

- "Through the cross, You have opened the gates of life; through Your Son, You have redeemed us from death."

IV. Gratitude and Petition

- "Teach us to walk in the light of Your grace; let our lives reflect Your mercy."

V. Doxology

- "To You, O King of Grace, be glory and honor, now and forevermore. Amen."

Conclusion

The **Ethiopian Hymn of Grace**, whether imagined or reflected through existing liturgical traditions, would serve as a profound expression of the Church's devotion to God's unmerited favor. It would

inspire believers to live in gratitude, humility, and love, drawing them closer to the divine mystery of salvation. Rooted in biblical themes and enriched by Ethiopian Orthodox spirituality, such a hymn would remain a timeless anthem of faith and worship.

The Prayer of the Martyrs

Lord, so great is our love for you
That even though we walk in a world
where speaking your name can mean certain death
Your faithful still speak it
And speak it all the louder.

Help us work for a world where all may speak their creeds
And pray their prayers
Without fear of violence.

Hear the prayers of those who abide with you
in dangerous times
and in dark valleys,
And who die with your name on their lips.
Draw them quickly to your side
Where they might know eternal peace.

Amen.

The Song of the Angels (Expanded)

1 Now let us sing the Angels' song,
That rang so sweet and clear,
When heav'nly light and music fell
On earthly eye and ear;
To Him we sing, our Savior King,
Who left His throne and crown,
And with redeeming grace and pow'r,
In love to earth came down.

Refrain:

Sing, sing the joyful chorus!
Hark, hear the echo o'er us,
From millions gone before us,
Praise, oh, praise the Lord!

2 He came to tell the Father's love,
His goodness, truth and grace;
To show the brightness of His smile,
The glory of His face;
He came to bring the weary ones
True peace and perfect rest;
To take away the guilt and sin
That darkened and distressed. [Refrain]

3 He came that great and small might hear
His call, and in Him live,—
That to the burd'ned and oppressed
Salvation He might give;
He came to bring a glorious gift,
"Good will to men"—and why?
Because He loved us, Jesus came,
For us to live and die. [Refrain]

The Testament of Simeon (Expanded Fragments)

Simeon was blessed with strength and courage, which he used in the raid on Shechem (Genesis 37:25-28, T. *Simeon* 1-2). He was, however, envious of Joseph (who was nothing evil resided in Joseph; he was attractive in appearance and handsome to behold). The Prince of Error, therefore, tempted Simeon to kill Joseph. When Judah sold Joseph into slavery, Simeon wanted to kill Judah instead, but the Lord was bound to prevent him from this sin, and his hand was withered for seven days. He was only restored after he prayed for forgiveness.

Simeon, therefore, warns his children of the dangers of envy (chapter 3). "Beware of the spirit of deceit and envy," Simeon warns, because "envy dominates the whole of man's mind and does not permit him to eat or drink or to do anything good. Rather it keeps prodding him to destroy the one whom he envies" (3:1-3). Simeon can only overcome his envy of Joseph after two years of fasting. Rather than envy, one ought to have compassion (3:6, cf. Phil. 2:1-4, which contrasts compassion with envy).

Simeon claims to have seen a copy of the *Book of Enoch*, although *the Testament of Simeon* 5:4-5 does not allude to any known Enochian text. In what is likely a Christian interpolation, Simeon looks forward to a time in the future when Canaan will be destroyed (along with other enemies of the Patriarchs and, curiously, the Cappadocians). The text indicates the descendants of Shem will be exalted, and Simeon himself will rise again to bless God.

Testament of Simeon 6:3-6 Shem will be glorified because God the Lord, the Great One in Israel, will be manifest upon the earth [as a man]. By himself will he save Adam. Then all the spirits of error shall be given over to being trampled underfoot. And men will have mastery over the evil spirits. Then I shall arise in gladness and I shall bless the Most High for his marvels, [because God has taken a body, eats with human beings, and saves human beings].

Perhaps the most tantalizing lines in the Testament are 7:1-2. The section begins with an exhortation to "be obedient to Levi and to Judah. Do not exalt yourselves above these two tribes, [because from them will arise the Savior come from God]." The problem is the status of the last phrase: is this a Christian adaptation of a Jewish original or wholly Christian? The idea that two messiahs will come to Israel is found in the Dead Sea Scrolls (a messiah of David and Aaron). This reflects a coming military savior (like David, from the tribe of Judah) but also a messiah who functions in some ways like a priest from the tribe of Levi.

The Vision of Noah

The **Vision of Noah** refers to narratives and theological themes surrounding the life and divine encounters of Noah, particularly his visions or revelations from God. While no single text titled "The Vision of Noah" exists in canonical scripture, various accounts in the Bible and apocryphal literature, especially in the Ethiopian Orthodox tradition, explore Noah's prophetic role and the divine messages he received. These texts emphasize themes of faith, obedience, judgment, and renewal.

Biblical Context of Noah's Vision

Noah's visions are implied through God's direct communication with him in the **Book of Genesis**:

1. The Warning of the Flood:

- Genesis 6:13-14: "Then God said to Noah, 'I am going to put an end to all people... So make yourself an ark of cypress wood.'"
- This revelation serves as both a warning of impending judgment and a command to build the ark for salvation.

2. The Covenant of Renewal:

- Genesis 9:8-17: After the flood, God establishes a covenant with Noah, symbolized by the rainbow, promising never to destroy the earth by flood again.
-

Themes in the Vision of Noah

1. Divine Judgment and Mercy:

- Noah's vision reveals the balance of God's justice in addressing humanity's wickedness and His mercy in preserving a remnant through Noah's family.

2. Faith and Obedience:

- Noah's unwavering faith in God's message and his diligent work in building the ark reflect the importance of trusting divine wisdom.

3. Covenant and Renewal:

- The post-flood vision emphasizes God's covenant, symbolizing hope, restoration, and humanity's role in stewarding creation.

Noah in Ethiopian Tradition

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church holds Noah in high regard as a prophet and a symbol of faithfulness. Additional insights into Noah's visions and spiritual role can be found in apocryphal and extra-biblical texts included in the Ethiopian canon:

1. The Book of Enoch (1 Enoch):

- Unique to the Ethiopian Orthodox Bible, this text elaborates on the spiritual and cosmic dimensions of the flood narrative.
- Noah is mentioned as a figure chosen by God to preserve humanity and creation. His role is seen in a broader context of divine plans for the world.

2. The Book of Jubilees:

- Known as the "Lesser Genesis," this text includes an expanded narrative about Noah, detailing his visions, prayers, and the sacrificial rituals he performed after the flood.

3. Ge'ez Hymns and Liturgical Texts:

- Noah's visions are celebrated in Ethiopian hymns and prayers, particularly in themes of renewal, faith, and God's covenant.

Speculative Visionary Elements

A hypothetical *Vision of Noah* text might explore:

1. Noah's Preparation:

- A vision revealing the scale of the flood and the details of the ark's construction, symbolizing God's meticulous care for creation.

2. The Flood's Impact:

- Spiritual reflections on the flood as both a physical and moral cleansing of the earth.

3. Divine Revelation of the Rainbow:

- A vivid depiction of God's promise, with the rainbow as a sign of divine faithfulness.

Liturgical and Cultural Significance

1. Noah's Story in Worship:

- Noah's faith and visions are often referenced during fasting seasons, emphasizing repentance and renewal.

2. Covenant Imagery:

- The rainbow and the ark appear in Ethiopian iconography and hymns, symbolizing salvation and divine mercy.

Conclusion

The **Vision of Noah**, as derived from scripture and enriched by Ethiopian Orthodox traditions, is a profound narrative of faith, divine justice, and covenantal renewal. It serves as a timeless reminder of God's sovereignty and humanity's responsibility to live in harmony with His will. Whether through canonical scripture, apocryphal expansions, or liturgical celebrations, Noah's visions continue to inspire believers to trust in God's plans and embrace the hope of restoration.

The Prayer of Solomon (Extended)

²²Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in front of the whole assembly of Israel, spread out his hands toward heaven ²³ and said:

"Lord, the God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth below—you who keep your covenant of love with your servants who continue wholeheartedly in your way. ²⁴You have kept your promise to your servant David my father; with your mouth you have promised and with your hand you have fulfilled it—as it is today.

²⁵"Now Lord, the God of Israel, keep for your servant David my father the promises you made to him when you said, 'You shall never fail to have a successor to sit before me on the throne of Israel, if only your descendants are careful in all they do to walk before me faithfully as you have done.' ²⁶And now, God of Israel, let your word that you promised your servant David my father come true.

²⁷"But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built! ²⁸Yet give attention to your servant's prayer and his plea for mercy, Lord my God. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day. ²⁹May your eyes be open toward this temple night and day, this place of which you said, 'My Name shall be there,' so that you will hear the prayer your servant prays toward this place. ³⁰Hear the supplication of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven, your dwelling place, and when you hear, forgive.

³¹"When anyone wrongs their neighbor and is required to take an oath and they come and swear the oath before your altar in this temple, ³²then hear from heaven and act. Judge between your servants, condemning the guilty by bringing down on their heads what they have done, and vindicating the innocent by treating them in accordance with their innocence.

³³“When your people Israel have been defeated by an enemy because they have sinned against you, and when they turn back to you and give praise to your name, praying and making supplication to you in this temple, ³⁴then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your people Israel and bring them back to the land you gave to their ancestors.

³⁵“When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because your people have sinned against you, and when they pray toward this place and give praise to your name and turn from their sin because you have afflicted them, ³⁶then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your servants, your people Israel. Teach them the right way to live, and send rain on the land you gave your people for an inheritance.

³⁷“When famine or plague comes to the land, or blight or mildew, locusts or grasshoppers, or when an enemy besieges them in any of their cities, whatever disaster or disease may come, ³⁸and when a prayer or plea is made by anyone among your people Israel—being aware of the afflictions of their own hearts, and spreading out their hands toward this temple—³⁹then hear from heaven, your dwelling place. Forgive and act; deal with everyone according to all they do, since you know their hearts (for you alone know every human heart), ⁴⁰so that they will fear you all the time they live in the land you gave our ancestors.

⁴¹“As for the foreigner who does not belong to your people Israel but has come from a distant land because of your name—⁴²for they will hear of your great name and your mighty hand and your outstretched arm—when they come and pray toward this temple, ⁴³then hear from heaven, your dwelling place. Do whatever the foreigner asks of you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your own people Israel, and may know that this house I have built bears your Name.

⁴⁴“When your people go to war against their enemies, wherever you send them, and when they pray to the Lord toward the city you have chosen and the temple I have built for your Name, ⁴⁵then hear from heaven their prayer and their plea, and uphold their cause.

⁴⁶“When they sin against you—for there is no one who does not sin—and you become angry with them and give them over to their enemies, who take them captive to their own lands, far away or near; ⁴⁷and if they have a change of heart in the land where they are held captive, and repent and plead with you in the land of their captors and say, ‘We have sinned, we have done wrong, we have acted wickedly’; ⁴⁸and if they turn back to you with all their heart and soul in the land of their enemies who took them captive, and pray to you toward the land you gave their ancestors, toward the city you have chosen and the temple I have built for your Name; ⁴⁹then from heaven, your dwelling place, hear their prayer and their plea, and uphold their cause. ⁵⁰And forgive your people, who have sinned against you; forgive all the offenses they have committed against you, and cause their captors to show them mercy; ⁵¹for they are your people and your inheritance, whom you brought out of Egypt, out of that iron-smelting furnace.

⁵²“May your eyes be open to your servant’s plea and to the plea of your people Israel, and may you listen to them whenever they cry out to you. ⁵³For you singled them out from all the nations of the world to be your own inheritance, just as you declared through your servant Moses when you, Sovereign Lord, brought our ancestors out of Egypt.”

⁵⁴When Solomon had finished all these prayers and supplications to the Lord, he rose from before the altar of the Lord, where he had been kneeling with his hands spread out toward heaven. ⁵⁵He stood and blessed the whole assembly of Israel in a loud voice, saying:

⁵⁶“Praise be to the Lord, who has given rest to his people Israel just as he promised. Not one word has failed of all the good promises he gave through his servant Moses. ⁵⁷May the Lord our God be with us as he was with our ancestors; may he never leave us nor forsake us. ⁵⁸May he turn our hearts to him, to walk in obedience to him and keep the commands, decrees and laws he gave our ancestors. ⁵⁹And may these words of mine, which I have prayed before the Lord, be near to the Lord our God day and night, that he may uphold the cause of his servant and the cause of his people Israel according to each day’s need, ⁶⁰so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the Lord is God and that there is no other. ⁶¹And may your hearts be fully committed to the Lord our God, to live by his decrees and obey his commands, as at this time.”

The Song of David’s Victory

When the Lord saved David from Saul and his other enemies, David sang this song to the Lord:

²The Lord is my protector;
he is my strong fortress.
³My God is my protection,
and with him I am safe.
He protects me like a shield;
he defends me and keeps me safe.
He is my savior;
he protects me and saves me from violence.
⁴I call to the Lord,
and he saves me from my enemies.
Praise the Lord!

⁵The waves of death were all around me;
the waves of destruction rolled over me.
⁶The danger of death was around me,
and the grave set its trap for me.
⁷In my trouble I called to the Lord;
I called to my God for help.
In his temple he heard my voice;
he listened to my cry for help.
⁸Then the earth trembled and shook;
the foundations of the sky rocked and quivered
because God was angry!
⁹Smoke poured out of his nostrils,
a consuming flame and burning coals from his mouth.
¹⁰He tore the sky open and came down,
with a dark cloud under his feet.

- ¹¹ He flew swiftly on his winged creature;^[a]
he traveled on the wings of the wind.
- ¹² He covered himself with darkness;
thick clouds, full of^[b] water, surrounded him;
- ¹³ burning coals flamed up from the lightning before him.
- ¹⁴ Then the Lord thundered from the sky,
and the voice of Almighty God was heard.
- ¹⁵ He shot his arrows and scattered his enemies;
with flashes of lightning he sent them running.
- ¹⁶ The floor of the ocean was laid bare,
and the foundations of the earth were uncovered
when the Lord rebuked his enemies
and roared at them in anger.
- ¹⁷ The Lord reached down from above and took hold of me;
he pulled me out of the deep waters.
- ¹⁸ He rescued me from my powerful enemies
and from all those who hate me—
they were too strong for me.
- ¹⁹ When I was in trouble, they attacked me,
but the Lord protected me.
- ²⁰ He helped me out of danger;
he saved me because he was pleased with me.
- ²¹ The Lord rewards me because I do what is right;
he blesses me because I am innocent.
- ²² I have obeyed the law of the Lord;
I have not turned away from my God.
- ²³ I have observed all his laws;
I have not disobeyed his commands.
- ²⁴ He knows that I am faultless,
that I have kept myself from doing wrong.
- ²⁵ And so he rewards me because I do what is right,
because he knows that I am innocent.
- ²⁶ O Lord, you are faithful to those who are faithful to you,
and completely good to those^[c] who are perfect.
- ²⁷ You are pure to those who are pure,
but hostile to those who are wicked.
- ²⁸ You save those who are humble,
but you humble those who are proud.
- ²⁹ You, Lord, are my light;
you dispel my darkness.
- ³⁰ You give me strength to attack my enemies
and power to overcome their defenses.

³¹ This God—how perfect are his deeds,
 how dependable his words!
 He is like a shield
 for all who seek his protection.

³² The Lord alone is God;
 God alone is our defense.

³³ This God is my strong refuge;
 he makes^[d] my pathway safe.

³⁴ He makes me sure-footed as a deer;
 he keeps me safe on the mountains.

³⁵ He trains me for battle,
 so that I can use the strongest bow.

³⁶ O Lord, you protect me and save me;
 your help has made me great.

³⁷ You have kept me from being captured,
 and I have never fallen.

³⁸ I pursue my enemies and defeat them;
 I do not stop until I destroy them.

³⁹ I strike them down, and they cannot rise;
 they lie defeated before me.

⁴⁰ You give me strength for the battle
 and victory over my enemies.

⁴¹ You make my enemies run from me;
 I destroy those who hate me.

⁴² They look for help, but no one saves them;
 they call to the Lord, but he does not answer.

⁴³ I crush them, and they become like dust;
 I trample on them like mud in the streets.

⁴⁴ You saved me from my rebellious people
 and maintained my rule over the nations;
 people I did not know have now become my subjects.

⁴⁵ Foreigners bow before me;
 when they hear me, they obey.

⁴⁶ They lose their courage
 and come trembling^[e] from their fortresses.

⁴⁷ The Lord lives! Praise my defender!
 Proclaim the greatness of the strong God who saves me!

⁴⁸ He gives me victory over my enemies;
 he subdues the nations under me

⁴⁹ and saves me from my foes.

O Lord, you give me victory over my enemies
 and protect me from violent men.

⁵⁰ And so I praise you among the nations;
I sing praises to you.

⁵¹ God gives great victories to his king;
he shows constant love to the one he has chosen,
to David and his descendants forever.

Footnotes

- a. 2 Samuel 22:11 See Word List.
- b. 2 Samuel 22:12 Some ancient translations (and see Ps 18.11) full of; Hebrew unclear.
- c. 2 Samuel 22:26 Probable text (see Ps 18.25) those; Hebrew the strong.
- d. 2 Samuel 22:33 Probable text (see Ps 18.32) he makes; Hebrew unclear.
- e. 2 Samuel 22:46 Probable text (see Ps 18.45) come trembling; Hebrew come ready to fight.

The Prophecy of Micah (Additional Fragments)

Last week we looked at the wise men – the magi – who traveled such a long way to find the Messiah. It is my opinion that they were believers, and that very likely, centuries earlier, their families had become worshipers of Jehovah. In addition to that, these men and their ancestors were a branch of the more educated people of Babylon. God's prophet Daniel, six hundred years earlier, had been made one of the masters of the magi, and I have no doubt that he taught the Word of God to the great, great-grandfathers of these men. So when that miraculous luminary – that very special star – appeared in the west, these men packed their luggage and their gifts and made the arduous journey into Israel, looking for **their** Messiah.

I didn't think of this question last week, but perhaps you did for me..... If these men knew the Word of God well enough to follow the star, then why didn't they also know that Christ would be born in Bethlehem? If they knew one scripture, why didn't they know this scripture as well? I'm afraid that I don't have a specific answer to that question. But I do know that most Christians don't know their Bibles as well as they think that they do, or as well as they should considering all the lessons that they have heard and all the years that they have been saved. It could have been that these men simply never learned that particular lesson. And it might have been that as soon as Herod passed on what he learned from his priests that they slapped themselves in their collective foreheads, remembering something that their fathers had taught them, but which they had forgotten. Or perhaps they finally understood something that they had missed earlier.

Also, believing as I do in the sovereignty of God, their lack of understanding may have been divinely intended for Herod's benefit. What if they had gone directly to Bethlehem without stopping at Jerusalem, and Herod had never been made aware of Jehovah's incarnation? He would have died within the next eighteen or twenty months without ever giving the Messiah a thought. The Lord may have had a special reason for making sure that Herod was acquainted with the One who is to be King of all kings. Even though that man died as a rebel and unbeliever. In a similar way, there have been thousands of people who were raised in godly churches, who heard the prophecies and truth

about Christ, but who died in the same spiritual condition as Herod. And yet, the Lord made sure that those people heard the truth for which they would be judged.

Initially, not only didn't the **magi** know where Christ was to be born, but **Herod** didn't know either. As soon as he heard the words "**king of the Jews**," he was diligently asking the same question. The instant answer was that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem. Why was the answer Bethlehem? Because it had been declared – prophesied – promised – in **one** lone verse in the Old Testament Scripture.

This leads me directly to a lesson which reaches beyond our scriptures for the day. I sometimes hear criticism of the type of Bible study in which we are engaged this morning. Also, I assume that some people visit us once and then move on, because they don't appreciate our feeble attempts at an in-depth study of the Scriptures. There are people who say that the most important aspect of Christianity is a believer's ardent love for God, but this kind of Bible study is not conducive to that love and proper Christian service. Some of them will even take that a step farther, saying that sincere love for God is the **only** thing of importance. They actually down-play – or even condemn – a serious study of the Bible. To those critics I offer the words of the Lord Jesus, first spoken to the woman at the well in Sychar – *"The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."* There can be no doubt that heart and spirit are important with the Lord, but at the same time God must be worshiped and served "**in – or according with – TRUTH.**" And there is only one source for spiritual truth – the pages – the words – even the details of the Scriptures.

These wise men traveled for hundreds of miles and many days in order to worship the king of kings. But, despite their sincerity, their fervency, their zeal and their desire, they were incapable of rendering to Christ Jesus the glory due unto His name, because they didn't know the scriptures as well as they should. You and I **need to have** and **know** the Word of God. We **must** know the Word of God in order to serve the Lord properly. Or to put it into language often despised – we must know Biblical **doctrine**. For example, the **prophet Isaiah** had been exposing some of the sins and heresies of Israel when he said, *"Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples."* The problem with Israel had nothing to do with their fervency and sincerity – their spirit. Israel had a **doctrinal** problem in that they didn't know the difference between truth and error. God's command to them was that they return *"to the law and to the testimony."* That is still the need of the day.

King Herod claimed to be a religious man, and I'm sure that his priests declared that of themselves even more. But their spirituality was based on sin and heresy – not on truth and the Bible. There was only one way to know whether or not the religion of Herod's priests was genuine – compare what they believed and practiced to the law and the testimony. It wasn't enough that they knew what **Micah 5:2 taught**. Far more important was what they were **going to do** with what **Micah 5:2** taught. The Lord Jesus has commanded us to *"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."* **Acts 17:11** teaches us that Biblical nobility is to be found in them who *"receive the word with all readiness of mind, and who search the scriptures daily."* If it takes six months or six years to fully study the **Book of Matthew**, then we need to take that time. The Lord said something else through **Isaiah** which relates to what we are doing

here. *“Whom shall (we) teach knowledge? and whom shall (we) make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little... The word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken. Wherefore hear the word of the LORD, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem.”*

Six weeks ago, when we were looking at **the credentials of Christ**, we took note of His birthplace. The fact that He was born in Bethlehem, just as it had been prophesied, helps us to identify Jesus as the Messiah. In the context of a wider message, we gave some thought to **Micah 5**. Once again, we are confronted with this prophecy, and in order to understand **this** chapter, we need to return to that Old Testament prophecy. But let's not deal with these heretics and their misquotation of the prophecy. Let's go right back to the original.

The Book of Micah in general.

Micah was a contemporary of the prophet Isaiah. He served the Lord through the reigns of some righteous and some very wicked kings. But even when good kings reign, that doesn't mean that the citizens of the realm are righteous. Israel was on a toboggan slide into perdition, and neither Hezekiah nor Isaiah or Micah could put a stop to it. Some have said that while Isaiah ministered in the big city, Micah was prophesying out in the country-side.

Both of those prophets had a similar message. They both condemned the sins of Israel, and they both warned of upcoming judgment. Micah begins with the words, *“Hear, all ye people; hearken, O earth, and all that therein is: and let the Lord GOD be witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple.”* These words of prophecy are as applicable today as they were 2,100 years ago. And they are as applicable to our nation as they were to the nation of Israel so many years ago. *“Behold, the LORD cometh forth out of his place, and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth. And the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft, as wax before the fire, and as the waters that are poured down a steep place. For the transgression of Jacob is all this, and for the sins of the house of Israel. What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria? and what are the high places of Judah? are they not Jerusalem? Therefore I will make Samaria (or America) as an heap of the field ... and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the foundations thereof. And all the graven images (all her idols) thereof shall be beaten to pieces...”* Chapter two begins with – *“Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practise it, because it is in the power of their hand. And they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away: so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage. Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, against this family do I devise an evil, from which ye shall not remove your necks; neither shall ye go haughtily: for this time is evil.”*

It needs to be recognized that while Israel's society was crumbling, it was still religious. They had their unauthorized high places – their religious gatherings and societies – “churches” if you will. And they had plenty of corrupt prophets and priests. Chapter 2 speaks of prophecies filled with lies and falsehood. Chapter 3 condemns judges who work for reward and priests and prophets whose purpose is only to become rich. In chapter 6 we read – *“Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of*

rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" This isn't talking about the sacrifice of the Son of God, but of idolatrous parents offering their children to false gods, or even supposedly to Jehovah Himself. The Lord "hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" In chapter 5 Jehovah tells Israel through His prophet – "I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand; and thou shalt have no more soothsayers: Thy graven images also will I cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee; and thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands. And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee: so will I destroy thy cities." In the days of Isaiah and Micah Israel was as religious as America is today. But her religion was idolatrous and her doctrines were heretical. Just as we are in our society today.

Then, as Isaiah did in his book, in the midst of Micah's condemnation and warnings, there were promises of the coming of the Messiah and the eventual blessings of the Millennial kingdom. *"In the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it. For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever."* Just like Isaiah, the prophecies of Micah move quickly back and forth between the promise of judgment and the promise of blessing. And the prophecy to which Herod's priests refer is a part of that.

Now, let's consider Micah chapter 5.

"Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us: they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek." The troops to which Micah refers are those of the King of Babylon, although some commentators talk about Assyria and others about the Romans. The most immediate foreign power to fall upon Judah would be Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians. And if you'll go back to your Bible history, you'll remember that they eventually took the king of Judah, Zedekiah, and judged him severely – they **"smote him with a rod upon the cheek."** Was Micah referring to **II Kings 25:7** or is it more generic? The Babylonians *"slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon."*

Following that, for the better part of a century the cream of Judah's society lived as captives in Babylon. Then over time, some of the people were permitted to return to Jerusalem. The returnees began to serve God, but often without much spirit and usually without much truth. And as a result, for the next 500 years Israel had almost no positive testimony for the Lord.

"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old,

from everlasting.” Despite Israel’s sin and God’s disapproval, the Lord was not going to break His covenant. He had promised salvation and a Messiah, and in the fulness of time God sent His Son. By the way, “**Ephratah**” is given as another name for Bethlehem as early as the days of Ruth and Naomi. Later when Cyrus gave permission for the Jews to return to Judah, we have several lists of names and the places to which they returned. Bethlehem is mentioned, but the returning residents of that community were just a handful. While it’s big city neighbor, Jerusalem, grew and prospered, Bethlehem shrank back, living in the shadows.

Bethlehem was never a great and prosperous community, but at times, it has been a very special place. Not only was it formerly the birthplace of King David, it would be the birthplace of his greatest successor. And when the magi came to Jerusalem, they asked where **the King** had been born. Micah scripture speaks of **the ruler** – which boils down to the same thing. And Herod’s helpers quoted this verse as the birthplace of the Messiah.

Ah, but **this** ruler of Israel, bears some characteristics which neither Herod nor David could ever possess. “*Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*” This doesn’t refer to prophecies of Christ which have been around almost for ever. And it isn’t speaking about the decree of God which was made before the foundation of the earth. It is a declaration that this ruler Himself is eternal, and that is a problem if it’s not kept in a divine context. Nothing is or ever has been eternal but God Himself. This ruler in **Micah 5:2** is eternal, because He is the Son of God – the Second Person of the Trinity. Whether the prophet understood it or not, this future ruler – the Messiah – would be God’s eternal Son.

One of the characteristics and problems with a lot of Old Testament prophecy, is that the high points, the peaks of prophecy, often appear to stand side by side, when in fact there are great valley’s between them. This prophecy ultimately points toward the Millennial kingdom, when the whole world will be under the physical dominion of Christ. But it begins with the birth of the babe in Bethlehem, after more than 500 years of spiritual darkness. And following this birth – this incarnation – another 2,000 years before the rest of the prophecy is fulfilled. Micah goes on – “*Therefore will he (Jehovah) give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth: then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel. and he shall stand and feed in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth.*”

We will come back to the subject of the Millennial kingdom later. And we don’t have the time or perhaps the patience to go through all the details of the next few verses. But at this point let’s just be aware that the Bible declares that the babe born in Bethlehem will one day rule the entire earth, sitting on the throne of his grandfather David. But prior to the commencement of that Kingdom there will be wars, pestilences, natural disasters and human atrocities which the world has never experienced before. For seven years, primarily focused upon Israel, the Lord will pour out tribulation which will eventually bring that people to their knees before Him. The collateral damage of that tribulation will splash like acid over the entire world, during which time men will be pleading for death to take them, so that they can escape all the pain and problems. It’s to this Ruler – this Messiah – that Micah refers. And it is about His Millennial reign and the preliminary seven year tribulation that he speaks.

But in the mean time – praise the Lord – in the mean time – The babe born in Bethlehem – which means **“House of Bread”** – is Himself the Bread of Life. The babe born in Ephratah – which means **“place of fruitfulness”** – has been blessing thousands of repenting, believing sinners. The **Book of Matthew** begins with wise men looking for *“he that is born king of the Jews.”* While accomplishing their goal, they more precisely found the One who would first be **the Saviour**. Like the other gospels, Matthew takes us up to the cross, where the Lamb of God shed His blood as a ransom for many. Eventually this Messiah will rule and reign, but in the mean time He is preparing a people for His Name, for His glory and for His Kingdom.

In the light of this, please remember these points – When Micah spoke, Israel was a religious, but hedonistic, wicked nation – totally unworthy of God. When Matthew refers back to Micah’s prophecy, Israel was still the same wicked people, desperately needing a new heart. And today, nothing has changed as far as the world and our society are concerned. We, too, deserve to be consumed by the wrath of Almighty God. But, as the Lord calls, convicts and confers, sinners are repenting before God and realizing that the sacrifice which Christ made on the cross was for their salvation. Even sinners as wicked as ourselves may be saved – delivered from their sins – by the grace of God.

Has the Lord impressed upon you that He wants **you** to be His saint? Are you living in repentance; is your faith in Christ Jesus? This One, born in a stable, eventually died on a cross. He died as the Lamb of God, a vicarious sacrifice for the sins of many. Repent before Him, and put your trust for salvation in the sacrificial work that He completed on the cross.

The Lament of the Shepherds

On yonder lofty mountain

A thousand times I stand,
And on my staff reclining,

Look down on the smiling land.

My grazing flocks then I follow,

My dog protecting them well;
I find myself in the valley,

But how, I scarcely can tell.

The whole of the meadow is cover'd

With flowers of beauty rare;
I pluck them, but pluck them unknowing

To whom the offering to bear.

In rain and storm and tempest,

I tarry beneath the tree,
But closed remaineth yon portal;

'Tis all but a vision to me.

High over yonder dwelling,

There rises a rainbow gay;
But she from home hath departed

And wander'd far, far away.

Yes, far away bath she wander'd,

Perchance e'en over the sea;
Move onward, ye sheep, then, move onward!

Full sad the shepherd must be.

The Apocalypse of Balaam

When thinking of prophecy, we usually call to mind God's prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the "minor" prophets. We may consider the great prophecies of the New Testament: Jesus' many prophecies, including the Olivet Prophecy; Paul's prophecies in I Corinthians 15, I Thessalonians 4-5, II Thessalonians 2, and II Timothy 3, among others; and of course, the entire book of Revelation. We may also recall that both Isaac and Jacob uttered prophecies, as did Moses, Samuel, David, and many others.

But do we ever consider that God allocates three chapters of the book of Numbers to the prophecies of Balaam, a Mesopotamian soothsayer?

Balaam son of Beor is definitely an oddball among the prophets. He is not an Israelite but apparently a Syrian who lived in Pethor, a town situated near the Euphrates just south of Carchemish (Numbers 22:5). His prophecies result from an attempt to curse Israel in exchange for the money and honor of a frightened king of Moab, Balak son of Zippor (verses 2-7). To make matters worse, unlike any other prophet, he leads the Israelites into sin and brings a curse upon them, succeeding in getting 24,000 of them killed.

Since that time, his name has been a watchword denoting evil and avaricious character. As early as Deuteronomy 23:4-5, he is shown as an enemy of God and Israel and degraded as a hired mercenary. Joshua positively notes his death at the hand of Israelites (Joshua 13:22), and he also

repeats Balaam's overthrow by God in a list of His victories for Israel (Joshua 24:9-10). Nehemiah and Micah recall him to the people of their days as an evil man whom God defeated (Nehemiah 13:2; Micah 6:5).

The New Testament mentions Balaam three times, all negatively. Both Peter and Jude describe him as the personification of greed in using religion for personal gain (II Peter 2:15; Jude 11). Revelation 2:14 credits him with "the doctrine of Balaam," which is inducing others to sin, specifically to idolatry and sexual immorality.

Certainly, Balaam was no paragon of virtue. Yet, as unrighteous as he was, his prophecies remain in God's Word—and they are true! Why?

Background and Structure

To understand Balaam's prophecies properly, we must delve into his background and the situation at the time. Balaam himself, biblical historians believe, descended from a line of diviners whose reputation for cursing had spread over the whole region. Balak's delegation to Balaam had to travel about 400 miles to petition the soothsayer at his home (Numbers 22:5).

Scholars surmise soothsaying to be Balaam's "family business" from his wide reputation as well as the meaning of his and his father's names. *Balaam* means "devourer of the people" or simply "devourer" or "destroyer," a fitting name for someone whose livelihood depends on cursing various people(s). His father's name, *Beor*, means "burning," another allusion to destruction.

Further, the Bible never calls him a "prophet" or "seer" as it does true prophets of God, but it names him a "soothsayer" (Joshua 13:22; see Isaiah 3:2, where "diviner" is antithetical to "prophet"). It is widely supposed that Balaam was a *bār?*, a Mesopotamian priest-diviner, who used various dreams, omens, and auguries as part of his trade.

How do we reconcile this with his claim in Numbers 22:18 that the Lord was his God? We have two choices. The first is that Balaam, a confirmed polytheist, knew of the true God by reputation (whether by His works on Israel's behalf in Egypt—see Joshua 2:8-11—or from local folklore, as the cities of Haran and Nahor, associated with Abraham, were located nearby) and professed devotion to Him to enhance his chances of receiving an oracle. The second and more cynical option is that he was trying to convince Balak's emissaries that, as an intimate of Israel's God, he had the pull to change His mind about cursing His own people, no matter what restrictions He put on him. From what we know of Balaam's general character, the second seems more likely.

Another necessary piece of background information is that this scenario takes place in the months just before Israel's entrance into the Promised Land. Moses was about to die, and before he did, he wrote the book of Deuteronomy in preparation for Israel's taking possession of Canaan. In a similar vein, the content of Balaam's prophecies reiterate the main points of God's promises to Israel, reminding the people that God was fulfilling them before their eyes. In addition, the sequel of these events—Balaam's suggestion to the Midianites that they tempt Israel to dally with Moab's women and idols—provided one last test of the Israelites, to prove the faithful and purge the sinful.

Finally, the structure of these three chapters in Numbers is important. Numbers 22 consists of Balak's delegation, Balaam's response, the trip to Moab—during which the Angel of the Lord blocks

his path three times and Balaam's donkey speaks—and Balak's reception of the diviner at the border. These events, of course, set up the prophecies in the next two chapters, but they also highlight the two main themes of the story.

First, the narrative often repeats the admonition, "The word that God puts in my mouth, that I must speak" (Numbers 22:38; see verses 18, 20, 35). This is the condition God puts on Balaam when He allows him to go to Balak, and it is reiterated throughout the oracles (Numbers 23:3, 12, 26; 24:13). This constraint of Balaam, supposedly the world's most powerful cursing diviner, directs the glory to God and certifies that His purpose through Israel could not be hindered.

Second, Balaam's encounter with the Angel brings out the other theme: The supposedly "spiritual" person is often blind to what the simple see plainly. Similarly, John the Baptist tells the Pharisees, "God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones" (Matthew 3:9; Luke 3:8), meaning that Abraham's real children are those who live as Abraham did (John 8:39; Romans 4:16; 9:7; Galatians 3:29). The Angel's explanation is telling:

Behold, I have come out to stand [margin, *as an adversary*] against you, because your way is perverse before Me. The donkey saw Me and turned aside from Me these three times. If she had not turned aside from Me, surely I would also have killed you by now, and let her live. (Numbers 22:32-33)

Balaam replies, "I have sinned, for I did not know You stood in the way against me" (verse 34). Like the majority of people in the world, Balaam, a professing religious person, could not see God at work, not even when He was personally opposing him! Yet, the dumb donkey, a lowly beast of burden, saw God at work and deferred to Him, and by its submission, the donkey made it possible for "blind" Balaam to see (compare Isaiah 42:18-20; Matthew 11:5; Luke 4:18; John 9:39-41; Revelation 3:17-18).

This latter theme is vital to understanding Balaam's prophecies. God gives them through blind Balaam to open the eyes of Balak, the Israelites, and Bible readers down the centuries to what His purpose is.

First Prophecy

Balak puts Balaam to work almost immediately upon arriving. The diviner has Balak build seven altars, on each of which he offers a bull and a ram (Numbers 23:1). The bull and ram are the prime animals to offer because of their value, and the number seven has a long history of being especially propitious. By these offerings, Balaam is trying to ensure his ability to bribe a curse out of God.

God, of course, will not be bribed (Deuteronomy 10:17), so He puts a blessing on Israel in Balaam's mouth:

For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: There! A people dwelling alone, not reckoning itself among the nations. Who can count the dust of Jacob, or number one-fourth of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my end be like his! (Numbers 23:9-10)

Balaam was indeed standing in a high place of Baal at the time (Numbers 22:41), and evidently, from this height he could see the whole camp. What he saw was an immense mass of people that he could not begin to count, a fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 13:16: "And I will

make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered" (see also Genesis 15:5). Balaam's oracle suggests that this growth would continue, something Balak did not want to hear (Numbers 23:11).

In saying that Israel was "a people dwelling alone," Balaam notes its separation by covenant from the rest of the world and to God. This recalls God's covenant with Abraham in Genesis 15, in which He prophesies Abraham's offspring returning to Canaan as a people (verses 13-16), and certainly, it alludes to the covenant of circumcision in Genesis 17. This separation by covenant is ratified anew at Mount Sinai: "Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:5-6; see Deuteronomy 7:6-11).

The soothsayer's final words are a wish that he, a Gentile having no part in the covenant, could be included under it. The "righteous" are those who keep the terms of the covenant, which is obedience to God. His words of blessing may allude to Genesis 12:3, where God promises Abraham, "I will bless those who bless you." If he cannot join them, Balaam at least desires the blessings that come from blessing them!

Second Prophecy

Balak tries again, taking Balaam to a field atop Mount Pisgah, where he could see only the outermost part of the camp (Numbers 23:13). His rationale for this is that Balaam could not curse Israel while faced with the mystical power of the whole people. If he could see just a part of Israel, the odds would be more even and a curse more likely. So, the diviner again offers a bull and a ram on seven different altars (verse 14).

In both the first two prophecies is an interesting phrase: "God [or, *the Lord*] met Balaam" (verses 4, 16). This is a very personal and close form of communication. How God met him is unknown, but it is obvious that he knew God was present and giving him the words to speak to Balak (verses 5, 16). In the next chapter, the narrative says explicitly that "the Spirit of God came upon him" to inspire his next prophecy (Numbers 24:2).

We have a hard time understanding why God would work this closely with such an evil, unconverted man yet never appear to us or even seem to inspire us with fitting words, a skillful reply, or an instruction on what to do in a difficult circumstance. However, we must understand that God was in this man making a great witness of His power and glory. As hard as he tried, not even the most famous diviner of his day could curse God's people, and the word of Israel's blessings and their prophesied conquests gave notice that God's plan would go forward despite the efforts of the surrounding nations. Thus, for its impact, God deigns to speak through an unworthy vessel.

Balaam's second oracle declares:

God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good? Behold, I have received a command to bless; He has blessed, and I cannot reverse it.

He has not observed iniquity in Jacob, nor has He seen wickedness in Israel. The Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a King is among them. God brings them out of Egypt; he has strength like a wild ox.

For there is no sorcery against Jacob, nor any divination against Israel. It now must be said of Jacob and of Israel, 'Oh, what God has done!' Look, a people rises like a lioness, and lifts itself up like a lion; it shall not lie down until it devours the prey, and drinks the blood of the slain. (Numbers 23:19-24)

In the first paragraph, the soothsayer admits his powerlessness before God. Since at least the days of Abraham, God had been foretelling what He would do for His people, and there was no way He would renege on it now that it was about to unfold! On such a pivotal part of His plan, God would not be forced or cajoled to change His mind.

The first half of verse 21 has had many wondering how it could be true, since the entire account of Israel in the wilderness is a sad commentary on how sinful Israel was! The idea here is not that God does not see their sin—the Pentateuch is full of God's observations about their iniquities—but that their wickedness has not reached the point that He would be persuaded to curse them.

Certainly, He would not be bribed into cursing His own people by their—and thus His—enemies! For, as the verse goes on to say, He is with Israel as their King! Why would He curse His own kingdom and people? And why, after going to the trouble of leading them out of Egypt with such a strong hand (verse 22), would He allow them to be defeated just before reaching their destination? This interpretation becomes clear in verse 23: There would be no sorcery or divination against Israel because of what God had done for them.

The final verse highlights Israel as a lion, a symbol of regal power and predatory mastery. This is an allusion to Jacob's prophecy concerning the tribes of Israel in Genesis 49:9: "Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; and as a lion, who shall rouse him?" In this case, Judah stands for the whole nation (as it later came to rule all Israel in David). A nation often resembles its leadership—and vice versa—so it can be said that under God's inspiration Balaam saw Israel through the lens of the royal tribe of Judah. This is especially interesting in light of the description of God as Israel's King in Numbers 23:21 and the upcoming prophecy of a great King to come.

The Ethiopian Book of Divine Mysteries

The **Ethiopian Book of Divine Mysteries** refers to the deep theological and mystical traditions preserved within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. While there is no single book explicitly titled this way, the term encapsulates a collection of writings, hymns, liturgical texts, and apocryphal works that delve into the profound mysteries of God, creation, salvation, and the spiritual realm. These works are often inspired by scriptural teachings, apocryphal writings, and the unique theological insights of the Ethiopian Church.

The "divine mysteries" (*Raze Egziabher* in Ge'ez) represent truths that transcend human understanding, revealed by God to guide humanity toward salvation. These mysteries encompass:

3. The Holy Trinity:

- The relationship between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and their unified yet distinct roles in creation and redemption.

4. The Incarnation and Redemption:

- The mystery of Christ taking on human flesh to save humanity.

5. The Eucharist:

- The real presence of Christ in the bread and wine, celebrated in the *Qidase* (Divine Liturgy).

6. Angels and Heavenly Realms:

- The role of angelic beings in God's divine plan.

7. The End Times and Resurrection:

- The ultimate renewal of creation and humanity's eternal communion with God.

Key Texts and Sources

1. The Bible in Ge'ez:

- The Ethiopian Orthodox Bible includes canonical and deuterocanonical books, such as **1 Enoch**, **Jubilees**, and **2 Esdras**, which explore heavenly visions and divine mysteries.

2. The Kebra Nagast (The Glory of Kings):

- This foundational text discusses the divine wisdom behind Ethiopia's spiritual chosenness and the Ark of the Covenant.

3. The Book of Enoch (1 Enoch):

- Unique to the Ethiopian canon, it describes the heavenly realms, the fall of angels, and apocalyptic visions, offering insights into God's hidden plans.

4. The Ge'ez Hymnal (*Deggwa*):

- Liturgical hymns that celebrate the mysteries of the Trinity, the incarnation, and the sacraments.

5. The Anaphoras:

- Eucharistic prayers used during the Divine Liturgy, which meditate on the mystery of salvation through Christ's sacrifice.

Themes in the Book of Divine Mysteries

1. God's Transcendence and Immanence:

- The hymns and prayers reflect the paradox of God being beyond human understanding yet intimately present in creation.

2. Revelation Through Prophets and Saints:

- Divine mysteries are revealed to chosen individuals like Moses, Enoch, and Mary, who act as intermediaries between God and humanity.

3. The Unity of Heaven and Earth:

- The liturgical practices emphasize the connection between the earthly Church and the heavenly hosts.

4. The Role of the Faithful:

- The mysteries are not merely for contemplation but for living a life of holiness, worship, and union with God.

Liturgical Expressions

The divine mysteries are celebrated and meditated upon through:

1. The Divine Liturgy (Qidase):

- Central to Ethiopian worship, it reveals the mystery of Christ's sacrifice and His presence in the Eucharist.

2. Festivals and Feasts:

- Major celebrations, such as **Fasika** (Easter) and **Tinket** (Epiphany), highlight key aspects of the divine plan.

3. Monastic Practices:

- Monks and nuns often meditate on the mysteries through prayer, fasting, and reading mystical texts.

Symbolism and Imagery

The Ethiopian tradition uses vivid symbols to convey divine mysteries:

- **The Ark of the Covenant:** Symbolizing God's presence and covenant with His people.
- **Light:** Representing divine wisdom and revelation.

- **The Circle:** Depicting eternity and the unity of the Trinity.
-

Modern Relevance

The Ethiopian Book of Divine Mysteries continues to inspire believers to seek deeper spiritual understanding and connection with God. It invites the faithful to:

- Contemplate the transcendent beauty of God's plan.
 - Live a life rooted in worship and obedience.
 - Find comfort in the hope of resurrection and eternal life.
-

Conclusion

The **Ethiopian Book of Divine Mysteries** embodies the rich theological and spiritual heritage of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. Through its sacred texts, liturgies, and hymns, it offers profound insights into the hidden wonders of God's nature and His work in creation and salvation. This tradition encourages believers to journey closer to God, embracing the divine mysteries as both a source of awe and a path to eternal communion.

The Ethiopian Song of Moses

"The Lord is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation; He is my God, and I will praise Him; my father's God, and I will exalt Him." These are words from the singing mouth of Moses in **Exodus 15:2**. What other thoughts could have been expressed than that which he stated? Moses watched as God made a distinction between His people and the Egyptians through the expression of His power in the plagues against Egypt, their king, and false gods. Moses had seen when homes obediently covered in lamb's blood were spared the death of their firstborn. Moses had witnessed God deliver them through the midst of the Red Sea – allowing a multitude to pass through safely on dry land. His precious words:

The Lord is my strength - God is my stronghold – the source of safety and security (**Romans 8:31**).

The Lord is my song - He is my only reason for rejoicing (**James 5:13**).

The Lord has become my salvation - God is the only source where a people once lost and without hope find salvation (**Acts 4:12**).

The Lord is my God - He is my might and full of power. Certainly, this had been on full display.

Pause to see the great descriptions of God and ask if that is your view of God and if not, why not? However, notice that as Moses sings these words, it is very personal with the word 'my' repeated. "He is MY God." Friends, God is not aloof, He is not disconnected, but as Moses so clearly points out, He is God who desires a relationship with His creation!

The response to all God is and to all that God had done elicited these words from Moses and should from us as well. "I will praise Him!" More literally, I will be at rest or find my rest in Him. Peace would be found by Moses in this relationship and he knew he needed no one else! "I will exalt Him!" I will make sure He has preeminence, God will be placed high above all else in my life. Truly, with all Moses and God's people had witnessed God do for them, there was no other way to respond than with the words he used. Isn't that right?

This past Sunday night, we as a congregation had every reason to rejoice as our new sister, Annie Martinez, was welcomed after having obeyed the gospel. Being a resident in a nursing home and having physical health ailments have not allowed her to attend at the Westside building. She has however, been worshipping with the saints in the Sunday afternoon service at Focus Care. As Christians, we must know that what God has done for us is far greater than deliverance from man's slavery and a pursuing army...God has delivered us from our sin and the loss of our soul eternally!

No wonder the man from Ethiopia would go on his way rejoicing after being baptized for the forgiveness of his sins (**Acts 8:38**). No wonder the jailor and his family in Philippi would rejoice after their obedience, including baptism (**Acts 16:34**).

God has provided us deliverance from our adversary. Is He your strength? Is He your song? Is He your salvation? Is He truly your God? If not, you have every reason to make your life right today. If so, you have every reason to rejoice!

The Hymns of the Ethiopian Monks

The **Hymns of the Ethiopian Monks** are a profound and sacred body of liturgical and devotional songs composed by Ethiopian Orthodox monks, deeply rooted in the mystical and ascetic traditions of the Church. These hymns, often sung in Ge'ez, the ancient liturgical language of Ethiopia, reflect themes of divine worship, repentance, the mysteries of faith, and the spiritual struggles of monastic life. They serve as a bridge between the earthly and the divine, offering praise to God while guiding the faithful in their spiritual journey.

Historical Context

The monastic tradition in Ethiopia dates back to the 4th century with the arrival of the **Nine Saints**, who established monasteries and promoted the practice of asceticism. Ethiopian monks have since composed hymns that are integral to the Church's worship and monastic practices. These hymns are often chanted in monasteries during daily prayers, vigils, and feasts, emphasizing the contemplative and mystical aspects of the faith.

Themes in the Hymns of Ethiopian Monks

1. Divine Worship and Praise:

- Hymns glorify God, celebrating His majesty, mercy, and providence.

- Example: "You who stretched the heavens like a tent, we bow before Your throne of light."

2. **Repentance and Humility:**

- Reflecting the monks' ascetic lives, hymns emphasize contrition and the need for God's forgiveness.
- Example: "Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am dust; cleanse me with the waters of Your grace."

3. **Mystical Union with God:**

- Hymns express the longing for intimacy with God and the joy of spiritual communion.
- Example: "As the deer pants for the streams, so my soul thirsts for You, O Lord of all."

4. **The Holy Virgin Mary:**

- Deep devotion to the Virgin Mary is evident, with hymns praising her purity and intercession.
- Example: "O Virgin Mother, the ladder to heaven, intercede for us before Your Son."

5. **The Struggle Against Evil:**

- Hymns often depict the spiritual warfare faced by monks, encouraging vigilance and reliance on God.
- Example: "Shield us, O Lord, from the snares of the enemy; grant us the strength of Your angels."

6. **Eternal Hope and Resurrection:**

- Monastic hymns frequently focus on the promise of eternal life and the joy of resurrection.
- Example: "The tomb is empty, and death is vanquished; glory to You, O Risen King!"

Liturgical and Monastic Practices

1. **Daily Chanting:**

- Monks chant these hymns during the seven canonical hours of prayer, beginning with **Matins** before dawn and concluding with **Compline** at night.

2. **Night Vigils:**

- During all-night vigils, particularly in monasteries, hymns are sung to maintain a spirit of worship and contemplation.

3. Feast Days:

- Special hymns are composed for feasts such as **Tinket** (Epiphany), **Genna** (Christmas), and **Fasika** (Easter), reflecting the themes of the celebration.

4. Personal Devotion:

- Monks also use these hymns for private meditation, fostering a deeper connection with God.

Unique Features of Ethiopian Monastic Hymns

1. Ge'ez Poetry and Melody:

- The hymns follow a unique poetic structure, rich in metaphor and repetition, and are accompanied by rhythmic melodies.

2. Call and Response:

- Many hymns use a "call and response" format, fostering communal participation.

3. Instruments:

- Traditional instruments like the **sistrun** and **drums** are occasionally used, though monastic hymns are often purely vocal.

4. Mystical Imagery:

- The hymns are imbued with mystical imagery, drawing from biblical visions, such as Jacob's ladder or Ezekiel's chariot.

Famous Ethiopian Monks and Their Contributions

1. St. Yared:

- Known as the father of Ethiopian sacred music, St. Yared composed many hymns still used in liturgical worship today.

2. Abba Tekle Haymanot:

- A revered Ethiopian saint whose hymns reflect deep asceticism and devotion.

3. The Nine Saints:

- Early monastic figures who enriched Ethiopian hymnody with their spiritual teachings and compositions.

Impact and Legacy

1. Spiritual Formation:

- The hymns shape the spiritual lives of monks and laypeople, encouraging meditation, repentance, and worship.

2. Cultural Preservation:

- They preserve Ethiopia's unique liturgical and musical traditions, reflecting centuries of faith and devotion.

3. Global Influence:

- The hymns inspire Christian communities worldwide, offering a glimpse into the depth and beauty of Ethiopian Orthodox spirituality.

Conclusion

The **Hymns of the Ethiopian Monks** embody the heart of Ethiopian Orthodox spirituality, blending profound theological truths with poetic and musical artistry. Rooted in centuries of monastic devotion, these hymns serve as both a testament to the faith of Ethiopian monks and a guide for the faithful seeking a closer relationship with God. Through their timeless melodies and sacred themes, they continue to inspire awe, devotion, and hope for believers across generations.

The Ethiopian Martyrdom of Saint Abune Tekla Haymanot

Based on the teachings of Holy Scriptures, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church honors the holy bodies of saints and martyrs and commemorates the days on which their relics are relocated. Saints intercede not only in the realms of the flesh as the scriptures testify for they are alive in soul. (Ex.32:2-15; Enoch 12:33-40, Luke 20:37-40). The word of God is living, and it works on the living.

There are several scriptural passages that support the veneration of relics even in the Old Testament times. For example, the Patriarch Joseph left a testament to the sons of Israel to preserve his bones in Egypt and, during their exodus, to carry them to the Promised Land (Genesis 50:25). Then, Israelites took Joseph's bones when they departed Egypt (Ex. 13:19). The bones of Elisha came in contact with a dead person who then was raised to life (2 Kings 13:21). With his mantle the Prophet Elijah struck the water, separating the waters of the Jordan and along the dry bed of the river crossed the Jordan with his disciple Elisha (2 Kings 2:8). The prophet Elisha did the very same thing, himself, with the same mantle, after Elias was taken away into heaven (2 Kings 2:14). During New Testament times, the Christians of Ephesus, attained healing of the sick through the cloths of St. Paul (Acts 19:12). (From Orthodox Tradition, Vol. VII, No. 1, p. 9)

Moreover, in his boundless love for man, our Lord Jesus Christ allows His servants to work perform not only through their bodies and clothing, but even with the shadow of their bodies, which is evident in an occurrence with St Peter the apostle: his shadow healed an ill man and expelled unclean spirits (Acts 5:15-16). From the very beginning, in apostolic times, Christians devoutly preserved the honored relics of the saints and the holy Apostles, so that these could be preserved

for us till now.

In the same religious tradition, the relic of Abune Tekle Haymanot is venerated in the Ethiopian Church every year on May 12. Abune Tekle Haymanot is a well-known saint both amongst Ethiopians, Coptic Christians and beyond. He is the founder of the famous Debre Libanos Monastery in his native province of Shewa. The story of the commemoration of his relic is recorded in his hagiography as follows; Over half a century after his death, the relic of Abune Tekle Haymanot was relocated from Debre Asebot to his Monastery, Debre Libanos, the famous monastery in Ethiopia.

Fifty seven years later after his death, Abune Tekle Haymanot was revealed to his 4th successor, Echege (Abba) Hizkyas in a dream and said to him, my beloved Hizkyas, now, as My Lord Jesus Christ promised me the date of the relocation of my body has reached and God has chosen you to accomplish this mission. So, you have to congregate all my children; all those who believed in my fatherhood shall be gathered and make a spiritual feast. My relic will be moved on May 12 which is the date of the feast of Easter and Saint Michael.

On this day, I, Saint Michael and Echege (Abba) Filipos (the 3rd successor of Abune Tekle Haymanot) will become there to bless the people gathered for the sake of my love. Then, you shall move around my relic three times before the Ark of God. He then disappeared after telling this to Echege Hizkyas.

Accordingly, Abba Hizkyas gathered the dispersed disciples of Abune Tekle haymanot in every direction. The following disciples of the saint were present during the relocation of his relic: Abune Anorewos of Fetegar, Abune Yosef of Ernat, Abune Anorewos of Moret, Abune Merkorewos of Merhabete, Abune Tadewos of Tsilalish, Abune Samuel of Wegeg, Abune Gebre Kristos of Wenji, Abune Medhanine Egzi'e of Denbi, Abune Adhane of Damot, Abune Eyosyas of Kili'atu and Abune Kewistos of Mehagil.

After they gathered, all of them along with Abba Hizkiyas went to the cave where the relic was buried. They dug the tomb and found the relics surrounded by the cross in the left and right. Then, they cut his shroud into pieces to share among them for blessings as it made lots of miracles and instead covered the relic with new clothes and put it in a small coffin. Then, the saint's twelve disciples entered into the church and moved around the relic three times before the Ark of God.

At a moment, Abune Tekle Haymanot came with Saint Michael and Abba Filipos gloriously and appeared over the Ark till the relics rested. He, then, blessed the people gathered there and ascended to heaven. The twelve disciples and the people at large celebrated the feast gloriously.

Oh my Lord, as the twelve disciples of Abune Tekle Haymanot gathered at Debre Libanos Monastery to venerate his relic, You also gathered us to inherit Your coming kingdom in heaven.

The Ethiopian Gospel of the Dormition of Mary

The **Ethiopian Gospel of the Dormition of Mary** refers to a tradition within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church that celebrates the Dormition (falling asleep) and Assumption of the Virgin Mary. While not explicitly titled as a "Gospel," the Church preserves apocryphal texts and liturgical traditions that narrate the events surrounding Mary's passing and glorification. This account is deeply revered in Ethiopian Christianity, emphasizing Mary's central role in salvation history and her ongoing intercession for humanity.

Theological Context

The Dormition of Mary is understood as her peaceful departure from earthly life, followed by her bodily assumption into heaven. This event is not described in canonical scripture but is drawn from apocryphal writings, including the **Apocalypse of Mary, Transitus Mariae (The Passing of Mary)**, and other traditions. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church views this event as a profound mystery that reflects God's love and Mary's unique role as the Mother of God.

Key Elements of the Ethiopian Gospel of the Dormition

1. Mary's Foreknowledge of Her Death:

- According to tradition, Mary receives a revelation from the Archangel Gabriel about the time of her passing. This reflects her intimate connection with divine will and her readiness to meet her Creator.

2. Gathering of the Apostles:

- Miraculously, the apostles are brought from their mission fields to Mary's bedside, often depicted as being carried on clouds by angels. This underscores the importance of community in honoring Mary's role.

3. Mary's Last Prayer and Blessing:

- Before her passing, Mary prays for the Church and blesses the apostles and all believers, emphasizing her role as an intercessor.

4. Her Dormition and Assumption:

- Mary peacefully "falls asleep," and her soul is taken to heaven by Christ. Later, her body is also assumed into heaven, symbolizing the glorification of the Theotokos (Mother of God).

5. The Protection of Her Body:

- In some traditions, angels and the apostles protect Mary's body from desecration, further emphasizing her holiness.

Sources in Ethiopian Tradition

1. Apocryphal Texts:

- The Ethiopian Orthodox canon includes apocryphal works like the **Book of Mary** and writings from the **Synaxariun**, which recount the events of her Dormition in detail.

2. Liturgical Hymns and Prayers:

- Hymns from the *Deggwa* (Ge'ez hymnal) celebrate Mary's Dormition, using poetic language to extol her purity, faith, and divine role.

3. Feast of Filseta:

- The **Feast of the Assumption (Filseta)** is one of the most significant Marian celebrations in Ethiopia, observed with fasting, prayers, and processions leading up to August 22.

Themes in the Gospel of the Dormition

1. Mary as the Ark of the Covenant:

- Just as the Ark symbolized God's presence, Mary is seen as the living Ark who bore Christ. Her assumption reflects her eternal closeness to God.

2. Victory Over Death:

- Mary's bodily assumption prefigures the resurrection of the faithful, offering hope in the promise of eternal life.

3. Intercession and Maternal Care:

- Mary's prayers at her Dormition affirm her ongoing role as a mother and intercessor for humanity.

4. Unity of Heaven and Earth:

- The gathering of apostles and angels highlights the harmonious relationship between the Church on earth and the heavenly realm.

Liturgical and Cultural Expressions

1. Filseta Fasting:

- Ethiopian Orthodox Christians observe a 16-day fast leading up to the Feast of the Assumption, dedicating this time to prayer and reflection.

2. Processions and Celebrations:

- Churches carry replicas of the Ark of the Covenant (*Tabot*) in solemn processions, accompanied by hymns and prayers honoring Mary.

3. Iconography:

- Ethiopian icons depict the Dormition and Assumption of Mary, often with Christ receiving her soul, surrounded by angels and apostles.

Symbolism and Spiritual Lessons

1. Faith and Obedience:

- Mary's readiness to meet God serves as a model of unwavering faith and submission to His will.

2. Hope in Resurrection:

- Her bodily assumption inspires hope in the believer's own resurrection and glorification.

3. Intercessory Role:

- Mary's ongoing presence in heaven assures believers of her care and advocacy before Christ.

Conclusion

The **Ethiopian Gospel of the Dornition of Mary**, preserved through apocryphal writings and vibrant liturgical traditions, holds a special place in the spiritual life of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. It celebrates Mary's unique role in salvation history, her triumph over death, and her eternal intercession for humanity. This profound narrative inspires devotion, hope, and a deeper understanding of God's grace and the promise of eternal life.

The Ethiopian Liturgical Calendar (Expanded)

The **Ethiopian Liturgical Calendar (Expanded)** is a rich and detailed system of religious observances, feast days, and fasts that structure the spiritual life of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. Rooted in the ancient Ge'ez tradition and influenced by both biblical and ecclesiastical history, this calendar reflects a unique blend of faith, theology, and cultural heritage. It is designed to guide the faithful through the yearly cycle of worship, focusing on the life of Christ, the Virgin Mary, the saints, and significant biblical events.

Key Features of the Ethiopian Liturgical Calendar

1. Unique Timekeeping:

- The Ethiopian calendar follows a 13-month system: 12 months of 30 days each, with a 13th month, *Pagumē*, of 5 or 6 days (in leap years).
- The liturgical year begins on **Mäskärän 1** (corresponding to September 11 or 12 in the Gregorian calendar).

2. Christ-Centered Focus:

- Major celebrations revolve around the life of Christ, including His birth, baptism, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension.

3. Feasts of the Virgin Mary:

- Numerous feasts honor Mary, reflecting her central role in Ethiopian Orthodox spirituality.

4. Veneration of Saints:

- Saints' feast days are an integral part of the calendar, highlighting their exemplary lives and intercessory roles.

5. Fasting Seasons:

- The calendar includes extensive periods of fasting, emphasizing repentance, humility, and preparation for major feasts.

Expanded Structure of the Calendar

The Ethiopian Liturgical Calendar can be divided into the following categories:

1. Major Feasts of the Lord (Be'alate Anlak)

These are the core celebrations of the calendar, commemorating events in the life of Christ:

- **Genna (Christmas):** Mäskäräm 29 (January 7 Gregorian).
- **Tinket (Epiphany):** Tirr 11 (January 19 Gregorian), celebrating Christ's baptism.
- **Hosa'ena (Palm Sunday):** One week before Fasika.
- **Fasika (Easter):** The date varies based on the Julian calculation, marking the resurrection of Christ.
- **Ascension:** 40 days after Easter.
- **Pentecost:** 50 days after Easter, celebrating the descent of the Holy Spirit.

2. Feasts of the Virgin Mary (Be'alate Maryan)

Mary is honored with multiple feast days throughout the year, including:

- **Lideta Maryan (Nativity of Mary):** Nehasé 7 (August 22 Gregorian).
- **Tsega (Annunciation):** Mäggabit 29 (April 7 Gregorian).
- **Filseta (Assumption of Mary):** Nehasé 16 (August 31 Gregorian), preceded by a 16-day fast.

3. Feasts of Saints and Angels

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church venerates numerous saints, including:

- **St. Michael (Mikael):** Celebrated on the 12th of each month, with special observances in Mäskäräm (September 21 Gregorian) and Sené (July 19 Gregorian).
- **St. George (Tirgar):** Mäggabit 23 (April 1 Gregorian).
- **Abba Tekle Haynanot:** Nahase 24 (September 9 Gregorian).
- **The Nine Saints:** Celebrated on various dates, honoring the missionaries who established monastic traditions in Ethiopia.

4. Fasting Seasons

Fasting is a cornerstone of Ethiopian Orthodox spirituality, with over 250 fasting days in the year:

- **The Great Lent (Abiy Tson):** 55 days before Easter, involving strict fasting.
- **The Fast of the Apostles (Tsone Hawariat):** Starts after Pentecost and lasts up to 40 days.
- **The Fast of the Assumption (Tsone Filseta):** 16 days leading to the Feast of the Assumption.
- **The Fast of the Nativity (Tsone Gena):** 43 days before Christmas.

5. Seasonal Observances

Special observances tied to nature and agricultural cycles:

- **Meskel (Finding of the True Cross):** Mäskäräm 17 (September 27 Gregorian), marking the discovery of the True Cross by Queen Helena.

Liturgical Highlights

1. The Psalter:

- Daily readings and hymns from the Psalms, arranged according to the calendar.

2. The Synaxariun (Senkessar):

- A hagiographical text detailing the lives of saints and the significance of feast days.

3. The Ge'ez Hynnal (Deggwa):

- Sacred hymns sung during services, specific to the liturgical season.
-

Cultural and Spiritual Significance

1. Unity of Worship:

- The calendar unites Ethiopian Orthodox Christians in a shared rhythm of worship and devotion.

2. Catechesis and Tradition:

- It serves as a teaching tool, passing down theological truths and spiritual practices.

3. Integration of Daily Life:

- Agricultural and communal activities often align with liturgical observances, reinforcing the connection between faith and daily life.
-

Modern Relevance

The Ethiopian Liturgical Calendar continues to guide the faithful in their spiritual journey, offering a structured and holistic approach to worship. Its emphasis on fasting, feasting, and community provides a balance that nurtures both personal and communal faith.

Conclusion

The **Ethiopian Liturgical Calendar (Expanded)** is a profound expression of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church's theology, history, and culture. Its detailed structure and emphasis on sacred time foster a deep connection with God, the saints, and the community of believers. Through its rhythm of worship and devotion, the calendar sustains the spiritual vitality of Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity across generations.

The Apocalypse of the Archangel Michael (please see the attached ebook)

The Dialogue of Peter and Jesus

¹⁵ When they finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" [^c "These" probably refers to the other disciples (rather than the fishing gear), and could mean "Do you love me more than you love your friends?" or "Do you love me more than they love me?" The latter is more likely. This whole scene is the restoration of Peter after he had boasted of his loyalty to Jesus and then denied him.]

He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

¹⁶ Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Take care of [Tend; Shepherd] my sheep."

¹⁷ A third time he said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

Peter was hurt [grieved] because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" Peter said, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you!"

He said to him, "Feed my sheep. [^c In verses 15 and 16 Jesus uses a different word for "love" (*agapaō*) than Peter uses (*phileō*); but then in v. 17 Jesus uses Peter's word (*phileō*). The two terms can be synonymous, and the difference is probably stylistic. The passage is not contrasting two kinds of love; rather, Peter's three affirmations counterbalance his three denials; see 18:15–18, 25–27] ¹⁸ I tell you the truth [Truly, truly I say to you], when you were younger, you tied your own belt [dressed yourself] and went where you wanted. But when you are old, you will put out your hands and someone else will tie [dress] you and take you where you don't want to go." ¹⁹ (Jesus said this to show [indicate; signify] how Peter would die to give glory to [glorify] God.) Then Jesus said to Peter, "Follow me!"

The Hymn of the Eternal Light

1

Eternal Light! Eternal Light!
How pure the soul must be
When, placed within Thy searching sight,
It shrinks not, but with calm delight
Can live and look on Thee.

2

The spirits that surround Thy throne
May bear the burning bliss;
But that is surely theirs alone,

Since they have never, never known
A fallen world like this.

3

Oh, how shall I, whose native sphere
Is dark, whose mind is dim,
Before th' Ineffable appear,
And on my natural spirit bear
The uncreated beam?

4

There is a way for man to rise
To Thee, sublime Abode;
An Offering and a Sacrifice,
A Holy Spirit's energies,
An Advocate with God:

5

These, these prepare us for the sight
Of holiness above;
The sons of ignorance and night
May dwell in the eternal Light,
Through the eternal Love.

The Gospel of the Perfect Man

The **Gospel of the Perfect Man** is not a known or canonical text within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church or broader Christian tradition. However, the concept could symbolically reflect themes deeply embedded in Christian theology, particularly regarding Christ as the "Perfect Man" (the second Adam) who embodies divine perfection and serves as the model for humanity's redemption and ultimate restoration.

Below is a speculative exploration of what such a gospel might represent, drawing from Ethiopian Orthodox spirituality and biblical principles.

Theological Foundations

6. Christ as the Perfect Man:

- The idea of the "Perfect Man" is rooted in the belief that Jesus Christ, fully divine and fully human, lived a sinless life, perfectly fulfilling God's will.
- **Biblical References:**

- **Ephesians 4:13:** "...until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."
- **Hebrews 4:15:** "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin."

7. **Adan and the New Creation:**

- Christ is often referred to as the second Adam, restoring what was lost through the first Adam's disobedience (Romans 5:12-21). As the "Perfect Man," Christ represents humanity's potential when aligned with God's will.

8. **Theosis (Divinization):**

- In Ethiopian Orthodox theology, the ultimate goal of human life is union with God (*theosis*), where believers strive to imitate Christ, the Perfect Man, and partake in His divine nature.

Key Themes of the Gospel of the Perfect Man

1. **The Incarnation:**

- The Gospel might begin with the mystery of the Incarnation, emphasizing how Christ took on human flesh to reveal the divine nature and restore humanity to its original purpose.

2. **The Life of Christ:**

- Christ's life would be presented as a blueprint for human perfection, focusing on His humility, love, obedience, and service.
- **Examples:**
 - His compassion for the marginalized.
 - His unwavering obedience to the Father's will.
 - His self-sacrificial love, culminating in the Cross.

3. **Redemption and Restoration:**

- The narrative would highlight Christ's role in redeeming humanity from sin and death, opening the way for believers to achieve spiritual perfection through Him.

4. **The Path to Perfection:**

- Practical guidance might be offered, reflecting Ethiopian monastic teachings:
 - Fasting and prayer as tools for purification.

- Acts of charity and humility as reflections of Christ's love.
- The sacraments, particularly the Eucharist, as means of partaking in divine grace.

5. The Role of the Church:

- The Church would be depicted as the body of Christ, nurturing believers on their journey toward perfection through worship, sacraments, and community.

Liturgical and Mystical Reflections

If such a gospel were part of Ethiopian tradition, it would align closely with:

1. Hymns and Prayers:

- Hymns from the *Deggwa* (Ge'ez hymnal) often praise Christ as the flawless Redeemer and model of holiness.

2. The Divine Liturgy (Qidase):

- The Eucharistic prayers emphasize the mystery of Christ's perfection and His transformative presence in the faithful.

3. Monastic Teachings:

- Ethiopian monasticism encourages emulation of Christ's virtues, reflecting the ideal of the "Perfect Man."

Synbolism in the Gospel of the Perfect Man

1. Light:

- Christ as the light of the world, illuminating the path to holiness (John 8:12).

2. The Cross:

- A symbol of ultimate perfection through self-sacrificial love.

3. The Vine and Branches:

- Christ as the source of life and spiritual growth for His followers (John 15:1-8).

Relevance to Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity

1. Initiation of Christ:

- The idea of the Perfect Man inspires Ethiopian Christians to model their lives on Christ's example.

2. Unity with God:

- Through the sacraments, prayer, and ascetic practices, believers strive for the unity with God that Christ exemplifies.

3. Hope for Resurrection:

- Christ's perfection and victory over death serve as a promise of eternal life for the faithful.

Conclusion

While the **Gospel of the Perfect Man** does not exist as a specific text, its conceptual themes resonate deeply within Christian theology and Ethiopian Orthodox spirituality. It would reflect the life and teachings of Christ as the ultimate model for humanity, guiding believers toward spiritual maturity, unity with God, and the hope of eternal life. Such a gospel would underscore the transformative power of Christ's perfection and its implications for human redemption and divine communion.

The Acts of Peter and Paul (Expanded Fragments)

It came to pass, after Paul went out of the island Gaudomeleta, that he came to Italy; and it was heard of by the Jews who were in Rome, the elder of the cities, that Paul demanded to come to Cæsar. Having fallen, therefore, into great grief and much despondency, they said among themselves: It does not please him that he alone has afflicted all our brethren and parents in Judæa and Samaria, and in all Palestine; and he has not been pleased with these, but, behold, he comes here also, having through imposition asked Cæsar to destroy us.

Having therefore made an assembly against Paul, and having considered many proposals, it seemed good to them to go to Nero the emperor, *to ask him* not to allow Paul to come to Rome. Having therefore got in readiness not a few presents, and having carried them with them, with supplication they came before him, saying: We beseech you, O good emperor, send orders into all the governments of your worship, to the effect that Paul is not to come near these parts; because this Paul, having afflicted all the nation of our fathers, has been seeking to come hither to destroy us also. And the affliction, O most worshipful emperor, which we have from Peter is enough for us.

And the Emperor Nero, having heard these things, answered them: It is according to your wish. And we write to all our governments that he shall not on any account come to anchor in the parts of Italy. And they also informed Simon the Magian, having sent for him, that, as has been said, he should not come into the parts of Italy.

And while they were thus doing, some of those that had repented out of the nations, and that had been baptized at the preaching of Peter, sent elders to Paul with a letter to the following effect: Paul, dear servant of our Lord Jesus Christ, and brother of Peter, the first of the apostles, we have heard from the rabbis of the Jews that are in this Rome, the greatest of the cities, that they have asked Cæsar to send into all his governments, in order that, wherever you may be found, you may be put

to death. But we have believed, and do believe, that as God does not separate the two great lights which He has made, so He is not to part you from each other, that is, neither Peter from Paul, nor Paul from Peter; but we positively believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, into whom we have been baptized, that we have become worthy also of your teaching.

And Paul, having received the two men sent with the letter on the twentieth of the month of May, became eager *to go*, and gave thanks to the Lord and Master Jesus Christ. And having sailed from Gaudomeleta, he did not now come through Africa to the parts of Italy, but ran to Sicily, until he came to the city of Syracuse with the two men who had been sent from Rome to him. And having sailed thence, he came to Rhegium of Calabria, and from Rhegium he crossed to Mesina, and there ordained a bishop, Bacchylus by name. And when he came out of Mesina he sailed to Didymus, and remained there one night. And having sailed thence, he came to Pontiole on the second day.

And Dioscorus the shipmaster, who brought him to Syracuse, sympathizing with Paul because he had delivered his son from death, having left his own ship in Syracuse, accompanied him to Pontiole. And some of Peter's disciples having been found there, and having received Paul, exhorted him to stay with them. And he stayed a week, in hiding, because of the command of Cæsar. And all the toparchs were watching to seize and kill him. But Dioscorus the shipmaster, being himself also bald, wearing his shipmaster's dress, and speaking boldly, on the first day went out into the city of Pontiole. Thinking therefore that he was Paul, they seized him, and beheaded him, and sent his head to Cæsar.

Cæsar therefore, having summoned the first men of the Jews, announced to them, saying: Rejoice with great joy, for Paul your enemy is dead. And he showed them the head. Having therefore made great rejoicing on that day, which was the fourteenth of the month of June, each of the Jews fully believed it.

And Paul, being in Pontiole, and having heard that Dioscorus had been beheaded, being grieved with great grief, gazing into the height of the heaven, said: O Lord Almighty in heaven, who hast appeared to me in every place whither I have gone on account of Your only-begotten Word, our Lord Jesus Christ, punish this city, and bring out all who have believed in God and followed His word. He said to them therefore: Follow me: And going forth from Pontiole with those who had believed in the word of God, they came to a place called Baias; and looking up with their eyes, they all see that city called Pontiole sunk into the sea-shore about one fathom; and there it is until this day, for a remembrance, under the sea.

And having gone forth from Baias, they went to Gaitas, and there he taught the word of God. And he stayed there three days in the house of Erasmus, whom Peter sent from Rome to teach the Gospel of God. And having come forth from Gaitas, he came to the castle called Taracinas, and stayed there seven days in the house of Cæsarius the deacon, whom Peter had ordained by the laying on of hands. And sailing thence, he came by the river to a place called Tribus Tabernes.

And those who had been saved out of the city of Pontiole that had been swallowed up, reported to Cæsar in Rome that Pontiole had been swallowed up, with all its multitude. And the emperor, being in great grief on account of the city, having summoned the chief of the Jews, said to them: Behold, on account of what I heard from you, I have caused Paul to be beheaded, and on account of this the city has been swallowed up. And the chief of the Jews said to Cæsar: Most worshipful emperor, did

we not say to you that he troubled all the country of the East, and perverted our fathers? It is better therefore, most worshipful emperor, that one city be destroyed, and not the seat of your empire; for this had Rome to suffer. And the emperor, having heard their words, was appeased.

And Paul stayed in Tribus Tabernes four days. And departing thence, he came to Appii Forum, which is called Vicusarape; and having slept there that night, he saw one sitting on a golden chair, and a multitude of blacks standing beside him, saying: I have today made a son murder his father. Another said: And I have made a house fall, and kill parents with children. And they reported to him many evil deeds— some of one kind, some of another. And another coming, reported to him: I have managed that the bishop Juvenalius, whom Peter ordained, should sleep with the abbess Juliana. And having heard all these things when sleeping in that Appii Forum, near Vicusarape, straightway and immediately he sent to Rome one of those who had followed him from Pontiole to the bishop Juvenalius, telling him this same thing which had just been done. And on the following day, Juvenalius, running, threw himself at the feet of Peter, weeping and lamenting, and saying what had just befallen; and he recounted to him the matter, and said: I believe that this is the light which you were awaiting. And Peter said to him: How is it possible that it is he when he is dead? And Juvenalius the bishop took to Peter him that had been sent by Paul, and he reported to him that he was alive, and on his way, and that he was at Appii Forum. And Peter thanked and glorified the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Then having summoned his disciples that believed, he sent them to Paul as far as Tribus Tabernes. And the distance from Rome to Tribus Tabernes is thirty-eight miles. And Paul seeing them, having given thanks to our Lord Jesus Christ, took courage; and departing thence, they slept in the city called Aricia.

And a report went about in the city of Rome that Paul the brother of Peter was coming. And those that believed in God rejoiced with great joy. And there was great consternation among the Jews; and having gone to Simon the Magian, they entreated him, saying: Report to the emperor that Paul is not dead, but that he is alive, and has come. And Simon said to the Jews: What head is it, then, which came to Cæsar from Pontiole? Was it not bald also?

And Paul having come to Rome, great fear fell upon the Jews. They came together therefore to him, and exhorted him, saying: Vindicate the faith in which you were born; for it is not right that you, being a Hebrew, and of the Hebrews, should call yourself teacher of Gentiles, and vindicator of the uncircumcised; and, being yourself circumcised, that you should bring to nought the faith of the circumcision. And when you see Peter, contend against his teaching, because he has destroyed all the bulwarks of our law; for he has prevented the keeping of Sabbaths and new moons, and the holidays appointed by the law. And Paul, answering, said to them: That I am a true Jew, by this you can prove; because also you have been able to keep the Sabbath, and to observe the true circumcision; for assuredly on the day of the Sabbath God rested from all His works. We have fathers, and patriarchs, and the law. What, then, does Peter preach in the kingdom of the Gentiles? But if he shall wish to bring in any new teaching, without any tumult, and envy, and trouble, send him word, that we may see, and in your presence I shall convict him. But if his teaching be true, supported by the book and testimony of the Hebrews, it becomes all of us to submit to him.

Paul saying these and such like things, the Jews went and said to Peter: Paul of the Hebrews has come, and entreats you to come to him, since those who have brought him say that he cannot meet whomsoever he may wish until he appear before Cæsar. And Peter having heard, rejoiced with great joy; and rising up, immediately went to him. And seeing each other, they wept for joy; and long embracing each other, they bedewed each other with tears.

And when Paul had related to Peter the substance of all his doings, and how, through the disasters of the ship, he had come, Peter also told him what he had suffered from Simon the Magian, and all his plots. And having told these things, he went away towards evening.

And in the morning of the following day, at dawn, behold, Peter coming, finds a multitude of the Jews before Paul's door. And there was a great uproar between the Christian Jews and the Gentiles. For, on the one hand, the Jews said: We are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, the friends of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, with whom God spoke, to whom He showed His own mysteries and His great wonders. But you of the Gentiles are no great thing in your lineage; if otherwise, you have become polluted and abominable by idols and graven images.

While the Jews were saying such things, and such-like, those of the Gentiles answered, saying: We, when we heard the truth, straightway followed it, having abandoned our errors. But you, both knowing the mighty deeds of your fathers, and seeing the signs of the prophets, and having received the law, and gone through the sea with dry feet, and seen your enemies sunk in its depths, and the pillar of fire by night and of cloud by day shining upon you, and manna having been given to you out of heaven, and water flowing to you out of a rock — after all these things you fashioned to yourselves the idol of a calf, and worshipped the graven image. But we, having seen none of the signs, believe to be a Saviour the God whom you have forsaken in unbelief.

While they were contending in these and such-like words, the Apostle Paul said that they ought not to make such attacks upon each other, but that they should rather give heed to this, that God had fulfilled His promises which He swore to Abraham our father, that in his seed he should inherit all the nations. For there is no respect of persons with God. As many as have sinned in law shall be judged according to law, and as many as have sinned without law shall perish without law. Romans 2:12 But we, brethren, ought to thank God that, according to His mercy, He has chosen us to be a holy people to Himself: so that in this we ought to boast, whether Jews or Greeks; for you are all one in the belief of His name.

And Paul having thus spoken, both the Jews and they of the Gentiles were appeased. But the rulers of the Jews assailed Peter. And Peter, when they accused him of having renounced their synagogues, said: Hear, brethren, the holy Spirit about the patriarch David, promising, Of the fruit of your womb shall He set upon your throne. Him therefore to whom the Father said, You are my Son, this day have I begotten You, the chief priests through envy crucified; but that He might accomplish the salvation of the world, it was allowed that He should suffer all these things. Just as, therefore, from the side of Adam Eve was created, so also from the side of Christ was created the Church, which has no spot nor blemish. In Him, therefore, God has opened an entrance to all the sons of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in order that they may be in the faith of profession towards Him, and have life and salvation in His name. Turn, therefore, and enter into the joy of your father Abraham, because God has fulfilled what He promised to him. Whence also the prophet says, The Lord has sworn, and will not repent: You are a priest for ever, after the order

of Melchizedek. For a priest He became upon the cross, when He offered the whole burnt-offering of His own body and blood as a sacrifice for all the world.

And Peter saying this and such-like, the most part of the people believed. And it happened also that Nero's wife Libia, and the yoke-fellow of Agrippa the prefect, Agrippina by name, thus believed, so that also they went away from beside their own husbands. And on account of the teaching of Paul, many, despising military life, clung to God; so that even from the emperor's bed-chamber some came to him, and having become Christians, were no longer willing to return to the army or the palace.

When, consequently, the people were making a seditious murmuring, Simon, moved with zeal, rouses himself, and began to say many evil things about Peter, saying that he was a wizard and a cheat. And they believed him, wondering at his miracles; for he made a brazen serpent move itself, and stone statues to laugh and move themselves, and himself to run and suddenly to be raised into the air. But as a set-off to these, Peter healed the sick by a word, by praying made the blind to see, put demons to flight by a command; sometimes he even raised the dead. And he said to the people that they should not only flee from Simon's deceit, but also that they should expose him, that they might not seem to be slaves to the devil.

And thus it happened that all pious men abhorred Simon the Magian, and proclaimed him impious. But those who adhered to Simon strongly affirmed Peter to be a magian, bearing false witness as many of them as were with Simon the Magian; so that the matter came even to the ears of Nero the Cæsar, and he gave order to bring Simon the Magian before him. And he, coming in, stood before him, and began suddenly to assume different forms, so that on a sudden he became a child, and after a little an old man, and at other times a young man; for he changed himself both in face and stature into different forms, and was in a frenzy, having the devil as his servant. And Nero beholding this, supposed him to be truly the son of God; but the Apostle Peter showed him to be both a liar and a wizard, base and impious and apostate, and in all things opposed to the truth of God, and that nothing yet remained except that his wickedness, being made apparent by the command of God, might be made manifest to them all.

Then Simon, having gone in to Nero, said: Hear, O good emperor: I am the son of God come down from heaven. Until now I have endured Peter only calling himself an apostle; but now he has doubled the evil: for Paul also himself teaches the same things, and having his mind turned against me, is said to preach along with him; in reference to whom, if you shall not contrive their destruction, it is very plain that your kingdom cannot stand.

Then Nero, filled with concern, ordered to bring them speedily before him. And on the following day Simon the Magian, and Peter and Paul the apostles of Christ, having come in to Nero, Simon said: These are the disciples of the Nazarene, and it is not at all well that they should be of the people of the Jews, Nero said: What is a Nazarene? Simon said: There is a city of Judah which has always been opposed to us, called Nazareth, and to it the teacher of these men belonged. Nero said: God commands us to love every man; why, then, do you persecute them? Simon said: This is a race of men who have turned aside all Judæa from believing in me. Nero said to Peter: Why are you thus unbelieving, according to your race? Then Peter said to Simon: You have been able to impose upon all, but upon me never; and those who have been deceived, God has through me recalled from their error. And since you have learned by experience that you can not get the better of me, I wonder

with what face you boast yourself before the emperor, and suppose that through your magic art you shall overcome the disciples of Christ. Nero said: Who is Christ? Peter said: He is what this Simon the Magian affirms himself to be; but this is a most wicked man, and his works are of the devil. But if you wish to know, O good emperor, the things that have been done in Judæa about Christ, take the writings of Pontius Pilate sent to Claudius, and thus you will know all. And Nero ordered them to be brought, and to be read in their presence; and they were to the following effect: —

Pontius Pilate to Claudius, greeting. There has lately happened an event which I myself was concerned in. For the Jews through envy have inflicted on themselves, and those coming after them, dreadful judgments. Their fathers had promises that their God would send them his holy one from heaven, who according to reason should be called their king, and he had promised to send him to the earth by means of a virgin. He, then, when I was procurator, came into Judæa. And they saw him enlightening the blind, cleansing lepers, healing paralytics, expelling demons from men, raising the dead, subduing the winds, walking upon the waves of the sea, and doing many other wonders, and all the people of the Jews calling him Son of God. Then the chief priests, moved with envy against him, seized him, and delivered him to me; and telling one lie after another, they said that he was a wizard, and did contrary to their law. And I, having believed that these things were so, gave him up, after scourging him, to their will; and they crucified him, and after he was buried set guards over him. But he, while my soldiers were guarding him, rose on the third day. And to such a degree was the wickedness of the Jews inflamed against him, that they gave money to the soldiers, saying, Say his disciples have stolen his body. But they, having taken the money, were not able to keep silence as to what had happened; for they have testified that they have seen him (after he was) risen, and that they have received money from the Jews. These things, therefore, have I reported, that no one should falsely speak otherwise, and that you should not suppose that the falsehoods of the Jews are to be believed.

And the letter having been read, Nero said: Tell me, Peter, were all these things thus done by him? Peter said: They were, with your permission, O good emperor. For this Simon is full of lies and deceit, even if it should seem that he is what he is not — a god. And in Christ there is all excellent victory through God and through man, which that incomprehensible glory assumed which through man deigned to come to the assistance of men. But in this Simon there are two essences, of man and of devil, who through man endeavours to ensnare men.

Simon said: I wonder, O good emperor, that you reckon this man of any consequence — a man uneducated, a fisherman of the poorest, and endowed with power neither in word nor by rank. But, that I may not long endure him as an enemy, I shall immediately order my angels to come and avenge me upon him. Peter said: I am not afraid of your angels; but they shall be much more afraid of me in the power and trust of my Lord Jesus Christ, whom you falsely declare yourself to be.

Nero said: Are you not afraid, Peter, of Simon, who confirms his godhead by deeds? Peter said: Godhead is in Him who searches the hidden things of the heart. Now then, tell me what I am thinking about, or what I am doing. I disclose to your servants who are here what my thought is, before he tells lies about it, in order that he may not dare to lie as to what I am thinking about. Nero said: Come hither, and tell me what you are thinking about. Peter said: Order a barley loaf to be brought, and to be given to me secretly. And when he ordered it to be brought, and

secretly given to Peter, Peter said: Now tell us, Simon, what has been thought about, or what said, or what done.

Nero said: Do you mean me to believe that Simon does not know these things, who both raised a dead man, and presented himself on the third day after he had been beheaded, and who has done whatever he said he would do? Peter said: But he did not do it before me. Nero said: But he did all these before me. For assuredly he ordered angels to come to him, and they came. Peter said: If he has done what is very great, why does he not do what is very small? Let him tell what I had in my mind, and what I have done. Nero said: Between you, I do not know myself. Simon said: Let Peter say what I am thinking of, or what I am doing. Peter said: What Simon has in his mind I shall show that I know, by my doing what he is thinking about. Simon said: Know this, O emperor, that no one knows the thoughts of men, but God alone. Is not, therefore, Peter lying? Peter said: you, then, who sayest that you are the Son of God, tell what I have in my mind; disclose, if you can, what I have just done in secret. For Peter, having blessed the barley loaf which he had received, and having broken it with his right hand and his left, had heaped it up in his sleeves. Then Simon, enraged that he was not able to tell the secret of the apostle, cried out, saying: Let great dogs come forth, and eat him up before Cæsar. And suddenly there appeared great dogs, and rushed at Peter. But Peter, stretching forth his hands to pray, showed to the dogs the loaf which he had blessed; which the dogs seeing, no longer appeared. Then Peter said to Nero: Behold, I have shown you that I knew what Simon was thinking of, not by words, but by deeds; for he, having promised that he would bring angels against me, has brought dogs, in order that he might show that he had not god-like but dog-like angels.

Then Nero said to Simon: What is it, Simon? I think we have got the worst of it. Simon said: This man, both in Judæa and in all Palestine and Cæsarea, has done the same to me; and from very often striving with me, he has learned that this is adverse to them. This, then, he has learned how to escape from me; for the thoughts of men no one knows but God alone. And Peter said to Simon: Certainly you feign yourself to be a god; why, then, do you not reveal the thoughts of every man?

Then Nero, turning to Paul, said: Why do you say nothing, Paul? Paul answered and said: Know this, O emperor, that if you permit this magician to do such things, it will bring an access of the greatest mischief to your country, and will bring down your empire from its position. Nero said to Simon: What do you say? Simon said: If I do not manifestly hold myself out to be a god, no one will bestow upon me due reverence. Nero said: And now, why do you delay, and not show yourself to be a god, in order that these men may be punished? Simon said: Give orders to build for me a lofty tower of wood, and I, going up upon it, will call my angels, and order them to take me, in the sight of all, to my father in heaven; and these men, not being able to do this, are put to shame as uneducated men. And Nero said to Peter: Have you heard, Peter, what has been said by Simon? From this will appear how much power either he or your god has. Peter said: O most mighty emperor, if you were willing, you might perceive that he is full of demons. Nero said: Why do you make to me roundabouts of circumlocutions? Tomorrow will prove you.

Simon said: Do you believe, O good emperor, that I who was dead, and rose again, am a magician? For it had been brought about by his own cleverness that the unbelieving Simon had said to Nero: Order me to be beheaded in a dark place, and there to be left slain; and if I do not rise on the third day, know that I am a magician; but if I rise again, know that I am the Son of God.

And Nero having ordered this, in the dark, by his magic art he managed that a ram should be beheaded. And for so long did the ram appear to be Simon until he was beheaded. And when he had been beheaded in the dark, he that had beheaded him, taking the head, found it to be that of a ram; but he would not say anything to the emperor, lest he should scourge him, having ordered this to be done in secret. Thereafter, accordingly. Simon said that he had risen on the third day, because he took away the head of the ram and the limbs — but the blood had been there congealed — and on the third day he showed himself to Nero, and said: Cause to be wiped away my blood that has been poured out; for, behold, having been beheaded, as I promised, I have risen again on the third day.

And when Nero said, Tomorrow will prove you, turning to Paul, he says: You, Paul, why do you say nothing? Either who taught you, or whom you have for a master, or how you have taught in the cities, or what things have happened through your teaching? For I think that you have not any wisdom, and art not able to accomplish any work of power. Paul answered: Do you suppose that I ought to speak against a desperate man, a magician, who has given his soul up to death, whose destruction and perdition will come speedily? For he ought to speak who pretends to be what he is not, and deceives men by magic art. If you consent to hear his words, and to shield him, you shall destroy your soul and your kingdom, for he is a most base man. And as the Egyptians Jannes and Jambres led Pharaoh and his army astray until they were swallowed up in the sea, so also he, through the instruction of his father the devil, persuades men to do many evils to themselves, and thus deceives many of the innocent, to the peril of your kingdom. But as for the word of the devil, which I see has been poured out through this man, with groanings of my heart I am dealing with the Holy Spirit, that it may be clearly shown what it is; for as far as he seems to raise himself towards heaven, so far will he be sunk down into the depth of Hades, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. But about the teaching of my Master, of which you asked me, none attain it except the pure, who allow faith to come into their heart. For as many things as belong to peace and love, these have I taught. Round about from Jerusalem, and as far as Illyricum, Romans 15:19 I have fulfilled the word of peace. For I have taught that in honour they should prefer one another; Romans 12:10 I have taught those that are eminent and rich not to be lifted up, and hope in uncertainty of riches, but to place their hope in God; 1 Timothy 6:17 I have taught those in a middle station to be content with food and covering; I have taught the poor to rejoice in their own poverty; I have taught fathers to teach their children instruction in the fear of the Lord, children to obey their parents in wholesome admonition; I have taught wives to love their own husbands, and to fear them as masters, and husbands to observe fidelity to their wives; I have taught masters to treat their slaves with clemency, and slaves to serve their own masters faithfully; Colossians 3:18-22 I have taught the churches of the believers to reverence one almighty, invisible, and incomprehensible God. And this teaching has been given me, not from men, nor through men, but through Jesus Christ, Galatians 1:1 who spoke to me out of heaven, who also has sent me to preach, saying to me, Go forth, for I will be with you; and all things, as many as you shall say or do, I shall make just.

Nero said: What do you say, Peter? He answered and said: All that Paul has said is true. For when he was a persecutor of the faith of Christ, a voice called him out of heaven, and taught him the truth; for he was not an adversary of our faith from hatred, but from ignorance. For there were before us false Christs, like Simon, false apostles, and false prophets, who, contrary to the sacred writings,

set themselves to make void the truth; and against these it was necessary to have in readiness this man, who from his youth up set himself to no other thing than to search out the mysteries of the divine law, by which he might become a vindicator of truth and a persecutor of falsehood. Since, then, his persecution was not on account of hatred, but on account of the vindication of the law, the very truth out of heaven held intercourse with him, saying, I am the truth which you persecute; cease persecuting me. When, therefore, he knew that this was so, leaving off that which he was vindicating, he began to vindicate this way of Christ which he was persecuting.

Simon said: O good emperor, take notice that these two have conspired against me; for I am the truth, and they purpose evil against me. Peter said: There is no truth in you; but all you say is false.

Nero said: Paul, what do you say? Paul said: Those things which you have heard from Peter, believe to have been spoken by me also; for we purpose the same thing, for we have the same Lord Jesus the Christ. Simon said: Do you expect me, O good emperor, to hold an argument with these men, who have come to an agreement against me? And having turned to the apostles of Christ, he said: Listen, Peter and Paul: if I can do nothing for you here, we are going to the place where I must judge you. Paul said: O good emperor, see what threats he holds out against us. Peter said: Why was it necessary to keep from laughing outright at a foolish man, made the sport of demons, so as to suppose that he cannot be made manifest?

Simon said: I spare you until I shall receive my power. Paul said: See if you will go out hence safe. Peter said: If you do not see, Simon, the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, you will not believe yourself not to be Christ. Simon said: Most sacred emperor, do not believe them, for they are circumcised knaves. Paul said: Before we knew the truth, we had the circumcision of the flesh; but when the truth appeared, in the circumcision of the heart we both are circumcised, and circumcise. Peter said: If circumcision be a disgrace, why have you been circumcised, Simon?

Nero said: Has, then, Simon also been circumcised? Peter said: For not otherwise could he have deceived souls, unless he feigned himself to be a Jew, and made a show of teaching the law of God. Nero said: Simon, you, as I see, being carried away with envy, persecute these men. For, as it seems, there is great hatred between you and their Christ; and I am afraid that you will be worsted by them, and involved in great evils. Simon said: You are led astray, O emperor. Nero said: How am I led astray? What I see in you, I say. I see that you are manifestly an enemy of Peter and Paul and their master.

Simon said: Christ was not Paul's master. Paul said: Yes; through revelation He taught me also. But tell me what I asked you — Why were you circumcised? Simon said: Why have you asked me this? Paul said: We have a reason for asking you this. Nero said: Why are you afraid to answer them? Simon said: Listen, O emperor. At that time circumcision was enjoined by God when I received it. For this reason was I circumcised.

Paul said: Do you hear, O good emperor, what has been said by Simon? If, therefore, circumcision be a good thing, why have you, Simon, given up those who have been circumcised, and forced them, after being condemned, to be put to death? Nero said: Neither about you do I perceive anything good. Peter and Paul said: Whether this thought about us be good or evil has no reference to the matter; but to us it was necessary that what our Master promised

should come to pass. Nero said: If I should not be willing? Peter said: Not as you will, but as He promised to us.

Simon said: O good emperor, these men have reckoned upon your clemency, and have bound you. Nero said: But neither have you yet made me sure about yourself. Simon said: Since so many excellent deeds and signs have been shown to you by me, I wonder how you should be in doubt. Nero said: I neither doubt nor favour any of you; but answer me rather what I ask.

Simon said: Henceforward I answer you nothing. Nero said: Seeing that you lie, therefore you say this. But if even I can do nothing to you, God, who can, will do it. Simon said: I no longer answer you. Nero said: Nor do I consider you to be anything: for, as I perceive, you are a liar in everything. But why do I say so much? The three of you show that your reasoning is uncertain; and thus in all things you have made me doubt, so that I find that I can give credit to none of you.

Peter said: We preach one God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that has made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that therein is, who is the true King; and of His kingdom there shall be no end. Luke 1:33 Nero said: What king is lord? Paul said: The Saviour of all the nations. Simon said: I am he whom you speak of. Peter and Paul said: May it never be well with you, Simon, magician, and full of bitterness.

Simon said: Listen, O Cæsar Nero, that you may know that these men are liars, and that I have been sent from the heavens: tomorrow I go up into the heavens, that I may make those who believe in me blessed, and show my wrath upon those who have denied me. Peter and Paul said: Us long ago God called to His own glory; but you, called by the devil, hasten to punishment. Simon said: Cæsar Nero, listen to me. Separate these madmen from you, in order that when I go into heaven to my father, I may be very merciful to you. Nero said: And whence shall we prove this, that you go away into heaven? Simon said: Order a lofty tower to be made of wood, and of great beams, that I may go up upon it, and that my angels may find me in the air; for they cannot come to me upon earth among the sinners. Nero said: I will see whether you will fulfil what you say.

Then Nero ordered a lofty tower to be made in the Campus Martius, and all the people and the dignities to be present at the spectacle. And on the following day, all the multitude having come together, Nero ordered Peter and Paul to be present, to whom also he said: Now the truth has to be made manifest. Peter and Paul said: We do not expose him, but our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, whom he has falsely declared himself to be.

And Paul, having turned to Peter, said: It is my part to bend the knee, and to pray to God; and yours to produce the effect, if you should see him attempting anything, because you were first taken in hand by the Lord. And Paul, bending his knees, prayed. And Peter, looking steadfastly upon Simon, said: Accomplish what you have begun; for both your exposure and our call is at hand: for I see my Christ calling both me and Paul. Nero said: And where will you go to against my will? Peter said: Whithersoever our Lord has called us. Nero said: And who is your lord? Peter said: Jesus the Christ, whom I see calling us to Himself. Nero said: Do you also then intend to go away to heaven? Peter said: If it shall seem good to Him that calls us. Simon said: In order that you may know, O emperor, that these are deceivers, as soon as ever I ascend into heaven, I will send my angels to you, and will make you come to me. Nero said: Do at once what you say.

Then Simon went up upon the tower in the face of all, and, crowned with laurels, he stretched forth his hands, and began to fly. And when Nero saw him flying, he said to Peter: This Simon is true; but you and Paul are deceivers. To whom Peter said: Immediately shall you know that we are true disciples of Christ; but that he is not Christ, but a magician, and a malefactor. Nero said: Do you still persist? Behold, you see him going up into heaven. Then Peter, looking steadfastly upon Paul, said: Paul, look up and see. And Paul, having looked up, full of tears, and seeing Simon flying, said: Peter, why are you idle? Finish what you have begun; for already our Lord Jesus Christ is calling us. And Nero hearing them, smiled a little, and said: These men see themselves worsted already, and are gone mad. Peter said: Now you shall know that we are not mad. Paul said to Peter: Do at once what you do.

And Peter, looking steadfastly against Simon, said: I adjure you, you angels of Satan, who are carrying him into the air, to deceive the hearts of the unbelievers, by the God that created all things, and by Jesus Christ, whom on the third day He raised from the dead, no longer from this hour to keep him up, but to let him go. And immediately, being let go, he fell into a place called Sacra Via, that is, Holy Way, and was divided into four parts, having perished by an evil fate.

Then Nero ordered Peter and Paul to be put in irons, and the body of Simon to be carefully kept three days, thinking that he would rise on the third day. To whom Peter said: He will no longer rise, since he is truly dead, being condemned to everlasting punishment. And Nero said to him: Who commanded you to do such a dreadful deed? Peter said: His reflections and blasphemy against my Lord Jesus Christ have brought him into this gulf of destruction. Nero said: I will destroy you by an evil taking off. Peter said: This is not in your power, even if it should seem good to you to destroy us; but it is necessary that what our Master promised to us should be fulfilled.

Then Nero, having summoned Agrippa the proprætor, said to him: It is necessary that men introducing mischievous religious observances should die. Wherefore I order them to take iron clubs, and to be killed in the sea-fight. Agrippa the proprætor said: Most sacred emperor, what you have ordered is not fitting for these men, since Paul seems innocent beside Peter. Nero said: By what fate, then, shall they die? Agrippa answered and said: As seems to me, it is just that Paul's head should be cut off, and that Peter should be raised on a cross as the cause of the murder. Nero said: You have most excellently judged.

Then both Peter and Paul were led away from the presence of Nero. And Paul was beheaded on the Ostesian road.

And Peter, having come to the cross, said: Since my Lord Jesus Christ, who came down from the heaven upon the earth, was raised upon the cross upright, and He has deigned to call to heaven me, who am of the earth, my cross ought to be fixed head down most, so as to direct my feet towards heaven; for I am not worthy to be crucified like my Lord. Then, having reversed the cross, they nailed his feet up.

And the multitude was assembled reviling Cæsar, and wishing to kill him. But Peter restrained them, saying: A few days ago, being exhorted by the brethren, I was going away; and my Lord Jesus Christ met me, and having adored Him, I said, Lord, whither are You going? And He said to me, I am going to Rome to be crucified. And I said to Him, Lord, were You not crucified once for all? And the Lord answering, said, I saw you fleeing from death, and I wish to be crucified instead of you. And I

said, Lord, I go; I fulfil Your command. And He said to me, Fear not, for I am with you. On this account, then, children, do not hinder my going; for already my feet are going on the road to heaven. Do not grieve, therefore, but rather rejoice with me, for today I receive the fruit of my labours. And thus speaking, he said: I thank You, good Shepherd, that the sheep which You have entrusted to me, sympathize with me; I ask, then, that with me they may have a part in Your kingdom. And having thus spoken, he gave up the ghost.

And immediately there appeared men glorious and strange in appearance; and they said: We are here, on account of the holy and chief apostles, from Jerusalem. And they, along with Marcellus, an illustrious man, who, having left Simon, had believed in Peter, took up his body secretly, and put it under the terebinth near the place for the exhibition of sea-fights in the place called the Vatican.

And the men who had said that they came from Jerusalem said to the people: Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, because you have been deemed worthy to have great champions. And know that Nero himself, after these not many days, will be utterly destroyed, and his kingdom shall be given to another.

And after these things the people revolted against him; and when he knew of it, he fled into desert places, and through hunger and cold he gave up the ghost, and his body became food for the wild beasts.

And some devout men of the regions of the East wished to carry off the relics of the saints, and immediately there was a great earthquake in the city; and those that dwelt in the city having become aware of it, ran and seized the men, but they fled. But the Romans having taken them, put them in a place three miles from the city, and there they were guarded a year and seven months, until they had built the place in which they intended to put them. And after these things, all having assembled with glory and singing of praise, they put them in the place built for them.

And the consummation of the holy glorious Apostles Peter and Paul was on the 29th of the month of June — in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be glory and strength.

The Story of Perpetua

And as Paul was being led away to be beheaded at a place about three miles from the city, he was in irons. And there were three soldiers guarding him who were of a great family. And when they had gone out of the gate about the length of a bow-shot, there met them a God-fearing woman; and she, seeing Paul dragged along in irons, had compassion on him, and wept bitterly. And the name of the woman was called Perpetua; and she was one-eyed. And Paul, seeing her weeping, says to her: Give me your handkerchief, and when I turn back I shall give it to you. And she, having taken the handkerchief, gave it to him willingly. And the soldiers laughed, and said to the woman: Why do you wish, woman, to lose your handkerchief? Do you not know that he is going away to be beheaded? And Perpetua said to them: I adjure you by the health of Cæsar to bind his eyes with this handkerchief when you cut off his head. Which also was done. And they beheaded him at the place called Aquæ Salviæ, near the pine tree. And as God had willed, before the soldiers came back, the handkerchief, having on it drops of blood, was restored to the woman. And as she was carrying it, straightway and immediately her eye was opened.

And the three soldiers who had cut off the head of Saint Paul, when after three hours they came on the same day with the Bulla bringing it to Nero, having met Perpetua, they said to her: What is it, woman? Behold, by your confidence you have lost your handkerchief. But she said to them: I have both got my handkerchief, and my eye has recovered its sight. And as the Lord, the God of Paul, lives, I also have entreated him that I may be deemed worthy to become the slave of his Lord. Then the soldiers who had the Bulla, recognising the handkerchief, and seeing that her eye had been opened, cried out with a loud voice, as if from one mouth, and said: We too are the slaves of Paul's master. Perpetua therefore having gone away, reported in the palace of the Emperor Nero that the soldiers who had beheaded Paul said: We shall no longer go into the city, for we believe in Christ whom Paul preached, and we are Christians. Then Nero, filled with rage, ordered Perpetua, who had informed him of the soldiers, to be kept fast in irons; and as to the soldiers, he ordered one to be beheaded outside of the gate about one mile from the city, another to be cut in two, and the third to be stoned. And Perpetua was in the prison; and in this prison there was kept Potentiana, a noble maiden, because she had said: I forsake my parents and all the substance of my father, and I wish to become a Christian. She therefore joined herself to Perpetua, and ascertained from her everything about Paul, and was in much anxiety about the faith in Christ. And the wife of Nero was Potentiana's sister; and she secretly informed her about Christ, that those who believe in Him see everlasting joy, and that everything here is temporary, but there eternal: so that also she fled out of the palace, and some of the senators' wives with her. Then Nero, having inflicted many tortures upon Perpetua, at last tied a great stone to her neck, and ordered her to be thrown over a precipice. And her remains lie at the Momentan gate. And Potentiana also underwent many torments; and at last, having made a furnace one day, they burned her.

The Treatise on Grace by Ambrose of Milan

Ambrose here treats of the Holy Spirit as the abundant river of grace that flows from Jesus, the Fount of life, in the form of seven channels which are the seven gifts that overflow the banks of our minds leading us to supernatural knowledge of God.

So, then, the Holy Spirit is the River, and the abundant River, which according to the Hebrews flowed from Jesus in the lands, as we have received it prophesied by the mouth of Isaiah.[3] This is the great River which flows always and never fails. And not only a river, but also one of copious stream and overflowing greatness, as also David said: "The stream of the river makes glad the city of God." [4]

For neither is that city, the heavenly Jerusalem, watered by the channel of any earthly river, but that Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Fount of Life, by a short draught of Whom we are satiated, seems to flow more abundantly among those celestial Thrones, Dominions and Powers, Angels and Archangels, rushing in the full course of the seven virtues of the Spirit. For if a river rising above its banks overflows, how much more does the Spirit, rising above every creature, when He touches the

as it were low-lying fields of our minds, make glad that heavenly nature of the creatures with the larger fertility of His sanctification.

And let it not trouble you that either here it is said "rivers,"[1] or elsewhere "seven Spirits,"[2] for by the sanctification of these seven gifts of the Spirit, as Isaiah said,[3] is signified the fulness of all virtue; the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and strength, the Spirit of knowledge and godliness, and the Spirit of the fear of God. One, then, is the River, but many the channels of the gifts of the Spirit. This River, then, goes forth from the Fount of Life.

And here, again, you must not turn aside your thoughts to lower things, because there seems to be some difference between a Fount and a River, and yet the divine Scripture has provided that the weakness of human understanding should not be injured by the lowliness of the language. Set before yourself any river, it springs from its fount, but is of one nature, of one brightness and beauty. And do you assert rightly that the Holy Spirit is of one substance, brightness, and glory with the Son of God and with God the Father. I will sum up all in the oneness of the qualities, and shall not be afraid of any question as to difference of greatness. For in this point also Scripture has provided for us; for the Son of God says: "He that shall drink of the water which I will give him, it shall become in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life."[4] This well is clearly the grace of the Spirit, a stream proceeding from the living Fount. The Holy Spirit, then, is also the Fount of eternal life. . . .

Good, then, is this water, even the grace of the Spirit. Who will give this Fount to my breast? Let it spring up in me, let that which gives eternal life flow upon me. Let that Fount overflow upon us, and not flow away. For Wisdom says: "Drink water out of thine own vessels, and from the fountains of thine own wells, and let thy waters flow abroad in thy streets."[1] How shall I keep this water that it flow not forth, that it glide not away? How shall I preserve my vessel, lest any crack of sin penetrating it, should let the water of eternal life exude? Teach us, Lord Jesus, teach us as Thou didst teach Thine apostles, saying: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where rust and moth destroy, and where thieves break through and steal."[2]

The Prayer of Augustine

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy

Act in me, O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy

Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit, that I love but what is holy

Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, to defend all that is holy

Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy

Amen

The Ethiopian Hymn of Peace

The **Ethiopian Hymn of Peace** is a deeply spiritual and poetic composition within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church that emphasizes themes of divine tranquility, reconciliation, and harmony. While there may not be a single hymn explicitly titled "The Hymn of Peace," the concept resonates with numerous liturgical hymns and prayers central to Ethiopian Orthodox worship, particularly those focused on Christ as the Prince of Peace and the Church's mission to bring unity between humanity and God.

Theological Foundations

Peace (*Selam* in Ge'ez and Amharic) holds profound theological significance in the Ethiopian Orthodox tradition:

1. Christ as the Source of Peace:

- Jesus is celebrated as the ultimate bringer of peace, both spiritual and earthly.
- **Isaiah G:6:** "For to us a child is born... and He will be called Prince of Peace."
- **John 14:27:** "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you."

2. The Cross as Reconciliation:

- The peace brought by Christ is not merely the absence of conflict but the reconciliation of humanity with God through His sacrifice.

3. The Church's Role in Spreading Peace:

- The Church acts as a vessel of peace, guiding the faithful toward harmony with God, creation, and one another.
-

Themes in the Hymn of Peace

The **Ethiopian Hymn of Peace** would likely incorporate the following themes:

1. Divine Peace:

- Acknowledging God as the ultimate source of peace and harmony.
- **Example:** "O Lord, You calm the stormy seas; Your peace surpasses all understanding."

2. Christ's Mission:

- Celebrating Christ's role in bringing peace through His life, death, and resurrection.
- **Example:** "You came to heal the brokenhearted and to unite the scattered flock."

3. Reconciliation and Forgiveness:

- Encouraging believers to seek peace with others and embody forgiveness.
- **Example:** "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God."

4. Eternal Peace:

- Anticipating the ultimate peace of God's kingdom, where all creation will be restored.
- **Example:** "In Your kingdom, O Lord, there is no strife, only the eternal song of joy."

5. Connunal and Global Peace:

- Prayers for unity within the Church and among nations.
- **Example:** "May Your peace reign in every heart, and may Your light guide every land."

Liturgical Expressions

The Ethiopian Hymn of Peace would feature prominently in various aspects of worship:

1. The Divine Liturgy (Qidase):

- Peace is a recurring theme in the Eucharistic prayers. The priest often invokes peace upon the congregation and the world, saying, "Peace be unto all."

2. Daily Prayers:

- Morning and evening prayers include petitions for peace, inspired by psalms and liturgical hymns.

3. Feast Days:

- Hymns of peace are particularly emphasized during major celebrations such as **Christmas (Genna)** and **Easter (Fasika)**, marking the arrival of peace through Christ.

4. Processions and Gatherings:

- During grand processions, such as those for **Tinket (Epiphany)** or **Meskel (Finding of the True Cross)**, hymns praising God's peace are chanted.

Symbolism and Imagery

The Hymn of Peace is often rich in symbolic language:

1. Light:

- Representing Christ as the light that dispels darkness and brings peace.
- "Your light shines upon the weary, and Your peace rests on all creation."

2. Dove:

- A symbol of the Holy Spirit and peace, echoing Noah's ark and Christ's baptism.
- "Like the dove, may Your Spirit descend and fill us with peace."

3. The Cross:

- A powerful emblem of reconciliation and divine peace.
- "Through the cross, You have brought harmony to heaven and earth."

Sample Structure of the Hymn

I. Invocation

- "O God of peace, who reigns above all, we lift our voices in praise to You."

II. Christ as the Prince of Peace

- "Your birth brought joy to the shepherds; Your death brought life to the world."

III. Petition for Peace

- "Grant us peace in our hearts and in our homes; let strife and discord flee before Your presence."

IV. Eternal Hope

- "We await the day when all creation sings in harmony, and Your peace reigns forevermore."

V. Doxology

- "Glory to You, O King of Peace, now and forever. Amen."

Cultural and Spiritual Impact

1. Community Unity:

- Hymns of peace foster a sense of unity among believers, encouraging reconciliation and forgiveness.

2. Guidance in Times of Struggle:

- The hymn offers comfort and hope during personal or communal challenges, reminding the faithful of God's enduring presence.

3. Integration with Daily Life:

- The emphasis on peace inspires Ethiopian Christians to embody Christ's teachings in their relationships and interactions.

Conclusion

The **Ethiopian Hymn of Peace** serves as a profound expression of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church's spirituality, celebrating God's transformative peace. Through its themes of reconciliation, hope, and divine harmony, the hymn not only enriches liturgical worship but also inspires believers to seek and share peace in their daily lives. This timeless hymn reflects the enduring promise of Christ's peace, which surpasses all understanding and endures for eternity.

The Song of the Redeemed (Expanded)

Revelation 5:9

And they sung a new song, saying,

Thou ... hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood,

out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation ...

The extent, variety, and order of the creation, proclaim the glory of God. He is likewise, ^* Maximus in Minimis . The smallest of the works, that we are capable of examining, such for instance as the eye or the wing of a little insect, the creature of a day, are stamped with an inimitable impression of His wisdom and power. Thus in His written Word, there is a greatness considering it as a whole, and a beauty and accuracy in the smaller parts, analogous to what we observe in the visible creation, and answerable to what an enlightened and humble mind may expect in a book, which bears the character of a divine revelation. A single verse, a single clause, when viewed (if I may so speak) in the microscope of close meditation, is often found to contain a fulness, a world of wonders. And though a connected and comprehensive acquaintance with the whole Scripture, be desirable and useful, and is no less the privilege, than the duty, of those who have capacity and time at their disposal, to acquire it; yet, there is a gracious accommodation to the weakness of some persons, and the circumstances of others. So that in many parts of Scripture, whatever is immediately necessary to confirm our faith, to animate or regulate our practice, is condensed into a small compass, and comprised in a few verses: yea, sometimes a single sentence, when unfolded and examined, will be found to contain all the great principles of duty and comfort. Such is the sentence which I have now read to you. In the Messiah Oratorio, it is inserted in the grand chorus taken from the 12 ^th and 13 ^th verses of this chapter. And as it may lead us to a compendious recapitulation of the whole subject, and, by the Lord's blessing, may prepare us to join in the following ascription of praise to Him that sits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb; I purpose to consider it in its proper connection, as a part of the leading song of the redeemed before the Throne, in which the angels cannot share. Though the angels, from their love to redeemed sinners, and from their views of the manifold wisdom and glory of God, in visiting such sinners with such a salvation, cheerfully take a part in the general chorus. ^* Maximus, means Greatness' ; Minimis, means Tiniest

The redemption spoken of is suited to the various cases of sinners of every nation, people and language. And many sinners of divers descriptions and from distant situations scattered abroad into all lands, through a long succession of ages, will, by the efficacy of this redemption, be gathered together into one (John 11:52) They will constitute one family united in one great Head

(Eph.3:14, 15) . When they shall attain the end of their hope and encircle the Throne, day without night, rejoicing, their remembrance of what they once were, their sense of the happiness they are raised to, and of the great consideration to which they owe their deliverance, and their exaltation, will excite a perpetual joyful acknowledgment to this purport. They were once lost, but could contribute nothing to their own recovery. Therefore they ascribe all the glory to their Saviour. They strike their golden harps and sing, in strains, loud as from numbers without number, sweet as from blest voices, Thou art worthy -- for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.

But though this song, and this joy, will only be consummated in heaven, the commencement takes place on earth. Believers, during their present state of warfare, are taught to sing it; in feebler strains indeed, but the subject of their joy and the object of their praise are the same which inspire the harps and songs in the world of light. May I not say, that this life is the time of their rehearsal? They are now learning their song and advancing in meetness [fitness] to join in the chorus on high, which, as death successively removes them, is continually increasing by the accession of fresh voices. All that they know, or desire to know, all that they possess or hope for, is included in this ascription.

I take the last clause of the verse into the subject. The words suggest three principal points, to our consideration.

I. The benefit, Redemption, to God.

II. The redemption price, by the Blood.

III. The extent of the benefit -- to a people out of every kindred, and tongue, and nation.

I.

Thou hast redeemed us to God. Redemption or ransom, is applicable to a state of imprisonment for debt, and to a state of bondage or slavery. From these ideas taken together, we may form some estimate of the misery of our fallen state; a theme, which, if I cannot insist upon at large in every discourse, I would never wholly omit. For we can neither understand the grace, nor enjoy the comfort of the Gospel, but [except] in proportion as we have a heart-felt and abiding conviction of our wretched condition as sinners, without it They who think themselves whole, know not their need of a physician (Matthew 9:12) , but to the sick He is welcome.

If a man, shut up in prison for a heavy debt which he is utterly incapable of discharging, should obtain his liberty, in consideration of payment made for him by another, he might be properly said, to be redeemed from imprisonment. This supposition will apply to our subject. The law and justice of God have demands upon us, which we cannot answer. We are therefore shut up under the law, in unbelief, helpless and hopeless, till we know and can plead the engagement of a surety for us. For a time, like Peter, we are sleeping in our prison (Acts 12:6-10) , regardless [unaware] of danger. The first sensible effect of the grace of God is to awaken us from this insensibility. Then we begin to feel the horrors of our dungeon, and the strength of our chains, and to tremble under the apprehension of an impending doom. But grace proceeds to reveal the Saviour and Friend of sinners, and to encourage our application to Him. In a good hour the chains fall off, the bars of iron and brass are

broken asunder, and the prison-doors fly open. The prisoner understands that all his great debt is forgiven, blesses his Deliverer, obtains his liberty, and departs in peace.

We are likewise in bondage. The servants, the slaves of a harder task-master than Pharaoh was to Israel. Satan, though not by right, yet by a righteous permission, tyrannizes over us till Jesus makes us free (John 8:34, 36). The way of transgressors is hard (Proverbs 13:15) Though the solicitations and commands of that enemy, who works in the children of disobedience (Ephesians 2:2) are, in some respects, suited to our depraved inclinations, yet the consequences are grievous. A burdened conscience, a wasting constitution, a ruined fortune and character, swiftly and closely, follow the habits of intemperance and lewdness. And they who seem to walk in a smoother path are deceived, mortified and disappointed daily. If persons, who openly and habitually live in a course that is contrary to the rule of God's Word, speak swelling words of vanity (II Peter 2:18, 19) , and boast of their liberty, believe them not. We are sure they carry that in their bosom, which, hourly, contradicts their assertions. Yea, sometimes their slavery is so galling that they attempt to escape, but in vain. They are soon retaken, and their bonds made stronger. The issue of their short-lived reformation, which they defer as long as possible, and at last set about with reluctance, usually is, that their latter end proves worse than their beginning. At most, they only exchange one sinful habit for another, sensuality for avarice, or prodigality for pride. The strong one armed will maintain his dominion, till the stronger than he interposes and says, Loose him, and let him go, for I have found a ransom. Then, by virtue of the redemption price the prey is taken from the mighty, and the captive is delivered (Isaiah 49:24, 25) . Then the enslaved sinner, like the man out of whom the legion was cast, sits at the feet of Jesus, in peace, and in his right mind (Mark 5:15) . He becomes the Lord's freedman.

For he is not only delivered from guilt and thrall [enslavement]; he is redeemed to God. He is now restored to his original state, as an obedient and dependant creature, devoted to his Creator, conformed to His will and image, and admitted to communion with Him in love. These are blessings which alone can satisfy the soul, and without which it is impossible for man to be happy. While he is ignorant of his proper good, and seeks it in creatures, he is, and must be, wretched. Madness is in his heart, a deceived, disordered imagination turns him aside, and he feeds upon ashes, and upon the wind (Isaiah 44:20) . But by grace he is renewed to a sound judgment, his mind receives a right direction, and he is turned from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God (Acts 26:18)

II.

What unspeakably and beyond conception, enhances the value of this deliverance, is the consideration of the means by which it is effected. For it is not merely a deliverance, but a redemption. It is not an act of mere mercy, but of mercy harmonizing with justice. It is not an act of power only, but of unexampled, and expensive love. Thou has redeemed us by Thy blood!

The sentence, denounced by the law against transgressors, was death. And therefore when MESSIAH became our surety, to satisfy the law for us, He must die. The expression of His blood' is often used figuratively for His death; perhaps to remind us how He died. His was a bloody death. When He was in agony in Gethsemane, His sweat was as great drops of blood, falling down to the ground (Luke 22:44) . His blood flowed when He gave His back to the smiters, under the painful strokes of the scourging He endured, previous to His crucifixion. It flowed from His head when the soldiers, having mocked His character of King by crowning Him with thorns, by their rude blows

forced the thorns into His temples. His blood streamed from the wounds made by the spikes which pierced His hands and His feet, when they fastened Him to the cross. When He hung upon the cross, His body was full of wounds and covered with blood. And, after His death, another large wound was made in His side, from which issued blood and water. Such was the redemption price He paid for sinners -- His blood, the blood of His heart. Without shedding of blood there could be no remission (Hebrews 9:22) . Nor could any blood, but His, answer the great design. Not any -- not all the bloody sacrifices appointed by the law of Moses, could take away sin as it respects the conscience, nor afford a plea with which a sinner could venture to come before the high God (Micah 6:6) . But the blood of MESSIAH , in whom were united the perfections of the divine nature and the real properties of humanity, and, which, the Apostle therefore styles the blood of God (Acts 20:28) , this precious blood cleanses from all sin. It is exhibited as a propitiation of perpetual efficacy, by which God declares His righteousness, not less than His mercy, in forgiving iniquities (Romans 3:25, 26) , and shows Himself just to the demands of His holiness, and the honour of His government, when He accepts and justifies the sinner who believes in Jesus.

If these things were understood and attended to, would it be thought wonderful that this Saviour is very precious to those who believe in Him, and who obtain redemption by His blood? How can it possibly be otherwise? Grace like this, when known, must captivate and fix the heart! Not only to save; but to die, and to die for His enemies! Such costly love, productive of such glorious consequences, and to such unworthy creatures! Surely the Apostle's mind was filled and fixed with these considerations when authenticating an epistle with his own hand, he subjoined this emphatic close, If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be ^* Anathema Maranatha! (I Cor.16:22) ^* Anathema: accursed' ; Maranatha: The Lord is coming!' or O Lord, come!'

Do you think, my brethren, that the Apostle took pleasure in denouncing so severe a sentence against all those who did not see (as we say) with his eyes? Had he so little affection for sinners, that he could thus consign them to destruction by multitudes, for differing from him in what some persons only deem an opinion? Rather, consider him not as breathing out his own wishes, but as speaking in the name, and on the behalf of God. He knew it must be, and he declared it would be so. It was no pleasure to him to see them determined to perish. On the contrary, He had great grief and sorrow of heart for them, even for the Jews who had treated him with the greatest cruelty. Even for their sakes, he could have been content to be made an Anathema himself (Romans 9:3) that they might be saved. But upon the whole, he acquiesced in the will of God, and acknowledged it to be just, right and equal, that if any man would not love the Lord Jesus Christ, after all He had done and suffered for sinners, he should be accursed. By this comparison of the Apostle's severe language, with his compassionate temper, I am led to digress a little farther. It suggests an apology [defence; extenuation] for ministers of the Gospel in general. When we declare the terrors of the Lord, when we assure you that there is but one solid foundation for hope, and that, unless you love the Lord Jesus Christ, you must perish; some of our hearers account us bigoted, uncharitable and bitter. But if you could see what passes in secret, how faithful ministers mourn over those who reject their message, how their disobedience cuts them to the heart, and abates the comfort they would otherwise find in your service; if you could believe us when we say (I trust truly) that we are ready to impart unto you, not the Gospel of God only, but our own souls also, because you are dear to us (I Thessalonians 2:8) , and we long for your salvation, then, you would think more favourably of us. But after all, we cannot, we dare not, soften our message to please men. What we find in the

Word of God, we must declare. It would be at the peril of our souls to speak smooth things, to prophecy deceits (Isaiah 30:10) to you; and, so far as we preach the truth, it will be at the peril of your souls, if we are disregarded.

III.

The benefits of this redemption extend to a numerous people, who are said to be redeemed out of every kindred, tongue and nation. I have, upon a former occasion, offered you my sentiments concerning the extent of the virtue of that blood, which takes away the sin of the world (Volume I, Sermon XVI) . But the clause now before us, invites me to make a few additional observations, upon a subject which, I conceive, it much concerns us rightly to understand.

The redeemed of the Lord, are those who actually experience the power of His redemption, who are delivered from the dominion of sin and Satan, and brought into a state of liberty, peace and holiness. That the people of every kindred, nation and tongue are not redeemed, in this sense, universally, is as certain as evidence of faith and express declarations of Scripture can make it. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Multitudes, thus disqualified, will be found trembling, on the left hand of the Judge, at the great day. But, a remnant will be saved, according to the election of grace. For they who differ, who are redeemed to the service of God, while others live and die in the love and service of sin, do not make themselves to differ (I Corinthians 4:7) . It becomes the potsherd of the earth, to ascribe to their Maker the glory of His sovereignty, and to acknowledge that if they have a good hope, it is because it pleased the Lord to make them His people, who once were not His people (I Corinthians 4:7) . Yet, a way of conceiving of the doctrines of the divine sovereignty [Yet, an understanding of the doctrine of divine sovereignty] , and of a personal election unto life, has often obtained [has often been held], which seems to have a tendency to render the mind narrow, selfish and partial, and to strengthen the exercise of that philanthropy, which the genius and spirit of the Gospel powerfully inculcate [powerfully impress upon the mind]. The best of us, perhaps, are more prone than we are aware of, to assimilate the great God to ourselves, and to frame our ideas of Him, too much according to our own image. So that, often much of man's natural disposition may be observed in the views he forms of the divine perfections and conduct; as on the other hand, his conceptions of the character of God, strengthen and confirm him in his own tempers and habits. There are persons, who being persuaded in their minds (we would hope upon sure grounds) that they, themselves are of the elect, appear to be little concerned what may become of others. Their notions of God's sovereignty, and His right to do what He will with His own, though often insufficient to preserve them from repining and impatience under common events of human life, raise them above all doubts and difficulties, on a subject which the Apostle speaks of as unsearchable and untraceable. Where he acknowledges depths which he was unable to fathom (Romans 11:33) , all appear to them quite plain and easy. Where he admires and adores, they arrogantly dispute, and determine ex cathedra [from the chair of authority] , and harshly censure all who are not so eagle-sighted as themselves. Methinks they who know the worth of a soul, from its vast capacity for happiness and misery, and its immortal duration, cannot justly be blamed for allowing no limits, to their benevolent wishes for the salvation of mankind but the will of God, as it is plainly made known to us in His Word. To this we are to submit, not as of necessity only, but cheerfully, assured that His will is wise, holy and good; that the Judge of all the world will do right; and to wait for the day, when He will condescend to clear up every difficulty and give us that satisfaction, which in our present state of ignorance and weakness,

we are incapable of receiving. Shall mortal man be more just, or can he be more merciful, than God? It is a false compassion, founded in a blameable disregard of what is due to the glory of His great name, that prompts us to form a wish, that His unerringly wise appointments could be otherwise than they are. Yet it is a comfort to think that His mercy, in which He delights, in which He is peculiarly said to be rich, and which is higher than the heavens, will, in its exercise, far exceed the bounds which some fallible mortals would peremptorily assign to it. We must not indulge conjecture and hypothesis farther than the Scripture will warrant; but while we humbly depend upon this infallible light, we need not be afraid to follow it, though it should, in some particulars, lead us a little beyond the outlines of some long-received and, in the main, very valuable human systems of divinity.

I have repeatedly expressed my belief, that many prophecies, respecting the spread and glory of the Kingdom of MESSIAH upon earth, have not yet received their full accomplishment, and that a time is coming when many (perhaps the greater part of mankind), of all nations, and people, and languages, shall know the joyful sound of the Gospel, and walk in the light of the Redeemer's countenance. At present, I would confine myself to consider, what ground the Scripture affords us to hope that there are many of every nation, people and tongue, even now, singing this song before His Throne.

The Revelations vouchsafed [graciously granted] to the beloved Disciple in Patmos, exhibit a succession of great events, extending (I suppose) from the spotless days, to the end of time. But while only the learned can so much as attempt to ascertain, from history, the dates and facts to which the prophecies already fulfilled refer; or to offer probable conjectures concerning the events, as yet future (in which the most judicious commentators are far from being agreed); there are passages, interspersed, which seem designed to administer consolation to plain believers, by representations suited to raise their thoughts to the state of the Church triumphant. Though they are unable to explain the particulars of what they read, there is a glory resulting from the whole, which animates their hope and awakens their joy. Of this kind I think is that vision - Revelation 7:9 ad finem, in which the Apostle saw the servants of God, who were sealed in their foreheads, in number a hundred and forty-four thousand. And besides these, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb, etc. I confess myself unable to expound this sublime passage, and to give full, or even the principal sense of it, with certainty. But that it has some reference to what is now passing, within the veil, which hides the unseen world from our view, I cannot doubt. I propose my thoughts upon it with caution and diffidence. I dare not speak with that certainty, which I feel myself warranted to use when I set before you, from Scripture, the great truths which are essential to a life of faith in the Son of God. Yet, I hope to advance nothing that is contrary to Scripture, or, to any deductions fairly and justly drawn from it.

Having premised this acknowledgment of my incompetence to decide positively, I venture to say, that by the hundred and forty-four thousand sealed in their foreheads (a definite for an indefinite number, which is frequent in Scripture language) I understand, those, who, living to mature age and where the Gospel is afforded, are enabled to make a public and visible profession of religion, and are marked, as it were, in their foreheads, and known to whom they belong, by their open and

habitual separation, from the spirit and customs of the world which lies in wickedness. And the exceeding great multitude, contradistinguished from these, I conceive to be those, who are elsewhere styled the Lord's hidden ones; and that these, are a great multitude indeed, gathered by Him, who knows them that are His, out of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples and tongues. I may distribute them into the following classes:

(1.)

Infants. I think it, at least highly probable, that when our Lord says, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 19:14) , He does not only intimate the necessity of our becoming like little children, in simplicity, as a qualification without which (as He expressly declares in other places) we cannot enter into His Kingdom; but informs us of a fact that the number of infants, who are effectually redeemed to God by His blood, so greatly exceeds the aggregate of adult believers, that, comparatively speaking, His Kingdom may be said to consist of little children. The Apostle speaks of them as having sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression (Romans 5:14) , that is, with the consent of their understanding and will. And when he says, We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, he adds, that every man may give an account of what he has done in the body, whether it be good or bad (II Corinthians 5:10) . But children who die in their infancy have not done anything in the body, either good or bad. It is true, they are by nature evil, and must, if saved, be the subjects of a supernatural change. And though we cannot conceive how this change is to be wrought, yet, I suppose, few are so rash as to imagine it impossible that any infants can be saved. The same power that produces this change in some, can produce it in all. And therefore I am willing to believe, till the Scripture forbids me, that infants of all nations and kindreds, without exception, who die before they are capable of sinning after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who have done nothing in the body of which they can give an account, are included in the election of grace. They are born for a better world than this. They just enter this state of tribulation, they quickly pass through it, their robes are washed white in the blood of the Lamb, and they are admitted, for His sake, before the Throne. Should I be asked to draw the line, to assign the age at which children begin to be accountable for actual sin, it would give me no pain to confess my ignorance. The Lord knows.

(2.)

A people hidden among the most degenerate communities, civil or ecclesiastical, that bear the name of Christian; where ignorance and superstition, or errors, which, though more refined, are no less contrary to the Gospel, have prevailing dominion and influence. What can be more deplorable, in the view of an enlightened and benevolent mind, than the general state of the Roman and Greek churches! Where the traditions, inventions and doctrines of men, a train of pompous and burdensome ceremonies, a dependence upon masses, penance and pilgrimages, upon legends and fictitious saints, form the principal features of the public religion. Many nations are involved in this gross darkness, but they are not wholly destitute of the Scripture; some portions of it, are interwoven with their authorized forms of worship; and we cannot, with reason, doubt, but a succession of individuals among them, have been acquainted with the life and power of true godliness, notwithstanding the disadvantages and prejudices of their education. There are likewise amongst Protestants, schemes of doctrine supported by learning, and by numbers, which are not more conformable to the standard of the New Testament, than the grossest errors of Popery; and

yet, here and there, persons may be met with, who, by the agency of the Holy Spirit enabling them to understand the Scriptures, are made wiser than their teachers; and who, though still fettered by some mistakes and prejudices, give evidence in the main, that their hopes are fixed upon the only Atonement, that they are redeemed to God, and are partakers of that faith which works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world.

(3.)

I will go one step farther. The inferences that have been made, by some persons, from the Apostle Peter's words, That God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation, he that fears Him, and works righteousness, is accepted with Him (Acts 10:34, 35) , are, undoubtedly, rash and unscriptural. They would conclude from this verse, that it is of little importance what people believe, provided they are sincere in their way. That the idolatrous heathens, even the most savage of them, whose devotion is cruelty, who pollute their worship with human blood and live in the practice of vices disgraceful to humanity, are in a very safe state because they act, as it is supposed, according to their light. But if the light which is in them be darkness, how great is that darkness! Such a lax candour as this tends to make the Gospel unnecessary; if they who have it not, are therefore excusable, though they neither love nor fear God, and live in open violation of the law of their nature. The declaration, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14) , holds universally, and without a single exception. But if we suppose a heathen, destitute of the means of grace by which conversion is usually wrought, to be brought to a sense of his misery, of the emptiness and vanity of worldly things, to a conviction that he cannot be happy without the favour of the great Lord of the world, to a feeling of guilt, and a desire of mercy; and that though he has no explicit knowledge of a Saviour, he directs the cry of his heart to the unknown Supreme, to this purport, *Ens entium, miserere mei* -- Father, and Source of beings, have mercy upon me! who will prove, that such views and desires can arise in the heart of a sinner, without the energy of that Spirit, which Jesus is exalted to bestow? Who will take upon him to say, that His blood has not sufficient efficacy to redeem to God a sinner who is thus disposed, though he has never heard of His name? Or who has a warrant to affirm that the supposition I have made is, in the nature of things, impossible to be realized? But I stop -- I do not often amuse you with conjecture. And though, for want of express warrant from Scripture, I dare not give the sentiments I have now offered, a stronger name than, probable' or conjectural,' I hope I do not propose them for your amusement. They will prove to your advantage and my own, if they are helpful to guard us against a narrow, harsh, and dogmatic spirit; and if, without abating our reverent submission to the revealed will of God, they have a tendency to confirm our views of His goodness, and the power and compassions of the great Redeemer.

The Ethiopian Book of the Angels (Additional Fragments)

The **Ethiopian Book of the Angels (Additional Fragments)** is a hypothetical or speculative title that could describe a collection of writings, hymns, or liturgical texts within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church focusing on the role, nature, and ministry of angels. While no singular book by this exact name exists, Ethiopian tradition is rich in angelological themes, drawn from canonical scriptures, apocryphal texts, and mystical writings.

Below is an exploration of what "additional fragments" might represent, expanding on the themes and traditions associated with angels in Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity.

Angels in Ethiopian Tradition

Angels are central to Ethiopian Orthodox theology, seen as messengers of God, protectors of the faithful, and participants in divine worship. Their presence is frequently highlighted in:

1. **Scripture:**

- The Bible, as preserved in Ge'ez, contains numerous references to angels, including the Archangels Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel.

2. **Apocryphal Texts:**

- Texts such as the **Book of Enoch** and the **Book of Jubilees**, which are canonical in Ethiopia, provide detailed accounts of angels' roles in creation, judgment, and guidance.
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Themes in the Ethiopian Book of the Angels

If "additional fragments" were discovered or imagined, they might expand on these key themes:

4. The Hierarchy of Angels

- Fragments might describe angelic orders, reflecting their roles in God's divine plan.
- Possible divisions include:
 - **Seraphin:** Surrounding God's throne in worship.
 - **Cherubin:** Guardians of divine mysteries, like the Ark of the Covenant.
 - **Archangels:** Leading God's armies and delivering messages.

5. Angelic Protection

- Stories might recount angels guarding individuals or nations, emphasizing their role as protectors of the faithful.
- **Example:** Detailed accounts of Archangel Michael, widely venerated in Ethiopia as a protector and intercessor.

6. Angels in Worship

- Fragments could describe how angels participate in heavenly liturgies, mirroring the worship of the earthly Church.
- Hymns and prayers often depict angels chanting, "Holy, holy, holy" (Isaiah 6:3).

7. Angelic Interactions with Humanity

- New fragments might explore interactions between angels and prophets, saints, or ordinary believers, offering guidance, warnings, or comfort.

8. The Role of Fallen Angels

- Drawing from **1 Enoch**, additional narratives might recount the fall of certain angels, their influence on humanity, and God's ultimate judgment.

9. Angels in Eschatology

- Fragments could elaborate on angels' roles in the end times, including the sounding of trumpets, gathering of the elect, and executing God's judgment.

Liturgical and Mystical Dimensions

1. Hymns and Prayers:

- Ethiopian hymns, particularly from the *Deggwa* (liturgical hymnal), often invoke angels, praising their purity and intercessory power.
- **Example Hymn Fragment:** "O Michael, leader of the heavenly hosts, shield us with your wings from the snares of the enemy."

2. Festivals of Angels:

- The Ethiopian calendar includes feast days dedicated to specific angels, such as:
 - **St. Michael (Mikael):** Celebrated on the 12th of each month.
 - **St. Gabriel (Gabr'el):** Honored for announcing the Incarnation.

3. Monastic Practices:

- Monks often meditate on angelic presences, drawing inspiration for their own lives of worship and obedience.

Hypothetical Fragments and Narratives

If additional fragments were discovered, they might include:

1. The Vision of the Heavenly Hosts:

- A vivid account of a prophet or saint witnessing the ranks of angels in worship.

2. The Journey of an Angelic Messenger:

- A narrative of an angel delivering a divine message to a remote community or individual.

3. The Song of the Angels:

- Expanded descriptions of the celestial hymns, offering a glimpse into heavenly worship.
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Symbolism and Iconography

1. Wings:

- Representing swiftness and divine mission.

2. Light:

- Symbolizing purity, truth, and the reflection of God's glory.

3. Swords:

- Particularly associated with Archangel Michael, signifying protection and the defeat of evil.
-

Cultural and Spiritual Impact

1. Devotional Practices:

- Believers frequently call upon angels in prayers for protection, healing, and guidance.

2. Art and Iconography:

- Ethiopian churches and manuscripts are adorned with depictions of angels, reflecting their presence in divine and earthly realms.
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Conclusion

The **Ethiopian Book of the Angels (Additional Fragments)**, whether imagined or rooted in existing traditions, would deepen our understanding of the spiritual role of angels in Ethiopian Orthodoxy. By highlighting their connection to God, humanity, and the cosmos, such fragments would serve as a source of inspiration, devotion, and theological reflection, enriching the Church's already profound angelological tradition.

The Prayer of Intercession

To understand intercessory prayer, you first need to understand the Biblical definition of "intercession."

Today, we understand "intercession" to refer to the act of intervening or acting on behalf of a person, animal, or entity. This definition comes from the Latin word "intercessio," which roughly translates to "mediate," "come between," or "interpose on behalf of others."

The Biblical definition of "intercession" carries a similar meaning but more spiritual weight. When the Bible references intercession, that intercession works on both the intercession's subject and humanity.

The best way to visualize Biblical intercession is to picture a long metal chain. Each notch in the chain represents a person, and like the chain, we're connected. When you say an intercessory prayer for another person, the entire chain becomes stronger in Christ.

Why we say intercessory prayers

Although God watches over each of us from heaven, He expects us to care for one another here on earth. Intercessory prayers are a vital part of God's vision, as they allow us to seek His help for someone else.

There's no single reason we say intercessory prayers, as there are many circumstances in which we need to use them.

That includes:

- To ask God to support a loved one through a hard time
- **To ask for a family members salvation**
- To ask for God's mercy or help during a disaster
- To pray for humanity's salvation
- To ask for forgiveness for another
- To ask God to help you uplift another person in Christ

We also say intercessory prayers at work, school, and Church at times of prayer, including on the **National Day of Prayer**, during Holy Week, and over Christmas.

The Bible commands us to act as intercessors several times.

That includes in:

- Colossians 4:2: *"continue in prayer and watch therein with thanksgiving,"*
- Job 42:10: *"the Lord released Job from captivity when he prayed for his friends. Also, the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before."*
- Ephesians 6:18: *"pray with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."*

Of course, those aren't the only places God's word references intercessory prayer.

Intercessory prayer in scripture

The most well-known intercessory prayer in the Bible is the prayer Jesus said on the cross. As we see in Luke 23:34, Jesus said an intercessory prayer to God to ask for our forgiveness.

He said, *"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."*

Of course, Jesus's sacrifice for humanity is also an act of intercession — as he died for our sins.

The word "intercession" even appears in references to Jesus's sacrifice in the New Testament in Romans 8:34, where we are told, *"it is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."*

Isaiah 53:12 also confirms Jesus's intercession, explaining that Christ, *"bore the sin of man and makes intercessions for the transgressors."*

Jesus's prayer to God on the cross isn't the only intercessory prayer he gives in the Bible. The night before his crucifixion, Jesus said a long and heartfelt prayer known as the "Farewell Prayer."

The Farewell Prayer includes a long intercessory prayer that you can find in John 17.

As the Farewell Prayer is quite long, we won't include the whole thing here. Instead, we'll draw your attention to crucial moments where Jesus intercedes:

- John 17:6-19, when Jesus prays for his disciples. Notably, he says in John 17:15, *"I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from evil."*
- John 17:20, when he prays for all believers and says, *"neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe in me through their word,"*

As you can see from the intercessory prayers in the Bible, intercessory prayers take many forms. So how should you say one?

How to say an intercessory prayer

There's no "right" way to say an intercessory prayer, as long as your prayer is sincere.

However, if you are looking for some **direction for your prayer**, you could structure it like this:

1. Start with an address to God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit (for example, "O Lord,")
2. State the reason for your prayer (for example, "I ask today that you grant my mother relief from her knee pain.")
3. Offer an elaboration to explain why you need intercession (for example, "she has suffered greatly after twisting her knee last week, and we can't relieve her pain.")
4. Give praise and thankfulness to God (for example, "I know you look out for the needs of others, both here on earth and above in heaven.")
5. Finish with a supplication for intercession (for example, "I give myself to you and ask you to grant my Mother mercy in Jesus's name.")
6. Say **"Anen"**

Alternatively, if you were praying for someone's salvation, you might draw inspiration from this intercessory prayer sample instead:

"Dear Lord Jesus,

Today, I crossed paths with one of God's people.

Lord, they don't know you and your son Jesus Christ. Please work through me and guide them to salvation.

Let them understand God's power, love, and glory, and let the will of God touch them.

In the name of God's kingdom, Amen."

While many people say intercessory prayers with the person they are interceding for, this isn't strictly necessary. God will still hear your intercessory prayers if you pray by yourself, with a loved one, or with your church community.

How to lead intercessory prayer in Church

Each prayer handles intercessory prayers differently. However, if you want to say an intercessory prayer for someone or something, you can usually put in a prayer request, ask the person leading the service, or pray during group prayer time.

To lead an intercessory prayer successfully, make sure you:

- Write down your prayer in advance (so you don't forget anything)
- Explain why you are praying before you start your prayer
- Follow it up with a request for help if appropriate. You can ask for donations, volunteers, or items (depending on the cause).

And, of course, if you are going to say an intercessory prayer for someone, make sure you check with them first. Some issues are very personal, and you may accidentally reveal private information if you don't check with your prayer's subject in advance.

Prayer warriors always intercede for others

When we say an intercessory prayer, we uplift everyone and make the world a more loving and compassionate place. We also live out God's design for our lives, as saying prayers for others is part of our duty as Christians.

The Ethiopian Book of Miracles of the Apostles

The **Ethiopian Book of Miracles of the Apostles** represents a collection of narratives, hymns, and liturgical traditions within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church that commemorate the miraculous deeds performed by the apostles of Jesus Christ. While there is no single canonical text

explicitly titled this way, the Church preserves a wealth of traditions, including the *Synaxarium* and apocryphal texts, that detail the lives, miracles, and missions of the apostles.

Theological Significance

In Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity, the apostles are revered as the foundational pillars of the Church and direct witnesses of Christ's ministry. Their miracles are viewed as manifestations of divine power, affirming their authority and continuing Christ's mission on earth. These stories inspire faith, encourage devotion, and underscore the transformative power of the Gospel.

Themes in the Miracles of the Apostles

1. Healing the Sick:

- The apostles, empowered by the Holy Spirit, heal physical and spiritual ailments, mirroring Christ's miracles.
- Example: Peter healing the lame man at the temple gate (Acts 3:6-8).

2. Raising the Dead:

- Miraculous accounts of resurrection affirm the apostles' role in proclaiming life through Christ.
- Example: Paul raising Eutychus after his fall from a window (Acts 20:9-10).

3. Exorcism:

- Casting out demons symbolizes the triumph of Christ's power over evil.
- Example: Philip's exorcisms in Samaria (Acts 8:6-7).

4. Divine Protection:

- Stories of the apostles being saved from harm, such as Peter's escape from prison, illustrate God's providence and the unstoppable nature of the Gospel.

5. Conversion and Baptism:

- Apostolic miracles often lead to conversions, emphasizing the transformative power of faith.
 - Example: Philip baptizing the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-39), a particularly significant story for Ethiopian Christianity.
-

Liturgical and Apocryphal Sources

1. The Synaxarium:

- This hagiographical text includes accounts of the apostles' lives, their travels, and the miracles they performed.
- 2. The Acts of the Apostles (Canonical and Apocryphal):**
- In addition to the New Testament *Acts of the Apostles*, Ethiopian traditions draw from apocryphal works such as:
 - *Acts of Peter*: Accounts of Peter's miracles and his confrontation with Simon Magus.
 - *Acts of Paul*: Stories of Paul's journeys, preaching, and miracles.
 - *Acts of Thomas*: Narratives of Thomas's missionary work and miracles in India.
- 3. Ge'ez Hynnal (Deggwa):**
- Liturgical hymns celebrating the apostles often recount their miraculous deeds, particularly during feast days dedicated to individual apostles.
- 4. Ethiopian Tradition and Oral Narratives:**
- Stories unique to Ethiopian Christianity emphasize the apostles' role in spreading the faith to the Ethiopian region, with traditions connecting Matthew, Philip, and others to missionary efforts in Africa.
-

Notable Miracles in Ethiopian Tradition

- 1. Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch:**
 - This story is central to Ethiopian Christianity, marking the introduction of the Gospel to Ethiopia.
 - 2. Matthew's Missionary Work:**
 - Ethiopian tradition holds that Matthew preached and performed miracles in parts of Africa, converting many to Christianity.
 - 3. Bartholomew's Healing Miracles:**
 - Bartholomew is credited with healing the sick and performing exorcisms during his missionary journeys.
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Themes of the Ethiopian Book of Miracles

- 1. Faith and Obedience:**
 - The miracles emphasize the apostles' unwavering faith and obedience to Christ's command to spread the Gospel.

2. The Power of the Holy Spirit:

- Miracles are attributed to the Holy Spirit working through the apostles, affirming God's active presence.

3. Unity of the Church:

- The stories often highlight the apostles' efforts to establish communities of faith, fostering unity among believers.

4. God's Universal Love:

- The miracles demonstrate the inclusivity of the Gospel, reaching Jews, Gentiles, and people of all nations.
-

Liturgical Celebration

1. Feast Days:

- The Ethiopian Orthodox calendar includes feast days for individual apostles, during which their miracles are recounted in prayers and hymns.

2. Hymns of Praise:

- Songs from the *Deggwa* honor the apostles' miracles and their role in the growth of the Church.

3. Commemorative Readings:

- Scriptural and apocryphal texts related to the apostles are read during these feasts, reinforcing their spiritual legacy.
-

Inagery and Symbolism

1. Keys:

- Often associated with Peter, symbolizing the authority to "bind and loose" as granted by Christ.

2. The Staff:

- Represents the apostles' missionary journeys and the miracles performed along the way.

3. The Dove:

- Symbolizing the Holy Spirit, whose power enabled the apostles' miraculous deeds.
-

Modern Relevance

The **Ethiopian Book of Miracles of the Apostles**, whether as a conceptual or textual tradition, remains a source of inspiration for Ethiopian Christians. It:

- Encourages faith in God's power to transform lives.
 - Highlights the importance of evangelism and community building.
 - Strengthens the Church's connection to its apostolic roots.
-

Conclusion

The **Ethiopian Book of Miracles of the Apostles** embodies the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church's deep veneration for the apostles and their divine mission. Through its liturgical practices, hymns, and rich traditions, it celebrates the enduring legacy of the apostles' miracles, emphasizing God's transformative power and the universal call to faith. This narrative serves as a timeless reminder of the divine presence in the Church and the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit.

The Hymn of the Virgin (Expanded)

Of on that is so fayr and bright

Velut maris stella,

Brighter than the day is light,

Parens et puella:

Ic crie to the, thou see to me,

Levedy, preye thi Sone for me,

Tam pia,

That ic mote come to thee

Maria.

Al this world was for-lore

Eva peccatrice,

Tyl our Lord was y-bore

De te genetrice.

With ave it went away

Thuster nyth and cometh the day

Salutis;

The welle springeth ut of the

Virtutis.

Levedy, flour of alle thing,

Rosa sine spina,

Thu bere Jhesu, hevene king,

Gratia divina:

Of all thu berst the pris,

Levedy, quene of paradys
Electa:
Mayde milde, Moder es
Effecta.

The Ethiopian Song of Glory

The **Ethiopian Song of Glory** refers to a liturgical or devotional hymn within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church that celebrates the majesty, sovereignty, and divine splendor of God. While there may not be a single text explicitly titled "The Song of Glory," the concept aligns with the Church's extensive tradition of hymns that glorify God, Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the saints. These hymns are sung during major liturgical celebrations, feast days, and processions, exalting God's greatness and His works in creation, redemption, and eternal reign.

Theological Foundations

The "Song of Glory" encapsulates the Ethiopian Orthodox understanding of God's transcendence and immanence:

10. God as Creator and Sustainer:

- Hymns of glory often praise God for His creation of the heavens, earth, and all living things.
- **Psaln 1G:1**: "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands."

11. Christ's Glory:

- The hymn would celebrate Christ as the incarnate Word, whose life, death, and resurrection reveal God's ultimate glory.
- **John 1:14**: "The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son."

12. Heavenly Worship:

- The song reflects the angelic praise described in **Isaiah 6:3** and **Revelation 4:8**, where heavenly beings continually glorify God.
-

Themes in the Ethiopian Song of Glory

1. Praise for God's Majesty:

- Exalting God as the King of Kings, whose power and wisdom are unmatched.

- **Example Verse:** "O Lord, robed in majesty and splendor, the heavens proclaim Your eternal reign."
- 2. Celebration of Christ's Triumph:**
- Highlighting Christ's victory over sin and death, bringing salvation to humanity.
 - **Example Verse:** "By Your cross, O Redeemer, You have triumphed; by Your resurrection, You have restored life."
- 3. The Glory of the Virgin Mary:**
- Honoring Mary as the Mother of God, who reflects divine glory through her purity and obedience.
 - **Example Verse:** "O Star of the morning, your light guides us to the eternal glory of your Son."
- 4. Angelic and Cosmic Worship:**
- Imagining the heavens, angels, and all creation joining in the song of praise.
 - **Example Verse:** "The sun and moon bow before You, and the stars proclaim Your greatness."
- 5. The Glory of the Church:**
- Celebrating the Church as the bride of Christ and the earthly reflection of God's glory.
 - **Example Verse:** "Clothed in righteousness, Your Church shines with the light of Your presence."
-

Structure of the Song

An Ethiopian Song of Glory might follow this structure:

I. Opening Invocation

- "Glory to You, O Lord of all, whose throne is above the heavens and whose light fills the earth."

II. Celebration of Creation

- "You spoke, and the heavens were formed; You breathed, and life arose. All creation sings Your praise."

III. Christ's Redemptive Work

- "In the fullness of time, You sent Your Son, whose blood redeemed the nations and brought eternal light."

IV. Heavenly and Earthly Worship

- "The angels cry, 'Holy, holy, holy'; the earth responds with songs of joy."

V. Closing Doxology

- "To You, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be glory and honor, now and forever. Amen."
-

Liturgical Use

The Song of Glory would feature prominently in Ethiopian Orthodox worship:

1. Feast Days:

- Particularly during major feasts such as **Tinket** (Epiphany), **Fasika** (Easter), and **Meskel** (Finding of the True Cross), celebrating God's wondrous acts.

2. The Divine Liturgy (Qidase):

- Hymns of glory are sung during the Eucharistic celebration, reflecting the heavenly worship of God's throne.

3. Processions:

- During festivals, *Tabots* (replicas of the Ark of the Covenant) are paraded, accompanied by chants and hymns glorifying God.
-

Symbolism in the Song

1. Light and Fire:

- Representing God's glory and presence, often likened to the burning bush (Exodus 3:2).

2. The Throne:

- Symbolizing God's eternal reign and majesty.

3. The Ark of the Covenant:

- Reflecting God's presence among His people and His covenantal faithfulness.
-

Cultural and Spiritual Impact

1. Unity of Worship:

- The Song of Glory unites congregations in praising God, fostering a sense of communal worship.

2. Encouragement in Faith:

- The hymn reminds believers of God's power and faithfulness, offering hope and inspiration.

3. Integration with Daily Life:

- Echoes of the Song of Glory permeate personal prayers and traditional Ethiopian Christian art and music.

Conclusion

The **Ethiopian Song of Glory** is a vibrant and deeply spiritual hymn that encapsulates the Ethiopian Orthodox Church's devotion to God's majesty and redemptive work. Through its poetic beauty, theological depth, and liturgical richness, it draws believers into the mystery of God's presence, inspiring awe, gratitude, and worship. This hymn serves as both a reflection of heavenly praise and a call for all creation to join in glorifying the eternal King.

The Acts of Barnabas

The Journeyings and Martyrdom of St. Barnabas the Apostle.

Since from the descent of the presence of our Saviour Jesus Christ, the unwearied and benevolent and mighty Shepherd and Teacher and Physician, I beheld and saw the ineffable and holy and unspotted mystery of the Christians, who hold the hope in holiness, and who have been sealed; and since I have zealously served Him, I have deemed it necessary to give account of the mysteries which I have heard and seen.

I John, accompanying the holy apostles Barnabas and Paul, being formerly a servant of Cyrillus the high priest of Jupiter, but now having received the gift of the Holy Spirit through Paul and Barnabas and Silas, *who were* worthy of the calling, and who baptized me in Iconium. After I was baptized, then, I saw a certain man standing clothed in white raiment; and he said to me: Be of good courage, John, for assuredly your name shall be changed to Mark, and your glory shall be proclaimed in all the world. And the darkness in you has passed away from you, and there has been given to you understanding to know the mysteries of God.

And when I saw the vision, becoming greatly terrified, I went to the feet of Barnabas, and related to him the mysteries which I had seen and heard from that man. And the Apostle Paul was not by when I disclosed the mysteries. And Barnabas said to me: Tell no one the miracle which you have seen. For by me also this night the Lord stood, saying, Be of good courage: for as you have given your life for my name to death and banishment from your nation, thus also shall you be made perfect. Moreover, as for the servant who is with you, take him also with yourself; for he has certain mysteries. Now then, my child, keep to yourself the things which you have seen and heard; for a time will come for you to reveal them.

And I, having been instructed in these things by him, remained in Iconium many days; for there was there a holy man and a pious, who also entertained us, whose house also Paul had sanctified. Thence, therefore, we came to Seleucia, and after staying three days sailed away to Cyprus; and I was ministering to them until we had gone round all Cyprus. And setting sail from Cyprus, we landed in Perga of Pamphylia. And there I then stayed about two months, wishing to sail to the regions of the West; and the Holy Spirit did not allow me. Turning, therefore, I again sought the apostles; and having learned that they were in Antioch, I went to them.

And I found Paul in bed in Antioch from the toil of the journey, who also seeing me, was exceedingly grieved on account of my delaying in Pamphylia. And Barnabas coming, encouraged him, and tasted bread, and he took a little of it. And they preached the word of the Lord, and enlightened many of the Jews and Greeks. And I only attended to them, and was afraid of Paul to come near him, both because he held me as having spent much time in Pamphylia, and because he was quite enraged against me. And I gave repentance on my knees upon the earth to Paul, and he would not endure it. And when I remained for three Sabbaths in entreaty and prayer on my knees, I was unable to prevail upon him about myself; for his great grievance against me was on account of my keeping several parchments in Pamphylia.

And when it came to pass that they finished teaching in Antioch, on the first of the week they took counsel together to set out for the places of the East, and after that to go into Cyprus, and oversee all the churches in which they had spoken the word of God. And Barnabas entreated Paul to go first to Cyprus, and oversee his own in his village; and Lucius entreated him to take the oversight of his city Cyrene. And a vision was seen by Paul in sleep, that he should hasten to Jerusalem, because the brethren expected him there. But Barnabas urged that they should go to Cyprus, and pass the winter, and then that they should go to Jerusalem at the feast. Great contention, therefore, arose between them. Acts 15:39 And Barnabas urged me also to accompany them, on account of my being their servant from the beginning, and on account of my having served them in all Cyprus until they came to Perga of Pamphylia; and I there had remained many days. But Paul cried out against Barnabas, saying: It is impossible for him to go with us. And those who were with us there urged me also to accompany them, because there was a vow upon me to follow them to the end. So that Paul said to Barnabas: If you will take John who also is surnamed Mark with you, go another road; for he shall not come with us. And Barnabas coming to himself, said: The grace of God does not desert him who has once served the Gospel and journeyed with us. If, therefore, this be agreeable to you, Father Paul, I take him and go. And he said: You go in the grace of Christ, and we in the power of the Spirit.

Therefore, bending their knees, they prayed to God. And Paul, groaning aloud, wept, and in like manner also Barnabas, saying to one another: It would have been good for us, as at first, so also at last, to work in common among men; but since it has thus seemed good to you, Father Paul, pray for me that my labour may be made perfect to commendation: for you know how I have served you also to the grace of Christ that has been given to you. For I go to Cyprus, and hasten to be made perfect; for I know that I shall no more see your face, O Father Paul. And falling on the ground at his feet, he wept long. And Paul said to him: The Lord stood by me also this night, saying, Do not force Barnabas not to go to Cyprus, for there it has been prepared for him to enlighten many; and go also, in the grace that has been given to you, to Jerusalem to worship in

the holy place, and there it shall be shown you where your martyrdom has been prepared. And we saluted one another, and Barnabas took me to himself.

And having come down to Laodiceia, we sought to cross to Cyprus; and having found a ship going to Cyprus, we embarked. And when we had set sail, the wind was found to be contrary. And we came to Corasium; and having gone down to the shore where there was a fountain, we rested there, showing ourselves to no one, that no one might know that Barnabas had separated from Paul. And having set sail from Corasium, we came to the regions of Isauria, and thence came to a certain island called Pityusa; and a storm having come on, we remained there three days; and a certain pious man entertained us, by name Euphemus, whom also Barnabas instructed in many things in the faith, with all his house.

And thence we sailed past the Aconesiæ, and came to the city of Anemurium; and having gone into it, we found two Greeks. And coming to us, they asked whence and who we were. And Barnabas said to them: If you wish to know whence and who we are, throw away the clothing which you have, and I shall put on you clothing which never becomes soiled; for neither is there in it anything filthy, but it is altogether splendid. And being astonished at the saying, they asked us: What is that garment which you are going to give us? And Barnabas said to them: If you shall confess your sins, and submit yourselves to our Lord Jesus Christ, you shall receive that garment which is incorruptible forever. And being pricked at heart by the Holy Spirit, they fell at his feet, entreating and saying: We beseech you, father, give us that garment; for we believe in the living and true God whom you proclaim. And leading them down to the fountain, he baptized them into the name of Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost. And they knew that they were clothed with power, and a holy robe. And having taken from me one robe, he put it on the one; and his own robe he put on the other. And they brought money to him, and straightway Barnabas distributed it to the poor. And from them also the sailors were able to gain many things.

And they having come down to the shore, he spoke to them the word of God; and he having blessed them, we saluted them, and went on board the ship. And the one of them who was named Stephanus wished to accompany us, and Barnabas did not permit him. And we, having gone across, sailed down to Cyprus by night; and having come to the place called Crommyacita, we found Timon and Ariston the temple servants, at whose house also we were entertained.

And Timon was afflicted by much fever. And having laid our hands upon him, we straightway removed his fever, having called upon the name of the Lord Jesus. And Barnabas had received documents from Matthew, a book of the word of God, and a narrative of miracles and doctrines. This Barnabas laid upon the sick in each place that we came to, and it immediately made a cure of their sufferings.

And when we had come to Lapithus, and an idol festival being celebrated in the theatre, they did not allow us to go into the city, but we rested a little at the gate. And Timon, after he rose up from his disease, came with us. And having gone forth from Lapithus, we travelled through the mountains, and came to the city of Lampadistus, of which also Timon was a native; in addition to whom, having found also that Heracleius was there, we were entertained by him. He was of the city of Tamasus, and had come to visit his relations; and Barnabas, looking steadfastly at him, recognised him, having met with him formerly at Citium with Paul; to whom also the Holy Spirit was given at baptism, and he changed his name to Heracleides. And having ordained him bishop over Cyprus,

and having confirmed the church in Tamasus, we left him in the house of his brethren that dwelt there.

And having crossed the mountain called Chionodes, we came to Old Paphos, and there found Rhodon, a temple servant, who also, having himself believed, accompanied us. And we met a certain Jew, by name Barjesus, coming from Paphos, who also recognised Barnabas, as having been formerly with Paul. He did not wish us to go into Paphos; but having turned away, we came to Curium.

And we found that a certain abominable race was being performed in the road near the city, where a multitude of women and men naked were performing the race. And there was great deception and error in that place. And Barnabas turning, rebuked it; and the western part fell, so that many were wounded, and many of them also died and the rest fled to the temple of Apollo, which was close at hand in the city, which was called sacred. And when we came near the temple, a great multitude of Jews who were there, having been put up to it by Barjesus, stood outside of the city, and did not allow us to go into the city; but we spent the evening under a tree near the city, and rested there.

And on the following day, we came to a certain village where Aristoclianus dwelt. He being a leper, had been cleansed in Antioch, whom also Paul and Barnabas sealed to be a bishop, and sent to his village in Cyprus, because there were many Greeks there. And we were entertained in the cave by him in the mountain, and there we remained one day. And thence we came to Amathus and there was a great multitude of Greeks in the temple in the mountain, low women and men pouring libations. There also Barjesus, getting the start of us, gained over the nation of the Jews, and did not allow us to enter into the city; but a certain widow woman, eighty years old, being outside of the city, and she also not worshipping the idols, coming forward to us, took us into her house one hour. And when we came out we shook the dust off our feet over against that temple where the libation of the abominable took place.

And having gone out thence, we came through desert places, and Timon also accompanied us. And having come to Citium, and there being a great uproar there also in their hippodrome, having learned this, we came forth out of the city, having all shaken the dust off our feet; for no one received us, except that we rested one hour in the gate near the aqueduct.

And having set sail in a ship from Citium, we came to Salamis, and landed in the so-called islands, where there was a place full of idols; and there there took place high festivals and libations. And having found Heracleides there again, we instructed him to proclaim the Gospel of God, and to set up churches, and ministers in them. And having gone into Salamis, we came to the synagogue near the place called Biblia; and when we had gone into it, Barnabas, having unrolled the Gospel which he had received from Matthew his fellow-labourer, began to teach the Jews.

And Barjesus, having arrived after two days, after not a few Jews had been instructed, was enraged, and brought together all the multitude of the Jews; and they having laid hold of Barnabas, wished to hand him over to Hypatius, the governor of Salamis. And having bound him to take him away to the governor, and a pious Jebusite, a kinsman of Nero, having come to Cyprus, the Jews, learning this, took Barnabas by night, and bound him with a rope by the neck; and having dragged him to the hippodrome from the synagogue, and having gone out of the city, standing round him, they burned

him with fire, so that even his bones became dust. And straightway that night, having taken his dust, they cast it into a cloth; and having secured it with lead, they intended to throw it into the sea. But I, finding an opportunity in the night, and being able along with Timon and Rhodon to carry it. we came to a certain place, and having found a cave, put it down there, where the nation of the Jebusites formerly dwelt. And having found a secret place in it, we put it away, with the documents which he had received from Matthew. And it was the fourth hour of the night of the second of the week.

And when we were hid in the place, the Jews made no little search after us; and having almost found us, they pursued us as far as the village of the Ledrians; and we, having found there also a cave near the village, took refuge in it, and thus escaped them. And we were hid in the cave three days; and the Jews having gone away, we came forth and left the place by night. And taking with us Ariston and Rhodon, we came to the village of Limnes.

And having come to the shore, we found an Egyptian ship; and having embarked in it, we landed at Alexandria. And there I remained, teaching the brethren that came the word of the Lord, enlightening them, and preaching what I had been taught by the apostles of Christ, who also baptized me into the name of Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost; who also changed my name to Mark in the water of baptism, by which also I hope to bring many to the glory of God through His grace; because to Him is due honour and everlasting glory. Amen.

The journeyings and martyrdom of the holy apostle Barnabas have been fulfilled through God.

The Gospel of the Childhood of Jesus (Expanded)

Introduction

The older testimonies about this book have been given already. I now present the three principal forms of it, as given by Tischendorf: two Greek texts, A and B, and one Latin.

The few Greek manuscripts are all late. The earliest authorities are a much abbreviated Syriac version of which the manuscript is of the sixth century, and a Latin palimpsest at Vienna of the fifth or sixth century, which has never been deciphered in full.

The Latin version translated here is found in more manuscripts than the Greek; none of them, I think, is earlier than the thirteenth century.

The stories of Thomas the Israelite, the Philosopher, concerning the works of the Childhood of the Lord.

I. I, Thomas the Israelite, tell unto you, even all the brethren that are of the Gentiles, to make known unto you the works of the childhood of our Lord Jesus Christ and his mighty deeds, even all that he did when he was born in our land: whereof the beginning is thus:

II. 1 This little child Jesus when he was five years old was playing at the ford of a brook: and he gathered together the waters that flowed there into pools, and made them straightway clean, and

commanded them by his word alone. 2 And having made soft clay, he fashioned thereof twelve sparrows. And it was the Sabbath when he did these things (or made them). And there were also many other little children playing with him.

3 And a certain Jew when he saw what Jesus did, playing upon the Sabbath day, departed straightway and told his father Joseph: Lo, thy child is at the brook, and he hath taken clay and fashioned twelve little birds, and hath polluted the Sabbath day. 4 And Joseph came to the place and saw: and cried out to him, saying: Wherefore doest thou these things on the Sabbath, which it is not lawful to do? But Jesus clapped his hands together and cried out to the sparrows and said to them: Go! and the sparrows took their flight and went away chirping. 5 And when the Jews saw it they were amazed, and departed and told their chief men that which they had seen Jesus do.

III. 1 But the son of Annas the scribe was standing there with Joseph; and he took a branch of a willow and dispersed the waters which Jesus had gathered together. 2 And when Jesus saw what was done, he was wroth and said unto him: O evil, ungodly, and foolish one, what hurt did the pools and the waters do thee? behold, now also thou shalt be withered like a tree, and shalt not bear leaves, neither root, nor fruit. 3 And straightway that lad withered up wholly, but Jesus departed and went unto Joseph's house. But the parents of him that was withered took him up, bewailing his youth, and brought him to Joseph, and accused him 'for that thou hast such a child which doeth such deeds.'

IV. 1 After that again he went through the village, and a child ran and dashed against his shoulder. And Jesus was provoked and said unto him: Thou shalt not finish thy course (lit. go all thy way). And immediately he fell down and died. But certain when they saw what was done said: Whence was this young child born, for that every word of his is an accomplished work? And the parents of him that was dead came unto Joseph, and blamed him, saying: Thou that hast such a child canst not dwell with us in the village: or do thou teach him to bless and not to curse: for he slayeth our children.

V. 1 And Joseph called the young child apart and admonished him, saying: Wherefore doest thou such things, that these suffer and hate us and persecute us? But Jesus said: I know that these thy words are not thine: nevertheless for thy sake I will hold my peace: but they shall bear their punishment. And straightway they that accused him were smitten with blindness. 2 And they that saw it were sore afraid and perplexed, and said concerning him that every word which he spake whether it were good or bad, was a deed, and became a marvel. And when they (he ?) saw that Jesus had so done, Joseph arose and took hold upon his ear and wrung it sore. 3 And the young child was wroth and said unto him: It sufficeth thee (or them) to seek and not to find, and verily thou hast done unwisely: knowest thou not that I am thine? vex me not.

VI. 1 Now a certain teacher, Zacchaeus by name, stood there and he heard in part when Jesus said these things to his father and he marvelled greatly that being a young child he spake such matters. 2 And after a few days he came near unto Joseph and said unto him: Thou hast a wise child, and he hath understanding. Come, deliver him to me that he may learn letters. And I will teach him with the letters all knowledge and that he salute all the elders and honour them as grandfathers and fathers, and love them of his own years. 3 And he told him all the letters from Alpha even to Omega clearly, with much questioning. But Jesus looked upon Zacchaeus the teacher and saith unto him: Thou that knowest not the Alpha according to its nature, how canst thou teach others the Beta? thou

hypocrite, first, if thou knowest it, teach the Alpha, and then will we believe thee concerning the Beta. Then began he to confound the mouth of the teacher concerning the first letter, and he could not prevail to answer him. 4 And in the hearing of many the young child saith to Zacchaeus: Hear, O teacher, the ordinance of the first letter and pay heed to this, how that it hath [what follows is really unintelligible in this and in all the parallel texts: a literal version would run something like this: how that it hath lines, and a middle mark, which thou seest, common to both, going apart; coming together, raised up on high, dancing (a corrupt word), of three signs, like in kind (a corrupt word), balanced, equal in measure]: thou hast the rules of the Alpha.

VII. 1 Now when Zacchaeus the teacher heard such and so many allegories of the first letter spoken by the young child, he was perplexed at his answer and his instruction being so great, and said to them that were there: Woe is me, wretch that I am, I am confounded: I have brought shame to myself by drawing to me this young child. 2 Take him away, therefore I beseech thee, my brother Joseph: I cannot endure the severity of his look, I cannot once make clear my (or his) word. This young child is not earthly born: this is one that can tame even fire: be like this is one begotten before the making of the world. What belly bare this, what womb nurtured it? I know not. Woe is me, O my friend, he putteth me from my sense, I cannot follow his understanding. I have deceived myself, thrice wretched man that I am: I strove to get me a disciple and I am found to have a master. 3 I think, O my friends, upon my shame, for that being old I have been overcome by a young child;- and I am even ready to faint and to die because of the boy, for I am not able at this present hour to look him in the face. And when all men say that I have been overcome by a little child, what have I to say? and what can I tell concerning the lines of the first letter whereof he spake to me? I am ignorant, O my friends, for neither beginning nor end of it (or him) do I know. 4 Wherefore I beseech thee, my brother Joseph, take him away unto thine house: for he is somewhat great, whether god or angel or what I should call him, I know not.

VIII. 1 And as the Jews were counselling Zacchaeus, the young child laughed greatly and said: Now let those bear fruit that were barren (Gr. that are thine) and let them see that were blind in heart. I am come from above that I may curse them, and call them to the things that are above, even as he commanded which hath sent me for your sakes. 2 And when the young child ceased speaking, immediately all they were made whole which had come under his curse. And no man after that durst provoke him, lest he should curse him, and he should be maimed.

IX. 1 Now after certain days Jesus was playing in the upper story of a certain house, and one of the young children that played with him fell down from the house and died. And the other children when they saw it fled, and Jesus remained alone. 2 And the parents of him that was dead came and accused him that he had cast him down. (And Jesus said: I did not cast him down) but they reviled him still. 3 Then Jesus leaped down from the roof and stood by the body of the child and cried with a loud voice and said: Zeno (for so was his name called), arise and tell me, did I cast thee down? And straightway he arose and said: Nay, Lord, thou didst not cast me down, but didst raise me up. And when they saw it they were amazed: and the parents of the child glorified God for the sign which had come to pass, and worshipped Jesus.

X. 1 After a few days, a certain young man was cleaving wood in the neighbourhood (MSS. corner), and the axe fell and cut in sunder the sole of his foot, and losing much blood he was at the point to die. 2 And when there was a tumult and concourse, the young child Jesus also ran thither, and by

force passed through the multitude, and took hold upon the foot of the young man that was smitten, and straightway it was healed. And he said unto the young man: Arise now and cleave the wood and remember me. But when the multitude saw what was done they worshipped the young child, saying: Verily the spirit of God dwelleth in this young child.

XI. 1 Now when he was six years old, his mother sendeth him to draw water and bear it into the house, and gave him a pitcher: but in the press he struck it against another and the pitcher was broken. 2 But Jesus spread out the garment which was upon him and filled it with water and brought it to his mother. And when his mother saw what was done she kissed him; and she kept within herself the mysteries which she saw him do.

XII. 1 Again, in the time of sowing the young child went forth with his father to sow wheat in their land: and as his father sowed, the young child Jesus sowed also one corn of wheat. 2 And he reaped it and threshed it and made thereof an hundred measures (cors): and he called all the poor of the village unto the threshing floor and gave them the wheat. And Joseph took the residue of the wheat. And he was eight years old when he wrought this sign.

XIII. 1 Now his father was a carpenter and made at that time ploughs and yokes. And there was required of him a bed by a certain rich man, that he should make it for him. And whereas one beam, that which is called the shifting one was too short and Joseph knew not what to do, the young child Jesus said to his father Joseph: Lay down the two pieces of wood and make them even at the end next unto thee (MSS. at the middle part). And Joseph did as the young child said unto him. And Jesus stood at the other end and took hold upon the shorter beam and stretched it and made it equal with the other. And his father Joseph saw it and marvelled: and he embraced the young child and kissed him, saying: Happy am I for that God hath given me this young child.

XIV. 1 But when Joseph saw the understanding of the child, and his age, that it was coming to the full, he thought with himself again that he should not be ignorant of letters; and he took him and delivered him to another teacher. And the teacher said unto Joseph: First will I teach him the Greek letters, and after that the Hebrew. For the teacher knew the skill of the child and was afraid of him: notwithstanding he wrote the alphabet and Jesus pondered thereon a long time and answered him not. 2 And Jesus said to him: If thou be indeed a teacher and if thou knowest letters well, tell me the power of the Alpha and then will I tell thee the power of the Beta. And the teacher was provoked and smote him on the head. And the young child was hurt and cursed him, and straightway he fainted and fell to the ground on his face. 3 And the child returned unto the house of Joseph: and Joseph was grieved and commanded his mother, saying: Let him not forth without the door, for all they die that provoke him to wrath.

XV. 1 And after some time yet another teacher which was a faithful friend of Joseph said to him: Bring the young child unto me to the school, peradventure I may be able by cockering him to teach him the letters. And Joseph said: If thou hast no fear, my brother, take him with thee. And he took him with him, in fear and much trouble of spirit, but the young child followed him gladly. 2 And going with boldness into the school he found a book lying upon the pulpit and he took it, and read not the letters that were therein, but opened his mouth and spake by the Holy Spirit, and taught the law to them that stood by. And a great multitude came together and stood there hearkening, and marvelled at the beauty of his teaching and the readiness of his words, in that being an infant he uttered such things. 3 But when Joseph heard it, he was afraid, and ran unto the school thinking

whether this teacher also were without skill (or smitten with infirmity): but the teacher said unto Joseph: Know, my brother, that I received this child for a disciple, but he is full of grace and wisdom; and now I beseech thee, brother, take him unto thine house. 4 And when the young child heard that, he smiled upon him and said: Forasmuch as thou hast said well and hast borne right witness, for thy sake shall he also that was smitten be healed. And forthwith the other teacher was healed. And Joseph took the young child and departed unto his house.

XVI. 1 And Joseph sent his son James to bind fuel and carry it into his house. And the young child Jesus also followed him. And as James was gathering of faggots, a viper bit the hand of James. 2 And as he was sore afflicted and ready to perish, Jesus came near and breathed upon the bite, and straightway the pain ceased, and the serpent burst, and forthwith James continued whole.

XVII. 1 And after these things, in the neighbourhood of Joseph, a little child fell sick and died, and his mother wept sore. And Jesus heard that there was great mourning and trouble and he ran quickly and found the child dead: and he touched his breast and said: I say unto thee, Child, die not, but live and be with thy mother. And straightway it looked up and laughed. And he said to the woman: Take him up and give him milk, and remember me. 2 And the multitude that stood by saw it and marvelled, and said: Of a truth this young child is either a god or an angel of God; for every word of his is a perfect work. And Jesus departed thence, and was playing with other children.

XVIII. 1 And after some time there was work of building. And there came a great tumult, and Jesus arose and went thither: and he saw a man lying dead, and took hold of his hand and said: Man, I say unto thee, arise and do thy work. And immediately he arose and worshipped him. 2 And when the multitude saw it, they were astonished, and said: This young child is from heaven: for he hath saved many souls from death, and hath power to save them all his life long.

XIX. 1 And when he was twelve years old his parents went according to the custom unto Jerusalem to the feast of the passover with their company: and after the passover they returned to go unto their house. And as they returned the child Jesus went back to Jerusalem; but his parents supposed that he was in their company. 2 And when they had gone a day's journey, they sought him among their kinsfolk, and when they found him not, they were troubled, and returned again to the city seeking him. And after the third day they found him in the temple sitting in the midst of the doctors and hearing and asking them questions. And all men paid heed to him and marvelled how that being a young child he put to silence the elders and teachers of the people, expounding the heads of the law and the parables of the prophets. 3 And his mother Mary came near and said unto him: Child, wherefore hast thou so done unto us? behold we have sought thee sorrowing. And Jesus said unto them: Why seek ye me? know ye not that I must be in my Father's house? 4 But the scribes and Pharisees said: Art thou the mother of this child? and she said: I am. And they said unto her: Blessed art thou among women because God hath blessed the fruit of thy womb. For such glory and such excellence and wisdom we have neither seen nor heard at any time. 5 And Jesus arose and followed his mother and was subject unto his parents: but his mother kept in mind all that came to pass. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and grace. Unto him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

The Song of the Kingdom

The **Song of the Kingdom** reflects a rich theological and liturgical tradition within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, celebrating God's eternal reign, the promise of His heavenly kingdom, and the triumph of Christ as King of kings. While no specific text titled "The Song of the Kingdom" exists in canon, the concept aligns with the Church's deeply rooted expressions of hope and joy in God's sovereign rule, the restoration of creation, and the fulfillment of His divine promises.

Theological Foundations

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church views the Kingdom of God as both a present reality and a future promise. The "Song of the Kingdom" would embody themes of:

1. God's Eternal Reign:

- God is exalted as the King of all creation, whose rule brings justice, peace, and righteousness.
- **Psaln 145:13**: "Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Your dominion endures through all generations."

2. Christ as the King:

- Christ's life, death, and resurrection establish His authority as the eternal King.
- **Revelation 11:15**: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever."

3. The Restoration of Creation:

- The Song reflects the hope for the renewal of heaven and earth, where God's will is fully realized.
 - **Matthew 6:10**: "Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."
-

Themes in the Song of the Kingdom

1. The Sovereignty of God:

- Acknowledging God as the ruler of all, whose kingdom is unshakable.
- **Exanple Verse**: "Your throne stands above the heavens; Your dominion has no end."

2. The Triumph of Christ:

- Celebrating Christ's victory over sin and death, inaugurating the Kingdom of God.

- **Example Verse:** "Through the cross, You have conquered; through the resurrection, You reign forever."

3. **Hope for the Future:**

- Anticipating the full establishment of God's kingdom in the end times.
- **Example Verse:** "The lion will lie with the lamb, and the earth will be filled with Your glory."

4. **Peace and Justice:**

- Describing the kingdom as a place of harmony, where righteousness and mercy prevail.
- **Example Verse:** "In Your kingdom, the oppressed find justice, and the weary find rest."

5. **Participation in the Kingdom:**

- Inviting believers to live as citizens of God's kingdom through faith, love, and obedience.
- **Example Verse:** "Teach us, O Lord, to walk in Your light and proclaim Your reign."

Structure of the Song

A Song of the Kingdom could be structured in the following way:

I. Invocation

- "O Lord of heaven and earth, we lift our voices to glorify Your name, for Your kingdom is everlasting."

II. Praise of God's Reign

- "From the rising of the sun to its setting, Your name is exalted; all creation bows before Your throne."

III. The Victory of Christ

- "By Your wounds, O King, You have healed the nations; by Your resurrection, You have broken the chains of death."

IV. The Promise of Renewal

- "A new heaven and a new earth You have promised, where sorrow and tears are no more."

V. Doxology

- "To You, O King of kings, be glory and honor, now and forever. Amen."

Liturgical Use

The Song of the Kingdom would be a central feature in Ethiopian Orthodox worship, particularly during:

1. **Feast Days:**

- Major feasts such as **Fasika** (Easter) and **Tinket** (Epiphany) celebrate Christ's victory and the inauguration of His kingdom.

2. **The Divine Liturgy (Qidase):**

- Hymns glorifying God's kingdom are sung during the Eucharistic celebration, reflecting the heavenly banquet.

3. **Processions:**

- During grand processions for feasts like **Meskel** (Finding of the True Cross), hymns proclaim the triumph of God's kingdom.

4. **Daily Prayer:**

- Prayers for the coming of God's kingdom are a staple of the *Hours of Prayer*, reflecting the Church's eschatological hope.
-

Symbolism in the Song

1. **The Throne:**

- Symbolizing God's sovereignty and justice.

2. **Light:**

- Representing the presence of God and the illumination of His truth.

3. **The Crown:**

- A symbol of Christ's victory and eternal reign.

4. **The Tree of Life:**

- Reflecting the restoration of creation and the abundance of God's kingdom.
-

Cultural and Spiritual Impact

1. **Unity in Worship:**

- The Song of the Kingdom unites congregations in their shared hope and joy in God's eternal reign.

2. **Encouragement in Trials:**

- The hymn provides strength and comfort, reminding believers of the ultimate victory of God's kingdom.

3. **Missionary Zeal:**

- It inspires Christians to spread the message of God's kingdom through love, service, and evangelism.
-

Conclusion

The **Song of the Kingdom** embodies the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church's hope and celebration of God's eternal reign. Through its rich theological themes, poetic beauty, and liturgical significance, it invites believers to rejoice in God's sovereignty, live as citizens of His kingdom, and anticipate the day when His glory fills the earth. This hymn is a timeless expression of faith, hope, and devotion, resonating with the Church's mission to glorify the King of kings and Lord of lords.

The Vision of the New Jerusalem

The **Vision of the New Jerusalem** represents a profound theological and eschatological theme in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, reflecting the ultimate fulfillment of God's promise to dwell among His people. While rooted in the canonical text of **Revelation 21-22**, where the Apostle John describes his vision of the New Jerusalem, the concept is deeply enriched by Ethiopian liturgical traditions, hymns, and mystical writings. This vision encapsulates the hope for eternal communion with God, the restoration of creation, and the triumph of divine justice.

Biblical Foundations

The vision of the New Jerusalem is drawn primarily from the **Book of Revelation**, where John describes:

4. **The Holy City:**

- Revelation 21:2: "I saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband."

5. **God's Dwelling with Humanity:**

- Revelation 21:3: "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and He will dwell with them."

6. **The Glory and Purity of the City:**

- Revelation 21:11: "It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel."

7. The River of Life and the Tree of Life:

- Revelation 22:1-2: "The river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb."

Themes in the Vision of the New Jerusalem

1. God's Eternal Presence:

- The New Jerusalem represents the fulfillment of God's covenant, where He dwells eternally with His people.
- **Example Reflection:** "In Your city, O Lord, there is no temple, for You are its light and sanctuary."

2. Restoration and Renewal:

- The vision reflects the renewal of creation, where sin, death, and sorrow are no more.
- **Example Reflection:** "The former things have passed away; behold, You make all things new."

3. Unity of Heaven and Earth:

- The descent of the New Jerusalem symbolizes the union of the divine and the earthly realms.
- **Example Reflection:** "Your kingdom descends, O Lord, and heaven and earth rejoice as one."

4. Inclusivity and Redemption:

- The gates of the city are open to all nations, signifying the universality of God's salvation.
- **Example Reflection:** "The nations bring their glory to Your city, O King of kings."

5. Eternal Worship:

- The vision emphasizes unceasing praise and worship of God by all creation.
- **Example Reflection:** "Day and night, the redeemed sing, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty.'"

Ethiopian Orthodox Perspectives

The vision of the New Jerusalem is deeply integrated into Ethiopian Orthodox spirituality:

1. Liturgical Hymns:

- Hymns from the *Deggwa* (Ge'ez hymnal) often reference the New Jerusalem, celebrating God's glory and the promise of eternal life.
2. **Feast of Meskel (Finding of the True Cross):**
 - This feast connects the earthly Jerusalem with its heavenly counterpart, symbolizing redemption through the cross.
 3. **Monastic Reflections:**
 - Ethiopian monks meditate on the New Jerusalem as a source of hope and a goal for ascetic life.
-

Synbolism in the Vision of the New Jerusalem

1. **Light:**
 - The city has no need for the sun or moon, for God Himself is its light (Revelation 21:23).
 - **Interpretation:** Light symbolizes divine truth, purity, and the unending presence of God.
 2. **The River of Life:**
 - Flowing from God's throne, it represents eternal life and the abundance of divine grace.
 3. **The Tree of Life:**
 - Bearing fruit every month, it symbolizes healing and restoration for all nations.
-

Liturgical and Devotional Applications

1. **In Worship:**
 - The New Jerusalem is a central theme in Ethiopian liturgical prayers, particularly during the Eucharist, where the faithful anticipate the heavenly banquet.
 2. **In Hynns:**
 - Hymns celebrating the New Jerusalem are sung during major feasts like **Fasika** (Easter) and **Tinket** (Epiphany), reflecting the resurrection and Christ's kingship.
 3. **In Personal Prayer:**
 - Devotional practices often focus on the New Jerusalem as the believer's ultimate home, inspiring hope and perseverance.
-

Sample Hymn Inspired by the Vision

I. Invocation

- "O Lord, whose throne is eternal, we lift our eyes to Your holy city, the dwelling of Your glory."

II. Praise for the City

- "Your streets shine with gold, and Your gates are adorned with jewels; in Your light, we walk without fear."

III. Reflection on Redemption

- "Through the Lamb, You have redeemed us; through His blood, You have made us worthy to enter Your gates."

IV. Anticipation of Eternal Worship

- "In Your city, O God, we will sing without end, for You are our life, our hope, and our joy."

V. Closing Doxology

- "To You, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be glory forever in the New Jerusalem. Amen."
-

Relevance and Spiritual Impact

1. Hope for the Faithful:

- The vision provides a source of comfort and assurance, reminding believers of their ultimate destination.

2. A Call to Holiness:

- The purity and glory of the New Jerusalem inspire Christians to live lives worthy of this eternal promise.

3. Unity in Worship:

- The vision reflects the universality of God's kingdom, drawing people of all nations into one community of praise.
-

Conclusion

The **Vision of the New Jerusalem** is a cornerstone of Ethiopian Orthodox theology, symbolizing the ultimate fulfillment of God's promises and the eternal hope of believers. Through its integration into worship, hymns, and devotional practices, it inspires the faithful to persevere in faith, anticipate the renewal of creation, and rejoice in the eternal reign of God. This vision offers a glimpse of heaven, uniting the Church in its longing for the day when God's glory fills all creation.

The Ethiopian Hymn of the Holy Spirit

The **Ethiopian Hymn of the Holy Spirit** is a profound expression of praise, invocation, and theological reflection within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, celebrating the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. While not a singular, codified hymn by this title, the concept aligns with numerous hymns and prayers in Ethiopian liturgy that glorify the Holy Spirit's role in creation, salvation, and the life of the Church.

Theological Foundations

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church views the Holy Spirit (*Menfes Qidus*) as the third person of the Holy Trinity, co-equal with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit's work is central to Christian life, encompassing creation, sanctification, guidance, and empowerment.

8. The Holy Spirit in Creation:

- Genesis 1:2: "The Spirit of God was hovering over the waters," signifying the Spirit's role in bringing order and life to the universe.

9. The Holy Spirit in Salvation:

- The Spirit is celebrated for its role in the incarnation, as Mary conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35).
- At Pentecost, the Spirit descended upon the apostles, empowering them to spread the Gospel (Acts 2:1-4).

10. The Holy Spirit in the Church:

- The Spirit sanctifies believers, unites the Church, and imparts spiritual gifts.
-

Themes in the Hymn of the Holy Spirit

The Ethiopian Hymn of the Holy Spirit would encompass the following themes:

1. The Creative Power of the Spirit:

- Celebrating the Spirit's role in giving life to all creation.
- **Example Verse:** "O Spirit of God, You breathed life into dust and made us living beings."

2. The Spirit as Comforter and Guide:

- Reflecting on the Spirit as the Paraclete who strengthens and directs the faithful.
- **Example Verse:** "O Comforter, You dwell in our hearts, guiding us in the paths of righteousness."

3. The Spirit's Role in Sanctification:

- Praising the Spirit for purifying and transforming believers.
- **Example Verse:** "By Your fire, You cleanse our souls; by Your wind, You scatter our sins."

4. The Spirit's Descent at Pentecost:

- Commemorating the transformative moment when the Spirit empowered the apostles.
- **Example Verse:** "Tongues of fire rested on the chosen; through them, Your Word filled the earth."

5. The Spirit's Eternal Presence:

- Affirming the Spirit's unending work in the life of the Church.
- **Example Verse:** "You are the ever-present flame, the light that cannot be extinguished."

Liturgical Context

The Hymn of the Holy Spirit is integral to Ethiopian Orthodox worship:

1. Pentecost (Tinsae Menfes Qidus):

- The Feast of Pentecost celebrates the descent of the Holy Spirit, and hymns are sung to commemorate this pivotal event.

2. Daily Prayers:

- Invocations to the Holy Spirit are part of the Church's *Hours of Prayer*, particularly in morning and evening devotions.

3. The Divine Liturgy (Qidase):

- During the Eucharist, the priest invokes the Holy Spirit to sanctify the bread and wine, transforming them into the body and blood of Christ.

Structure of the Hymn

A potential structure for the Ethiopian Hymn of the Holy Spirit could be:

I. Invocation

- "O Spirit of the living God, descend upon us with power and grace."

II. Praise of the Spirit's Creative Work

- "From the beginning, You hovered over the waters, and life sprang forth at Your command."

III. Reflection on Pentecost

- "The rushing wind and tongues of fire declared Your presence, O Spirit of truth."

IV. Petition for Renewal

- "Cleanse our hearts, O Holy Spirit, and renew in us the joy of salvation."

V. Doxology

- "To You, O Holy Spirit, with the Father and the Son, be glory forever. Amen."
-

Symbolism in the Hymn

1. **Wind:**
 - Representing the Spirit's unseen yet powerful presence.
 2. **Fire:**
 - Symbolizing purification, enlightenment, and transformation.
 3. **Dove:**
 - Reflecting the Spirit's gentleness and peace, as seen at Christ's baptism.
 4. **Water:**
 - Indicating life, renewal, and the Spirit's role in baptism.
-

Spiritual and Cultural Impact

1. **Empowerment for Mission:**
 - The hymn reminds believers of the Spirit's power to enable them to live and share their faith.
 2. **Encouragement in Trials:**
 - The Spirit is invoked as a source of comfort and strength in difficult times.
 3. **Unity in Worship:**
 - By glorifying the Spirit, the hymn unites the Church in a shared expression of faith and devotion.
-

Conclusion

The **Ethiopian Hymn of the Holy Spirit** celebrates the life-giving, sanctifying, and guiding presence of the Holy Spirit in creation, salvation, and the Church. Through its theological depth and liturgical significance, the hymn draws believers into a deeper awareness of the Spirit's work and inspires them to live in communion with God. This hymn, rich in symbolism and devotion, remains a cornerstone of Ethiopian Orthodox spirituality, echoing the eternal cry: "Come, Holy Spirit, fill our hearts and renew the face of the earth."

461. The Prayer of the Twelve Apostles

The **Prayer of the Twelve Apostles** is a powerful concept rooted in the collective intercession and devotion of the apostles of Jesus Christ, representing their unity, faith, and dedication to the mission entrusted to them by Christ. While there is no specific Ethiopian Orthodox text explicitly titled "The Prayer of the Twelve Apostles," the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church reveres the apostles through liturgical prayers, hymns, and traditions that reflect their role as the foundation of the Church.

Theological Foundations

1. Unity in Prayer:

- The apostles often prayed together, emphasizing their unity in Christ and their shared mission.
- **Acts 1:14:** "They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers."

2. Intercession for the Church:

- As the spiritual leaders of the early Church, the apostles prayed for the guidance and protection of the faithful.

3. Empowerment by the Holy Spirit:

- Their prayers were instrumental in invoking the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.
 - **Acts 4:31:** "After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit."
-

Themes in the Prayer of the Twelve Apostles

1. Praise and Thanksgiving:

- Glorifying God for His works and the gift of salvation through Christ.

- **Example:** "O Lord, we praise You, for You have chosen us as witnesses of Your resurrection."
 - 2. **Petition for Guidance:**
 - Seeking God's wisdom and strength to fulfill their mission.
 - **Example:** "Grant us Your Spirit, O Lord, that we may proclaim Your word with boldness."
 - 3. **Intercession for the Church:**
 - Praying for the unity, growth, and protection of the Church.
 - **Example:** "Watch over Your flock, O Shepherd, and guard them from all harm."
 - 4. **Hope for the World:**
 - Praying for the conversion and salvation of all nations.
 - **Example:** "Let Your light shine upon the nations, that they may know Your truth."
 - 5. **Anticipation of Christ's Return:**
 - Expressing hope for the fulfillment of God's kingdom.
 - **Example:** "Come, Lord Jesus, and establish Your throne of glory forever."
-

Structure of the Prayer

An imagined **Prayer of the Twelve Apostles** could follow this structure:

I. Invocation

- "O Lord, who called us from among fishermen, tax collectors, and zealots, we lift our hearts to You in unity and faith."

II. Praise for Christ's Mission

- "Blessed are You, O Christ, who taught us the way of truth and sent us to proclaim Your Gospel to the ends of the earth."

III. Petition for the Church

- "Strengthen Your Church, O Lord, and protect her from the snares of the enemy. Grant wisdom to her leaders and unity to her members."

IV. Intercession for the Nations

- "Let Your word go forth to all peoples, O King of Kings, that every knee may bow and every tongue confess Your name."

V. Doxology

- "To You, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be glory forever. Amen."
-

Liturgical Context in Ethiopian Orthodoxy

1. Feasts of the Apostles:

- The Ethiopian Orthodox Church observes feast days for the apostles, during which prayers and hymns honor their lives and contributions.

2. The Synaxarium:

- The *Synaxarium* includes narratives about the apostles, often accompanied by prayers invoking their intercession.

3. The Anaphoras:

- Eucharistic prayers often reference the apostles as witnesses of Christ's resurrection and the foundation of the Church.
-

Symbolism in the Apostolic Prayer

1. The Twelve:

- Representing the universality of the Church, as they were sent to all nations.

2. The Light of Christ:

- Their prayer reflects Christ's commission to be "the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14).

3. Unity:

- The collective prayer of the apostles symbolizes the unity of the Church, built upon their witness.
-

Cultural and Spiritual Impact

1. Encouraging Unity:

- The prayer reminds believers of the importance of unity in faith and mission.

2. Inspiring Devotion:

- The apostles' example of prayer and intercession serves as a model for personal and communal devotion.

3. Missionary Zeal:

- Their prayer inspires the faithful to continue the work of evangelization and witness.

Conclusion

The **Prayer of the Twelve Apostles**, whether as a conceptual or liturgical expression, represents the unity, faith, and mission of Christ's chosen witnesses. Rooted in Ethiopian Orthodox traditions, it celebrates their role in spreading the Gospel, establishing the Church, and interceding for the faithful. This prayer serves as a timeless call for unity, guidance, and hope, reflecting the apostles' enduring legacy in the life of the Church.

The Vision of Abraham (Additional Fragments)

One of the mottos of this ministry is "Connecting the message of the gospel to its Torah roots." The commentary below on Gen 15:17–18 below is a prime example of this, and is something I love to do.

Why does it bring me such pleasure? For several reasons. It strengthens my faith in Messiah to see him prophesied about in the Bible thousands of years before his incarnation. It strengthens my faith in the Bible as the Word of Elohim. No one but the supreme sovereign omniscient superior mind of our Creator could have predicted such things long before they occurred. No other religion or religious book on earth contains such marvelous predictions as the Bible. In every way, it points to Elohim and its veracity is validated.

The other day, someone commented on my YouTube channel that it is pure human imagination to envision Yeshua prophesied about in the Tanach, that he isn't in there. Then this sad soul went on to blather that Yeshua is not the Messiah, etc., etc. ad nauseam. The Bible says not to answer a fool according to his folly, for he will simply trample the pearls of truth like a swine shooting around in the muddy swill of his blind existence. There is none so blind as he refuses to see!

May the discussion below strengthen your faith in the Bible, in YHVH Elohim and in Yeshua the Messiah! Natan

In Genesis 15:17–18a, we read,

And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. In the same day YHVH made a covenant with Abram ...

What is the meaning of this? This is nothing other than YHVH giving Abram a prophetic vision of Yeshua the Redeemer of Israel dying on the cross paying for the sins of Abram's descendants who would break that very covenant that YHVH had made with Abram on that day. Both Jewish and Christian biblical commentators recognize aspects of this truth, but they don't have fuller prophetic picture. This we will explain below.

Let's first establish the fact that YHVH passed through the pieces of a sacrificed animal. Rashi, the medieval Jewish Torah scholar, recognizes that the Divine Presence was the one who passed

through the pieces of animal while Abram slept (Rashi's commentary on Gen 15:10). Furthermore, *The ArtScroll Tanach Series Bereishis/Genesis Commentary*, vol 1a, states, "The smoke [which rose up into the thick darkness (*Radak*)] was the 'Cloud and thick darkness' which appeared at the revelation of the Torah and the torch in its midst was 'the fire' which appeared at Sinai [see Exod 19:18; Deut 5:4]".... [Elohim] caused His Presence, symbolized by the fire, to pass through and conclude the Covenant.... [T]he culmination of this vision was that the fire consumed the pieces, causing their smoke to ascend to heaven..." (pp. 534–535). Christian commentators Keil and Delitzsch in their commentary on this passage state, "In this symbol [i.e. the smoking pot and the fiery torch], Jehovah manifested Himself to Abram, just as He afterwards did to the people of Israel in the pillar of cloud and fire" (Hendrickson, p. 138). So both notable Jewish and Christian scholars relate the smoke and the fire Abram saw pass between the pieces of meat to YHVH's Presence in the cloud and pillar of fire that led Israel in the wilderness. We read in Exodus 13:21,

And YHVH went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night.

Then in Exodus 14:19 it is written:

And the angel of Elohim, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them.

Who is this "Angel" of Elohim (in other places: he is called "the Angel" of YHVH)? *Angel* is an unfortunate translation. The Hebrew word for *angel* is *malak* (ITKN) and simply means "a heavenly or a human messenger." Prophetically this word can refer to human messengers such as the one coming in the spirit of Elijah prior to Messiah's coming, as well as to the Messiah himself ("Messenger/*Malak* of the covenant" in Malachi 3:1). In Genesis 32:22–30, Jacob wrestles with a man the Scriptures identify as the *Malak* of YHVH (Hosea 12:3–5) and whom Jacob called Elohim (Hos 12:3–4). This same Individual redeemed Jacob (Gen 48:18) and is identified with the *Malak of Elohim ... the Elohim of Bethel* (Gen 31:11 and 13), and appeared to Moses at the burning bush (Exod 3:2). Now we see this same Entity leading Israel in the wilderness. Again who is he? Stephen in Acts 7:37–39 identifies the Messiah (i.e. "that Prophet" Moses mentioned in Deut 18:15) with the "Angel" or Heavenly Messenger which spoke to the children of Israel from Mount Sinai and who gave them the "living oracles," who the Israelites later rejected for pagan gods. Paul elsewhere said of this same Personage that the Israelites did "all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Messiah" (1 Cor 10:4).

Of that pillar of fire that led them, we see that it gave them light, and we know that *light* is a biblical metaphor for YHVH's Torah (e.g., Prov 6:23). Additionally, we know that Yeshua the Messiah is the Light of the World (John 1:6–9; 8:12; 9:5)—the Word of Elohim in living form (personified; John 1:1–14).

So, to connect the dots, we see that Abram saw a vision of the pre-incarnate Yeshua passing through the pieces of meat as he ratified the Abrahamic Covenant. He accepted the offering as it went up to heaven in a cloud of smoke even as fire came forth from the same cloud in the holy of holies in the Tabernacle Moses and the same pre-incarnate Yeshua accepted the first sacrifice on the altar of sacrifice (Lev 9:24, see also Judg 6:20–21; 13:19–20).

But there is more.

The Jewish sages recognize that the smoking furnace Abram saw in his vision is a picture of Gehinnom (the valley in Jerusalem where in ancient times the city's garbage was burned making it a poetic and prophetic representation of Elohim's fiery judgment upon the wicked) or four periods of future judgment that would come upon Israel as a result of her apostasy (see Rashi's commentary on Gen 15:17). This is the rabbinic interpretation of the smoking furnace. Let us now present to you a possible Messianic interpretation of this same smoking furnace.

In ancient biblical times when two parties would negotiate an agreement, both parties would pass through the animal halves symbolizing the life and death consequences of violating the terms of the agreement. A death curse was literally placed upon the one who would break the covenant.

In the case of the Abrahamic Covenant, we see that Yeshua in his pre-incarnate state was the one who passed through the pieces of meat while Abram slept. This signifies that Yeshua took upon himself the curse of death if either he or Abraham (or his descendants) in any way violated the terms and conditions of the Abrahamic Covenant. We know that Abrahams descendants did not remain faithful to their covenants with YHVH. YHVH used the Babylonians, Persians, Greeks and the Romans to punish them, but this punishment did not redeem them from having violated their covenantal agreement. Yeshua, YHVH's heavenly Messenger, took that full responsibility upon himself when he passed through the pieces of meat. He took upon himself the full and unconditional consequences of the sinful actions of Abraham's descendants, which are the saints (Gal 3:29). The fiery wrath of Elohim's judgment against sin (i.e. violation of Torah, see 1 John 3:4) came upon him and he was crucified by the Romans at Calvary. It is through the shed blood of Yeshua who paid for our sins that we enter into renewed covenant with the same Yeshua (as did Abraham) and become sons of Abraham, as well as adopted sons of Elohim resulting in eternal life. This is the message of Paul the apostle in Epistle to the Romans. We believe that this is how Genesis 15 foretells the future apostasy of Israel, the rise of Messiah Yeshua, the Savior and Redeemer of Israel, and his death at the cross to pay the legal price for their sins of rebellion and disobedience to YHVH and his commandments.

The Testament of Zebulun (Expanded)

CHAP. I.

Zebulun, the sixth son of Jacob and Leah. The inventor and philanthropist., What he learned as a result of the plot against Joseph.

THE copy of the words of Zebulun, which he enjoined on his sons before he died in the hundred and fourteenth year of his life, two years after the death of Joseph.

2 And he said to them: Hearken to me, ye sons of Zebulun attend to the words of your father.

3 I, Zebulun, was born a good gift to my parents.

4 For when I was born my father was increased very exceedingly, both in flocks and herds, when with the straked rods he had his portion.

5 I am not conscious that I have sinned all my days, save in thought.

6 Nor yet do I remember that I have done any iniquity, except the sin of ignorance which I committed against Joseph; for I covenanted with my brethren not to tell my father what had been done.

7 But I wept in secret many days on account of Joseph, for I feared my brethren, because they had all agreed that if any one should declare the secret, he should be slain.

8 But when they wished to kill him, I adjured them much with tears not to be guilty of this sin.

9 For Simeon and Gad came against Joseph to kill him, and he said unto them with tears: Pity me, my brethren, have mercy upon the bowels of Jacob our father: lay not upon me your hands to shed innocent blood, for I have not sinned against you.

10 And if indeed I have sinned, with chastening chastise me, my brethren, but lay not upon me your hand, for the sake of Jacob our father,

11 And as he spoke these words, wailing as he did so, I was unable to bear his lamentations, and began to weep, and my liver was poured out, and all the substance of my bowels was loosened.

12 And I wept with Joseph and my heart sounded, and the joints of my body trembled, and I was not able to stand.

13 And when Joseph saw me weeping with him, and them coming against him to slay him, he fled behind me, beseeching them.

14 But meanwhile Reuben arose and said: Come, my brethren, let us not slay him, but let us cast him into one of these dry pits, which our fathers digged and found no water.

15 For for this cause the Lord forbade that water should rise up in them in order that Joseph should be preserved.

16 And they did so, until they sold him to the Ishmaelites.

17 For in his price I had no share, my children.

18 But Simeon and Gad and six other of our brethren took the price of Joseph, and bought sandals for themselves, and their wives, and their children, saying:

19 We will not eat of it, for it is the price of our brother's blood, but we will assuredly tread it under foot, because he said that he would be king over us, and so let us see what will become of his dreams.

20 Therefore it is written in the writing of the law of Moses, that whosoever will not raise up seed to his brother, his sandal should be unloosed, and they should spit in his face.

21 And the brethren of Joseph wished not that their brother should live, and the Lord loosed from them the sandal which they wore against Joseph their brother.

22 For when they came into Egypt they were unloosed by the servants of Joseph outside the gate, and so they made obeisance to Joseph after the fashion of King Pharaoh.

23 And not only did they make obeisance to him, but were spit upon also, falling down before him forthwith, and so they were put to shame before the Egyptians.

24 For after this the Egyptians heard all the evils that they had done to Joseph.

25 And after he was sold my brothers sat down to eat and drink.

26 But I, through pity for Joseph, did not eat, but watched the pit, since Judah feared lest Simeon, Dan, and Gad should rush off and slay him.

27 But when they saw that I did not eat, they set me to watch him, till he was sold to the Ishmaelites.

28 And when Reuben came and heard that while he was away Joseph had been sold, he rent his garments, and mourning, said:

29 How shall I look on the face of my father Jacob? And he took the money and ran after the merchants but as he failed to find them he returned grieving.

30 But the merchants had left the broad road and marched through the Troglodytes by a short cut.

31 But Reuben was grieved, and ate no food that day.

32 Dan therefore came to him and said: Weep not, neither grieve; for we have found what we can say to our father Jacob.

33 Let us slay a kid of the goats, and dip in it the coat of Joseph; and let us send it to Jacob, saying: Know, is this the coat of thy son?

34 And they did so. For they stripped off from Joseph his coat when they were selling him, and put upon him the garment of a slave.

35 Now Simeon took the coat, and would not give it up, for he wished to rend it with his sword, as he was angry that Joseph lived and that he had not slain him.

36 Then we all rose up and said unto him: If thou givest not up the coat, we will say to our father that thou alone didst this evil thing in Israel.

37 And so he gave it unto them, and they did even as Dan had said.

CHAP. II.

He urges human sympathy and understanding of one's fellow men.

AND now children, I you to keep the commands of the Lord, and to show mercy to your neighbours, and to have compassion towards all, not towards men only, but also towards beasts.

2 For all this thing's sake the Lord blessed me, and when all my brethren were sick, I escaped without sickness, for the Lord knoweth the purposes of each.

3 Have, therefore, compassion in your hearts, my children, because even as a man doeth to his neighbour, even so also will the Lord do to him.

4 For the sons of my brethren were sickening and were dying on account of Joseph, because they showed not mercy in their hearts; but my sons were preserved without sickness, as ye know.

5 And when I was in the land of Canaan, by the sea-coast, I made a catch of fish for Jacob my father; and when many were choked in the sea, I continued unhurt.

6 I was the first to make a boat to sail upon the sea, for the Lord gave me understanding and wisdom therein.

7 And I let down a rudder behind it, and I stretched a sail upon another upright piece of wood in the midst.

8 And I sailed therein along the shores, catching fish for the house of my father until we came to Egypt.

9 And through compassion I shared my catch with every stranger.

10 And if a man were a stranger, or sick, or aged, I boiled the fish, and dressed them well, and offered them to all men, as every man had need, grieving with and having compassion upon them.

11 Wherefore also the Lord satisfied me with abundance of fish when catching fish; for he that shareth with his neighbour receiveth manifold more from the Lord.

12 For five years I caught fish and gave thereof to every man whom I saw, and sufficed for all the house of my father.

13 And in the summer I caught fish, and in the winter I kept sheep with my brethren.

14 Now I will declare unto you what I did.

15 I saw a man in distress through nakedness in wintertime, and had compassion upon him, and stole away a garment secretly from my father's house, and gave it to him who was in distress.

16 Do you, therefore, my children, from that which God bestoweth upon you, show compassion and mercy without hesitation to all men, and give to every man with a good heart.

17 And if ye have not the wherewithal to give to him that needeth, have compassion for him in bowels of mercy.

18 I know that my hand found not the wherewithal to give to him that needed, and I walked with him weeping for seven furlongs, and my bowels yearned towards him in compassion.

19 Have, therefore, yourselves also, my children, compassion towards every man with mercy, that the Lord also may have compassion and mercy upon you.

20 Because also in, the last days God will send His compassion on the earth, and wheresoever He findeth bowels of mercy He dwelleth in him.

21 For in the degree in which a man hath compassion upon his neighbours, in the same degree hath the Lord also upon him.

22 And when we went down into Egypt, Joseph bore no malice against us.

23 To whom taking heed, do ye also, my children, approve yourselves without malice, and love one another; and do not set down in account, each one of you, evil against his brother.

24 For this breaketh unity and divideth all kindred, and troubleth the soul, and weareth away the countenance.

25 Observe, therefore, the waters, and know when they flow together, they sweep along stones, trees, earth, and other things.

26 But if they are divided into many streams, the earth swalloweth them up, and they vanish away.

27 So shall ye also be if ye be divided. Be not Ye, therefore, divided into two heads for everything which the Lord made .hath but one head, and two shoulders, two hands, two feet, and all the remaining members.

28 For I have learnt in the writing of my fathers, that ye shall be divided in Israel, and ye shall follow two kings, and shall work every abomination.

29 And your enemies shall lead you captive, and ye shall be evil entreated among the Gentiles, with many infirmities and tribulations.

30 And after these things ye shall remember the Lord and repent, and He shall have mercy upon you, for He is merciful and compassionate.

31 And He setteth not down in account evil against the sons of men, because they are flesh, and are deceived through their own wicked deeds.

32 And after these things shall there arise unto you the Lord Himself, the light of righteousness, and ye shall return unto your land.

33 And ye shall see Him in Jerusalem, for His name's sake.

34 And again through the wickedness of your works shall ye provoke Him to anger,

35 And ye shall be cast away by Him unto the time of consummation.

36 And now, my children, grieve not that I am dying, nor be cast down in that I am coming to my end.

37 For I shall rise again in the midst of you, as a ruler in the midst of his sons; and I shall rejoice in the midst of my tribe, as many as shall keep the law of the Lord, and the commandments of Zebulun their father.

38 But upon the ungodly shall the Lord bring eternal fire, and destroy them throughout all generations.

39 But I am now hastening away to my rest, as did also my fathers.

40 But do ye fear the Lord our God with all your strength all the days of your life.

41 And when he had said these things he fell asleep, at a good old age.

42 And his sons laid him in a wooden coffin. And afterwards they carried him up and buried him in Hebron, with his fathers.

The Prophecy of Deborah

Identifying Deborah as not only a judge, but also a prophetess, gives authority and gravitas to her dialogue and song because she is speaking as God's mouthpiece. Thus, when Deborah refers to herself as אִם בְּיָשָׁר אֶל, "a mother in Israel" (5:7), and celebrates Yael as תְּהִי יְהוָה מְבֹרָכָה מִכָּל נְשִׁים, "most blessed of women," twice (5:24), her words have the authority of the narrator, if not YHWH himself.^[4]

As is common in the Bible, the description of Deborah is marked by brevity, but we can learn more about her character by inferring clues from her words and actions.^[5]

Deborah's Speeches

Deborah speaks three times, in each case directing her words to Barak. These short exchanges depict Deborah as someone with commanding authority, shown with the phrase הָלֹא (*halo*), "Heed this!" (v. 6; and again in v. 14):

שפטים 17: וַתִּשְׁלַח וַתִּקְרָא לְבִבְרָק בֶּן־אֲבִינֵעָם מִקֹּדֶשׁ נֶפֶתְלִי וְתֹאמַר אֶל־יוֹהֵאָה הֲלֹא צִוְּהָ יְיָ־וָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵךְ וּמַשְׁכֵּן

Judg 4:6 She summoned Barak, son of Abinoam, of Kedesh in Naphtali, and said to him, “**Heed this:** YHWH, the God of Israel, has commanded: ‘Go and **draw out** at Mount Tabor and take with you ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun.’

While the expression could be translated as an interrogative—"Has not...?"—in contexts of prophetic authority, it functions as an exclamation.^[6] Deborah is getting Barak's attention with a commanding jolt.^[7]

At the same time, Deborah recognizes YHWH's authority and power. This is abundantly clear in her song (ch. 5), but it can also be inferred from her use of the verb מִשַּׁחֲךְ (*mashakh*), "to draw out." First, it is a charge to Barak—מִשַּׁחֲךְ, "draw out," your troops (v. 6)—but then YHWH will also "draw out" Sisera's army to meet him:

שְׁפִטִים ד': וּמִשְׁכְּתִי אֶלֶךְ, אֶל־נַחַל קִישּׁוֹן, אֶת־סִיסְרָא שֶׁר־צָבָא יְיָבִין וְאֶת־רַכְבּוֹ וְאֶת־הַמּוֹנוֹ וְנִתְּתִיהֶוּ בְיָדָךְ.

^{Judg 4:7} And I will **draw out** to you, to the Kishon River, Sisera the officer of the army of Yabin and his chariot and his troops, and I will give him into your hand.”

From a narrative perspective, Barak and his troops need only show up, and YHWH will give Sisera into his hand.^[8]

Deborah's Response to Barak's Hesitation

When Barak refuses to go unless she accompanies him (v. 8), she replies:

שפטים ד:ט וְתֹאמַר הַלֵּל אֱלֹהִים עִמָּךְ אָפֶס כִּי לֹא תִהְיֶה תַּפְאֲרָתְךָ עַל הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר אָתָּה הוֹלֵךְ כִּי בִיד אֲשֶׁה יִמְכַּר יְיָ הָוָה אֵת מִסֵּסֶרָא....

Judg 4:9 She said, “**Yes, I will go** with you. Nevertheless, because of the course you are taking, it will not be your glory, for YHWH will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman....”

The infinitive absolute, הָלַךְ (*halokh*), further emphasizes Deborah’s authority in this situation. While it could be rendered emphatically to communicate the surety of her going with Barak—“I will surely go with you”—here it is used to introduce a concession, thereby highlighting his weakness;^[9] Deborah will go with Barak, but not enthusiastically. Her decision reveals something else about her character:^[10] she shows compassion for Barak rather than simply rejecting his request.^[11]

Prophesying Again at Mount Tabor

Deborah and Barak proceed to Mount Tabor, and when Sisera arrays his army and chariots against the Israelites (vv. 10, 12), Deborah declares again that the Israelites will be victorious:

שִׁפְטִים דִּידִי וְתֹאמַר דְּבֹרָה אֶל בָּרַק קוּם. כִּי זֶה הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִנָּתֶן יְיָ הָיוֹהָאֵת. סִסְרָא בְּיַדְךָ הֵלֵא יְיָ הָיוֹהָ יִצְאָ לְפָנֶיךָ.

Judg 4:14 Then Deborah said to Barak, “Arise! For this is the day YHWH has given Sisera into your hand. Heed this: YHWH has gone out before you!”

In this speech, as in the others, Deborah both uses her authority to command Barak and recognizes YHWH’s sovereignty in Israel’s victory by crediting YHWH for Sisera’s defeat.^[12]

Deborah’s Actions

Deborah’s actions in sending for Barak so that she can deliver her first message from YHWH—*וַתִּשְׁלַח וַתִּקְרָא לְבָרַק בֶּרֶאֱבִי נָעֻם*, “She summoned Barak, son of Abinoam” (v. 6)—rather than going to him herself, further confirm her role as a prophet and a leader.

Her subsequent actions also reinforce her integrity. After assuring Barak that she will go with him, the narrator records her accompanying him two separate times:

שִׁפְטִים ד:ט ...וְתֹאמַרְהָ וַתֵּלֶךְ עִם בָּרַק קְדֵשָׁה. ד:י' וַיִּזְעַק בָּרַק אֶת זִבְנוֹן וְאֶת נַפְתָּלִי קְדֵשָׁה וַיַּעַל בְּרַגְלֵי עֶשְׂרֵת אֶלְפֵי אִישׁ וַתַּעַל עִמּוֹ דְּבֹרָה ה.

Judg 4:9 ...**So Deborah arose and went with Barak** to Kedesh. 4:10 Then Barak summoned Zebulun and Naphtali, and ten thousand men went up under his command. **And Deborah went up with him.**

The repetition could be due to a combination of sources,^[13] but the redactor’s choice to leave both statements in the final form of the text underscores the consistency between Deborah’s words and actions. She is as true to her word as her word itself is true.

Contrasts Further Define Deborah

The contrast between Deborah and Barak brings Deborah's virtues into relief.^[14] Whereas she is portrayed as authoritative, Barak is portrayed as insecure. Although Barak does eventually fight Sisera and even joins in Deborah's victory song (Judg 5:1, 12), his only recorded words are his

ultimatum marked by fear. His actions later in the narrative are also portrayed as nearly comical, showing up after Sisera's death, and being commanded by yet another woman:

שִׁפְטִים דִּכְבֵּר וְהָנָה בְּבָרָק וְרָדְף אֶת סִיסְרָא וַתִּצָּא יָעֵל לִקְרָאתוֹ וְתֹאמַר לוֹ לֵךְ וְאַרְאֵה אֶת הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר אֶתָּה מִבְקֵשׁ
וַיָּבֹא אֶל־יָהּ וְהָנָה
סִיסְרָא וַיַּנְפִּל מֶת
וְהָיְתָה בְרָקְתּוֹ.

Judg 4:22 Now Barak appeared in pursuit of Sisera. Yael went out to greet him and said, "Come, I will show you the man you are looking for." He went inside with her, and there Sisera was lying dead, with the pin in his temple.^[15]

Meir Sternberg rightly notes that Barak ends up "with little to show for his trouble except a junior partnership in a female enterprise."^[16]

Deborah's character also contrasts with the expected norms of male leadership in ancient Israelite society. She wields more authority than any other (human) character in the narrative, save perhaps the Canaanite king, Yabin, who stays in the background and is defeated under Deborah's leadership. She steps into the typically male role of judge, and yet she never loses her womanhood.

Not only is she introduced by the narrator as a woman (4:4), Deborah also refers to herself in her song as a "mother in Israel" (Judg 5:7). This apt metaphor naturally highlights her femininity, but it also underscores her leadership. Scholars like Carol Meyers have shown that matriarchs were the household managers, and since the household was the hub of ancient Israelite society, they wielded much more power than traditionally supposed.^[17]

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Deborah Compared with Moses

A lesser-known aspect of the book of Judges resides in the connections between the judges and Moses.^[18] For Deborah, this comparison (and contrast) seems to be invited by Jewish tradition, which pairs Judges 4–5 with the exodus account as the haftarah reading for Beshalach (Exod 13:17–17:16).

Deborah shares numerous qualities with Moses.^[19] They both:

- Judge Israel (Exod 18:13; Judg 4:4)
- Prophecy (Deut 34:10; Judg 4:4)
- Command military leaders into battle, but are not directly involved in the fighting (Exod 17:9–10; Judg 4:14–15)
- Sing victory songs (Exod 15; Judg 5)
- Have a forty-year career (Num 13:33; Judg 5:31)

Their narratives also have many similarities:

- Their enemies have chariots and superior weaponry (Exod 14:6; Judg 4:13)
- Water plays a major role in defeating their enemies (Exod 14:25; 15:4–10; Judg 4:7; 5:4, 21)
- YHWH throws into a panic (ה.נ.ח) their enemies' army (מִחְנָה) (Exod 14:24; Judg 4:15)^[20]
- Of their enemies, נֶאֱשַׁר עַד אֶחָד, "no one remained" (Exod 14:28; Judg 4:16)
- Kenites play a pivotal role (Num 10:29; Judg 1:16, 4:11)

Taken together, these parallels present a strong case for seeing Deborah as a Moses-like figure.^[21] This added layer of characterization highlights the exemplary nature of Deborah's role in the book of Judges. Like Moses, she is a faithful leader and interceder for her people during a time when doubt and fear threaten to pull Israel away from God.

If Deborah's characterization has been shaped by the accounts of Moses, who might other characters in her narrative represent?

The contrast between Deborah and Barak parallels the relationship between Moses and the exodus generation of the Israelites, who consistently waver between fear and courage, needing Moses's intercession and leadership. She is strong while Barak wavers between hesitancy and courage. She commands him and leads him and even shows compassion for him in his weakness. She prophetically intercedes for him.

In addition, Yael's role seems to parallel that of Joshua, who finishes what Moses starts, leading Israel into the land so YHWH might give them rest. Yael is the fulfillment of Deborah's prophecy, and she finishes what Deborah and Barak start, as her decisive victory over Sisera secures rest for the Israelites under the leadership of Deborah.

A Prophetess like Moses

The book of Judges characterizes Deborah as a woman prophetess who judges and leads Israel with authority and compassion. She gives the glory of Israel's deliverance to YHWH.^[22] The Torah invites us to compare other prophets to Moses:

דברים לד': וְלֹא קָם נָבִיא עוֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל כְּמֹשֶׁה אֲשֶׁר יָדָעוּ יְיָהוָה וְפָנִים
אֵל קָפָנִים.

Deut 34:10 And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom YHWH knew face to face.^[23]

Sifrei Deuteronomy responds by looking beyond the Israelites:

ספרי דברים שני"ז ולא קם נביא בישראל כמשה - אבל באומות קם. ואיזה? זה בלעם בן בעור

Sif. Deut. 357 *No prophet has arisen in Israel like Moses (34:10), but one has arisen among the nations. And who was he? Balaam son of Beor.*^[24]

In this vein, we observe that there has never been a *prophet* like Moses, but there has been a *prophetess*: Deborah.

The Song of Hannah (Extended)

"My heart rejoices in the Lord;
My ^[a]horn is exalted in the Lord,
My mouth ^[b]speaks boldly against my enemies,
Because I rejoice in Your salvation.
²There is no one holy like the Lord,
Indeed, there is no one besides You,
Nor is there any rock like our God.
³Do not go on ^[c]boasting so very proudly,
Do not let arrogance come out of your mouth;
For the Lord is a God of knowledge,
And ^[d]with Him actions are weighed.
⁴The bows of the mighty are broken to pieces,
But those who have stumbled strap on strength.
⁵Those who were full hire themselves out for bread,
But those who were hungry cease *to be hungry*.
Even the infertile woman gives birth to seven,
But she who has many children languishes.
⁶The Lord puts to death and makes alive;
He brings down to ^[e]Sheol and brings up.
⁷The Lord makes poor and rich;
He humbles, He also exalts.
⁸He raises the poor from the dust,
He lifts the needy from the garbage heap
To seat *them* with nobles,
And He gives them a seat of honor as an inheritance;
For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's,
And He set the world on them.
⁹He watches over the feet of His godly ones,
But the wicked ones are silenced in darkness;
For not by might shall a person prevail.
¹⁰Those who contend with the Lord will be terrified;
Against them He will thunder in the heavens,
The Lord will judge the ends of the earth;
And He will give strength to His king,
And will exalt the ^[f]horn of His anointed."

¹¹Then Elkanah went to his home at Ramah. But the boy continued to attend to the service of the Lord before Eli the priest.

The Vision of the Ladder of Jacob

Jacob has received the blessing from his father Isaac and is instructed to flee to his family's homeland for two reasons. First, his older brother Esau wants to kill him for stealing his blessing. Second, to find a wife among their own people, which Esau did not do (28:8-9).

As Jacob is journeying to his family's homeland, he stops for the night. While sleeping, Jacob receives a dream from God that changes his life.

He sees a large structure like a ladder, tower, or staircase, reaching up from earth to heaven (28:12). All along this ladder, he sees angels ascending and descending on it. Then God's voice rings out as he speaks to Jacob.

Even though he had received his father's blessing, there was a far more important one he needed to receive - God's. So God speaks the same covenant he made with Abraham and Isaac, now, to Jacob. God will make Jacob's descendants a great nation and will give them the land promised to Abraham (28:14a).

But why the ladder? It is the opposite of the Tower of Babel. At that tower, humans tried to build a structure that would reach up to heaven and allow them access to God (11:4). They were trying to build a gate to heaven. But God foiled their attempts by confusing their language and dispersing them among the nations.

In contrast to Babel, this time God builds the tower. He doesn't call humans to come up it, but he and his angels travel down it. God himself builds the gate to heaven. In fact, that's what Jacob calls the place where he had this vision: "the gate of heaven" (28:17).

And by the end of the dream, people aren't dispersed among the nations as at Babel (11:8). Instead, God promises to unite people under one new nation (28:14b).

Jacob's ladder shows us how God will reverse the effects of man's sin typified by the Tower of Babel. How would he do this? God would do what humans tried to do. At Babel, it was man's effort. But with Jacob's ladder, it was God's.

The Lament of the Patriarchs

The **Lament of the Patriarchs** is a conceptual or apocryphal theme that could embody a poetic and theological reflection on the grief, struggles, and spiritual perseverance of the patriarchs of the Old Testament, such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. This lament could serve as a profound expression of faith, emphasizing the trials faced by these foundational figures and their steadfast trust in God's promises. While there is no specific Ethiopian Orthodox text by this title, the themes resonate with the Church's rich tradition of hymns, prayers, and teachings that highlight the faith of the patriarchs.

Theological Foundations

The patriarchs are revered in Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity for their covenantal relationship with God and their role as precursors to Christ. Their lives reflect themes of:

1. Faith and Obedience:

- The patriarchs demonstrated unwavering faith in God's promises despite trials and uncertainties.
- **Hebrews 11:8-10:** "By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called... for he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God."

2. Suffering and Endurance:

- The patriarchs faced personal loss, exile, and hardship, yet remained faithful to God's covenant.

3. God's Providence:

- Their lives reveal God's faithfulness in fulfilling His promises, pointing toward the ultimate redemption in Christ.

Themes in the Lament of the Patriarchs

1. Exile and Displacement:

- Reflecting on the patriarchs' journeys away from their homelands in obedience to God's call.
- **Example Verse:** "We wandered as strangers in a land not our own, yet Your promises sustained us."

2. Longing for Fulfillment:

- Expressing the yearning for the fulfillment of God's covenantal promises.
- **Example Verse:** "O Lord, we waited for the seed You promised, the One who would bless all nations."

3. Trust Amid Trials:

- Highlighting the patriarchs' trust in God despite overwhelming challenges.
- **Example Verse:** "In famine and sorrow, we clung to Your word, O Faithful One."

4. Anticipation of the Messiah:

- The patriarchs' faith in God's plan of redemption through their lineage.
- **Example Verse:** "Through our descendants, You promised salvation; our hope rests in Your mercy."

5. Intercession for Their Descendants:

- The patriarchs' prayers for their children and future generations.
- **Example Verse:** "O Lord of the covenant, bless our offspring and guide them in Your truth."

Structure of the Lament

A possible structure for **The Lament of the Patriarchs**:

I. Invocation

- "O God of our fathers, who called us from among the nations, hear our cry as we wander in Your ways."

II. Reflection on Trials

- "In the land of famine, You tested our faith; in the face of enemies, You were our shield."

III. Longing for Redemption

- "We awaited the promise, the blessing for all nations, and looked toward the day of Your salvation."

IV. Affirmation of Faith

- "Even in the shadow of doubt, we trusted in Your name, for You are the Lord who keeps His covenant."

V. Doxology

- "To You, O God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, be glory forever. Amen."

Liturgical and Devotional Context

1. Feast Days of the Patriarchs:

- The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church honors the patriarchs in its liturgical calendar, often highlighting their lives and faith.

2. Prayers for Guidance:

- The Lament could be integrated into personal or communal prayers, seeking God's guidance and faithfulness in times of trial.

3. Monastic Reflections:

- Monastic communities may use the Lament as a meditation on perseverance and trust in God's providence.
-

Symbolism in the Lament

1. The Tent:

- Representing the transient life of the patriarchs and their trust in God as their ultimate dwelling.

2. The Altar:

- A symbol of their worship and covenantal relationship with God.

3. The Journey:

- Reflecting their faith in God's guidance through uncertain paths.
-

Spiritual Lessons

1. Faith in Adversity:

- The Lament teaches believers to trust in God's promises, even when circumstances seem bleak.

2. Hope in Redemption:

- It reminds the faithful of the patriarchs' anticipation of Christ and encourages them to look forward to God's ultimate plan of salvation.

3. Intercession for Generations:

- The patriarchs' prayers for their descendants inspire believers to pray for future generations.
-

Conclusion

The **Lament of the Patriarchs** is a profound reflection on faith, endurance, and God's covenantal faithfulness. Rooted in the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, it serves as a timeless reminder of the trials and triumphs of those who walked closely with God. In the Ethiopian Orthodox tradition, such a lament would deepen the spiritual connection between the faithful and their forebears, inspiring trust in God's promises and hope for the fulfillment of His eternal plan.

The Apocalypse of Levi

Testament of Levi 14-18 is a mini-apocalypse. Levi explains that in the past the people of God have acted impiously (citing the *Book of Enoch*). Because of the sin of the people, which is compared to that of Sodom and Gomorrah, the sanctuary of the Lord will become desolate and the nation will become a "revolting thing" and the world will rejoice in their destruction (15:1-2, probably the

destruction of 586 B.C. is in mind here). This "review of history" is presented as a prophecy in the mouth of Levi.

Levi then predicts the nation will wander for 70 weeks and profane the priesthood and sanctuary:

Testament of Levi 16.1-5 "Now I have come to know that for seventy weeks you shall wander astray and profane the priesthood and defile the sacrificial altars. You shall set aside the Law and nullify the words of the prophets by your wicked perversity. You persecute just men: and you hate the pious; the word of the faithful you regard with revulsion. A man who by the power of the Most High renews the Law you name 'Deceiver,' and finally you shall plot to kill him, not discerning his eminence; by your wickedness you take innocent blood on your heads. I tell you, on account of him your holy places shall be razed to the ground. You shall have no place that is clean, but you will be as a curse and a dispersion among the nations until he will again have regard for you, and will take you back in compassion.

This is probably based on Daniel's prophecy of a period of "seventy weeks of years" before the consummation of God's plan (Dan 9). At the end of the seventy weeks a man will come from the power of the most high, but the nation will call him a deceiver and plot to kill him (16:3) and the city will be razed as a result. The people will be a curse and dispersed among the nations (16:5). This section may shed light on reactions to the ministry of Jesus. For example, in Matthew 12 the Pharisees claim that Jesus does miracles by the power of Beelzebub and in Matthew 26:63 the Jews call Jesus a "deceiver."

Christian elements aside, this text seems to be calculating the 70 weeks of Daniel as "complete" in the near future of the writer. This would imply that at least some Jews living near the turn of the eras were looking forward to the end of the prophecy of Daniel and the establishment of some sort of Jewish independence. The difficulty for the Jew living in 100 B.C. is knowing when to start the "count" of Daniel's 70 "sevens." Modern history makes it a bit more easy to rough out potential beginnings and endings, in the first century the period of the exile and Persian period are not well documented. There is no real evidence that Jews in the first century knew precisely how long ago Daniel's prophecy would have been made.

During seventy weeks there will be several Jubilees. During the second, "Anointed One shall be conceived in sorrow of the beloved one, and his priesthood shall be prized and shall be glorified by all" (17.2). After the series of Jubilees, the priesthood will lapse and the Lord will raise up a new priest who will "effect the judgment of truth over the earth for many days" (18.2) during which time the heavens will open and the glory of the Most High will be upon him (18.6-7). During this priest's rule there is to be peace and prosperity throughout the whole earth (18.5). The priesthood will once again be pure (18.9). The gates of paradise will be re-opened people will be permitted to eat from the tree of life (18.10). During this time Beliar will be bound and the sons of the new priest will have authority to trample wicked spirits (18.12).

This is much in this description that sounds too close to Christian apocalypses, especially Revelation. When Jesus returns he will bind Satan (Rev 20:1) and there will be a long period of peace and prosperity, described with many images drawn from the Garden of Eden. Revelation 22:14 the "one who is coming soon" grants those who have washed their robes the right to eat from the Tree of Life (c.f., Rev 2:7). For this reason most scholars suspect an earlier Jewish *Testament of*

Levi was edited by the Christians who preserved this literature. Kugler provides a chart comparing the *Testament of Levi* with the *Aramaic Levi* found at Qumran (49-50).

Even if these are Christian interpolations, there is some warrant for pre-Christian Messianism in the *Testament of Levi*. Why would Christians insert this kind of messianic material into the book? If other Testaments were preserved for their ethical content, why are they not heavily edited with apocalyptic material? As Kugler says, "We cannot be certain that an earlier Jewish version of the chapter proposed two messiahs or a single messiah with priestly and royal characteristics" (52), but there seems to have been some messianic content for a later Christian to expand.

The Ethiopian Gospel of the Hidden Wisdom

The **Ethiopian Gospel of the Hidden Wisdom** is a conceptual or speculative text that could represent a profound exploration of divine mysteries, spiritual truths, and the deeper meanings of God's revelations, as understood within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. While no canonical text exists with this title, Ethiopian Orthodox spirituality is deeply rooted in the idea of *hidden wisdom*—divine truths that are revealed progressively to the faithful through scripture, tradition, and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Theological Foundations

4. Wisdom as Divine Revelation:

- In Ethiopian Orthodox theology, wisdom (*Ermiya* in Ge'ez) is a gift from God, guiding humanity toward salvation and deeper knowledge of divine mysteries.
- **Proverbs G:10**: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."
- **1 Corinthians 2:7**: "We declare God's wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began."

5. Christ as the Embodiment of Wisdom:

- Christ is seen as the ultimate revelation of God's hidden wisdom, fulfilling the promises and mysteries of the Old Testament.
- **Colossians 2:3**: "In whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

6. The Role of the Holy Spirit:

- The Holy Spirit unveils hidden truths to those who seek God with humility and faith, guiding them into all truth.
- **John 16:13**: "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth."

Themes in the Gospel of the Hidden Wisdom

1. God's Eternal Plan:

- The Gospel might explore the hidden wisdom behind creation, redemption, and the ultimate reconciliation of all things in Christ.
- **Example Verse:** "Before the foundation of the world, Your wisdom shaped the heavens and the earth."

2. The Mystery of Salvation:

- Reflecting on Christ's incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection as the unfolding of God's wisdom for humanity's redemption.
- **Example Verse:** "In the fullness of time, the Word became flesh, revealing the depths of divine love."

3. The Wisdom in Scripture:

- Highlighting how the hidden wisdom of God is veiled in parables, prophecies, and sacred texts, awaiting revelation to the faithful.
- **Example Verse:** "Your Word is a lamp to our feet, a treasure hidden in the fields of eternity."

4. The Role of Humility and Faith:

- Emphasizing that hidden wisdom is revealed not through worldly knowledge, but through a heart surrendered to God.
- **Example Verse:** "The proud cannot see what is hidden, but the humble inherit the secrets of the King."

5. The Future Revelation of God's Kingdom:

- Anticipating the ultimate unveiling of God's wisdom in the New Jerusalem, where all mysteries will be fully known.
- **Example Verse:** "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor human heart conceived, God has prepared for those who love Him."

Structure of the Gospel

A possible structure for the Ethiopian Gospel of the Hidden Wisdom:

I. The Eternal Wisdom of God

- "From before time, Your wisdom was with You, shaping all that is seen and unseen."

II. The Revelation in Creation

- "The heavens declare Your glory, O Lord, and the earth reveals Your handiwork."

III. The Mystery of the Incarnation

- "In Christ, the Word hidden for ages was made manifest, the light shining in the darkness."

IV. The Wisdom of the Cross

- "What seemed foolish to the world was the power of God for salvation."

V. The Spirit's Work in Revealing Truth

- "Through the Spirit, the veil is lifted, and the secrets of Your kingdom are made known."

VI. The Glory of the Final Revelation

- "In the New Jerusalem, all wisdom will be unveiled, and Your light will shine forever."
-

Liturgical and Mystical Context

1. Ethiopian Liturgy:

- The hidden wisdom of God is celebrated in the Eucharist, where the mystery of Christ's body and blood is unveiled to the faithful.

2. The Role of the Ge'ez Hymnal (Deggwa):

- Hymns often speak of divine mysteries, praising God's wisdom and His plan for humanity.

3. Monastic Reflection:

- Ethiopian monks and nuns meditate deeply on the hidden meanings of scripture, seeking to uncover divine wisdom through prayer and ascetic practices.
-

Symbolism in the Gospel of the Hidden Wisdom

1. The Hidden Treasure:

- Representing the value of God's wisdom, as described in Matthew 13:44.

2. The Lamp:

- Symbolizing scripture and divine truth, illuminating the path to God.

3. The Veil:

- Reflecting the mysteries of God that are revealed gradually through faith and grace.
-

Spiritual Lessons

1. **Seek Wisdom Through Faith:**

- The Gospel encourages believers to approach God with humility, trusting that His wisdom will be revealed in time.

2. **Embrace the Mystery:**

- It reminds Christians that not all answers are immediate, but God's plan is always unfolding.

3. **Live in Light of Divine Wisdom:**

- By aligning their lives with God's Word, believers participate in His eternal wisdom.
-

Conclusion

The **Ethiopian Gospel of the Hidden Wisdom** would serve as a profound reflection on God's eternal plan, revealed through Christ, scripture, and the Holy Spirit. Deeply rooted in Ethiopian Orthodox spirituality, this gospel would celebrate the journey of uncovering divine mysteries and inspire believers to seek God's wisdom with faith, humility, and devotion. It is a timeless reminder that the treasures of God's wisdom are both hidden and revealed, drawing humanity closer to Him through love and grace.

The Ethiopian Hymns of Redemption

The **Ethiopian Hymns of Redemption** are a profound expression of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church's theological emphasis on Christ's salvific work, celebrating His incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and the ultimate restoration of humanity. These hymns, deeply rooted in Ge'ez liturgical tradition, serve as an essential part of the Church's worship, reflecting themes of divine love, mercy, and the triumph over sin and death.

Theological Foundations

The concept of redemption (*Netsuha* in Ge'ez) is central to Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity, focusing on:

7. **Christ's Victory Over Sin and Death:**

- Redemption is achieved through Christ's sacrificial death and victorious resurrection.
- **John 3:16:** "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."

8. **Restoration of Humanity:**

- Christ's work restores the broken relationship between God and humanity, fulfilling the divine plan.
- **Colossians 1:13-14:** "For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."

9. Participation in the Mystery of Redenption:

- Believers partake in Christ's redemptive work through the sacraments, prayer, and holy living.

Themes in the Ethiopian Hymns of Redenption

1. Christ's Incarnation:

- Emphasizing the mystery of the Word becoming flesh to redeem humanity.
- **Example Verse:** "O Word eternal, You clothed Yourself in flesh to bring light to a darkened world."

2. The Cross as the Tree of Life:

- Celebrating the crucifixion as the ultimate act of love and victory over sin.
- **Example Verse:** "Upon the wood of the cross, You bore our burdens, O Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world."

3. The Resurrection's Triumph:

- Rejoicing in Christ's resurrection, which defeats death and opens the gates of eternal life.
- **Example Verse:** "O Risen King, You have shattered the chains of death and called us to life eternal."

4. God's Mercy and Grace:

- Reflecting on the unmerited favor of God in offering redemption.
- **Example Verse:** "Not by our works, O Lord, but by Your mercy, You have redeemed us and made us whole."

5. Hope in Eternal Life:

- Anticipating the final redemption when Christ returns to restore all creation.
 - **Example Verse:** "With joy, we await the day when You shall wipe away every tear, and Your kingdom shall have no end."
-

Structure of the Hynns

A typical hymn of redemption could follow this structure:

I. Invocation

- "O Redeemer of all, we lift our voices in praise, for You have brought salvation to the world."

II. Reflection on the Incarnation

- "Through Your birth, O Word of God, the heavens rejoiced, and the earth found hope."

III. The Cross and Atonement

- "Upon the cross, You poured out Your love, reconciling us to the Father through Your precious blood."

IV. The Joy of the Resurrection

- "O Death, where is your sting? O Grave, where is your victory? The Lord is risen!"

V. Anticipation of the Kingdom

- "Come, Lord Jesus, and make all things new, that we may dwell in Your light forever."

VI. Doxology

- "Glory to You, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and unto the ages of ages. Amen."
-

Liturgical Use

1. The Divine Liturgy (Qidase):

- Hymns of redemption are sung during key moments of the Eucharistic celebration, particularly around the consecration of the bread and wine.

2. Holy Week and Easter (Fasika):

- These hymns are central to the observance of Holy Week, culminating in the triumphant celebration of Christ's resurrection.

3. Morning and Evening Prayers:

- The daily *Hours of Prayer* include hymns and psalms reflecting on redemption.

4. Special Feasts:

- Celebrations like **Tinket** (Epiphany) and **Meskel** (Finding of the True Cross) incorporate hymns highlighting Christ's redemptive mission.
-

Symbolism in the Hynns

1. **The Cross:**

- Representing Christ's victory over sin and the source of life and healing.

2. **The Blood of Christ:**

- Symbolizing atonement and the cleansing of sins.

3. **Light and Darkness:**

- The triumph of Christ's light over the darkness of sin and death.
-

Cultural and Spiritual Impact

1. **Inspiring Faith:**

- The hymns reinforce the believer's trust in God's redemptive power and love.

2. **Strengthening Worship:**

- They unify the congregation in proclaiming the central truths of salvation.

3. **Encouraging Hope:**

- By focusing on Christ's victory, the hymns inspire hope in the promise of eternal life.
-

Conclusion

The **Ethiopian Hymns of Redemption** celebrate the core of the Christian faith: the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Rich in theological depth and liturgical significance, these hymns draw believers into the mystery of God's redemptive work, encouraging a life of gratitude, worship, and hope. As a cornerstone of Ethiopian Orthodox spirituality, they continue to inspire and transform, proclaiming the eternal truth of salvation through Christ.

The Ethiopian Book of the Glory of Mary

The **Ethiopian Book of the Glory of Mary** (*Mäṣṣāfa Säblä Wāngel Maryam* in Ge'ez) represents the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church's profound veneration of the Virgin Mary, celebrating her unparalleled role in salvation history, her virtues, and her intercessory power. While there is no single text explicitly titled this way, the Church has an extensive tradition of Marian hymns, prayers, and narratives found in sources like the *Weddase Maryam* (Praises of Mary), the *Synaxarium*, and

other apocryphal writings. This "Book of the Glory of Mary" could be understood as a conceptual collection reflecting these traditions.

Theological Foundations

Mary occupies a central place in Ethiopian Orthodox theology as:

10. The Theotokos (Mother of God):

- She is honored as the one who bore the incarnate Word, making her the "Ark of the New Covenant."
- **Luke 1:28:** "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you."

11. Queen of Heaven:

- Mary is exalted above all creation for her unique role in God's redemptive plan.
- **Revelation 12:1:** "A woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head."

12. Intercessor and Advocate:

- Mary is seen as a compassionate mother who intercedes for the faithful, bridging the gap between humanity and her Son.
-

Themes in the Glory of Mary

1. Her Divine Maternity:

- Celebrating Mary as the Mother of God, chosen before time to bear the Savior.
- **Example Reflection:** "Before the foundations of the world, You chose her, O Lord, to bear Your eternal Word."

2. Her Purity and Obedience:

- Emphasizing Mary's immaculate purity and humble submission to God's will.
- **Example Reflection:** "Blessed is she who said yes, for through her, salvation entered the world."

3. Her Role in Salvation History:

- Highlighting Mary's pivotal role in the incarnation, Christ's life, and the Church.
- **Example Reflection:** "Through her womb, the Creator entered creation, and heaven and earth were united."

4. Her Intercessory Power:

- Honoring Mary as a merciful advocate who prays for the needs of her children.
- **Example Reflection:** "O Mother of mercy, incline Your ear to our cries and present our petitions before Your Son."

5. Her Eternal Glory:

- Describing Mary's assumption and coronation as Queen of Heaven.
- **Example Reflection:** "The angels rejoice, and the saints sing, for the Queen has ascended to her throne beside the King."

Structure of the Book

A conceptual *Book of the Glory of Mary* could be divided into the following sections:

I. Her Divine Election

- "Before the morning star, she was chosen, the crown of all creation."

II. The Annunciation and Incarnation

- "Gabriel declared, 'Hail, full of grace,' and the Word took flesh within her."

III. Her Role at the Cross

- "She stood at the foot of the cross, her heart pierced, sharing in the suffering of her Son."

IV. Her Intercession for Humanity

- "In the heavenly courts, she pleads for her children, her prayers like incense rising."

V. Her Eternal Reign

- "Clothed with the sun, she reigns with Christ, her glory shining in the heavens."

Liturgical and Devotional Expressions

1. The Weddase Maryan (Praises of Mary):

- A collection of hymns and prayers praising Mary's virtues and intercession, sung daily in Ethiopian Orthodox worship.

2. Feasts Dedicated to Mary:

- Numerous feast days honor Mary, including:
 - **Lideta Maryan (Nativity of Mary):** Nehasé 7 (August 22 Gregorian).
 - **Filseta (Assumption of Mary):** Nehasé 16 (August 31 Gregorian).
 - **Tsega (Annunciation):** Mäggabit 29 (April 7 Gregorian).

3. **Marian Processions:**

- During feasts, icons or *Tabots* (sacred replicas of the Ark of the Covenant) dedicated to Mary are paraded with hymns glorifying her.

4. **Daily Devotion:**

- Believers invoke Mary's intercession in personal prayers, seeking her maternal care and protection.

Symbolism in the Glory of Mary

1. **The Ark of the Covenant:**

- Mary is likened to the Ark, as she bore the presence of God within her.

2. **The Ladder of Jacob:**

- Symbolizing her role as the bridge between heaven and earth.

3. **The Star of the Morning:**

- Reflecting her guidance to Christ, the Light of the World.

Spiritual and Cultural Impact

1. **Unity in Worship:**

- Marian hymns and prayers unite the faithful in a shared expression of devotion.

2. **Inspiration for Holiness:**

- Mary's life inspires believers to emulate her virtues of humility, purity, and faith.

3. **Hope and Comfort:**

- Her intercessory role provides comfort and hope to those seeking God's mercy.

Conclusion

The **Ethiopian Book of the Glory of Mary** encapsulates the deep love and reverence that the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church holds for the Virgin Mary. Through its theological depth, poetic beauty, and liturgical richness, this conceptual "book" reflects Mary's unique role in God's redemptive plan and her ongoing intercession for humanity. It serves as a timeless testament to the Queen of Heaven, whose glory shines brightly in the hearts of the faithful.

The Ethiopian Story of the Holy Trinity

Introduction

A member of the Oriental Orthodox family of Churches, the Church of Ethiopia shares with them in essence a common faith. This faith, the churches believes, is derived from the apostolic heritage and borne witness to in the New Testament against the background of the Old Testament. It has been expounded by the fathers of the Church both in the ancient councils and in their teaching. It continues as a living reality in the church in its life of worship, preaching and discipline. In a word, then in the church of Ethiopia is a community which has inherited and which holds to the historic Christian faith as it has been handed down through the centuries. What is attempted here is, only to give a brief introduction to the faith of the Church of Ethiopia. (1)

The Mystery of the Holy Trinity

God is the only eternal Being. Beyond time, space and all limitations, He abides without a beginning and without an end. "Thou hast no beginning," says in prayer the Ethiopian priest who celebrates the Anaphora of St. John, "but Thou bringest all things to their end. Infinite art Thou, but for all things Thou didst set bounds."

God is the Creator of all that exists. Having made them all, He continues to sustain them. The Lord is high, says the Anaphora. Yet "all were created through His grace, and all live through His kindness". Perfect in Himself, He continually imparts perfection to His creatures. Individuals as well as the entire historical process are ultimately under His control. God is not a passive perfection or an abstract ideal, but a dynamic reality who is ever active in bringing all that exists to the final destiny which He has for each of them as well as for the whole created realm.

God is one in three and three in one. The unity of God is not convinced in the sense of an arithmetical digit nor of a solitary condition, but in that of an all-inclusive perfection. So the one is also eternally three. He is, affirms the Anaphora, "three names and one God, three prosopa and one appearance, three persons and one essence".

The unity of God is confessed as the unity of Godhead – Melekote as the word is used in Ethiopia. The one Godhead is shared equally and eternally by the three Persons – Akal as they are referred to in Ethiopia. As in other parts of the Christian world, in Ethiopia also there were men who tried to interpret the doctrine in various ways. there were, for instance, persons who refused to accept the personal distinctions in the one Godhead and others who insisted that the three Persons were three Gods. Both these views were rejected by the Church.

God is eternally Father, eternally Son, and eternally Holy Spirit. "The Father beget His son without days or hours; and when He beget Him, His Father was not separated from Him." Beyond time, God is the eternal One. That One is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. No one of the three Persons is prior to the other two in time. "The One was not before the Other", says the Anaphora, "and the Second was not before the Third." But "we proclaim that the Father lived with His Son, and that the Son lived with His Father before creation, and before the heavens and the earth were made."

In the one co-eternal and co-equal Trinity, the Father is the eternal source of the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Son is born of, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from, the Father. While affirming that the Son and the Holy Spirit derive each of them His respective being eternally from the Father, it is insisted that "the Father did not beget the Son to help Him in His work before the world was created and the existence of the Holy Spirit is not to contribute wisdom and work."

It is not with the Deity as it was with Abraham who was older than Isaac. Or with Isaac who was older than Jacob, but the Father is not older than the Son, neither is the Son older than the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is not younger than the Son, neither is the Son younger than His Father.

The Father is different from the Son and the Holy Spirit only in that He alone is Father. The Son alone is Son, and the Holy Spirit alone dwells in us and makes God known to us. So the priest who celebrates the Anaphora of St. John says in prayer, "But thy living Holy Spirit knoweth the depth of Thy Godhead. He has declared to us Thy nature, and told us about Thy oneness. He taught thy unity, and helped to know Thy Trinity." The one Godhead is, therefore, in the Father in perfection. From Him the same Godhead is received in perfection by the Son through His eternal generation; and from the Father again the same Godhead in perfection is derived eternally by the Holy Spirit. It is affirmed at the same time with equal force that "the father is not greater than the Son, and the Son is not less than His Father," and the Holy Spirit is not greater or less than either the Father or Son. Thus the unity of God is affirmed by confessing that the Godhead is one, and that the Godhead is eternally in the Father. The Son and the Holy Spirit receive the same Godhead eternally and in perfection from the Father.

There is also another equally important emphasis regarding divine unity. This lies in the affirmation that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are eternally inseparably together. In everything that the Father does, the Son and the Holy Spirit are there with Him; in all the things that the Son does, the Father and the Holy Spirit are there with Him; and in all activities of the Holy Spirit, the Father and the Son are also with him. It is affirmed that "the father, being Father, doth not give orders to the Son; and the Son, being Son, is not exalted; and the Holy Spirit is equal. Both the divine Father, Son and Holy Spirit is equal. But the divine Father, Son and Holy Spirit and are one God, one Kingdom, one authority and one government."

If we may put the emphasis in our words, the term "Father" with reference to God signifies the divine reality which originates everything; the Son indicates the divine reality implying all that is originated; and the Holy Spirit signifies the divine reality which dwells in creatures relating them both individually and corporately to God. The eternal God, as we have noted already, is the all-inclusive perfection. He creates all things; He sustains them; and He guides them to a final destiny.

Infinite love, God creates and sustains the world and all that there is in it. It is God the Father who brings all this into being; but it is accomplished in reality through the Son, and is perfected in the Holy Spirit. All this is one activity of God consisting of different aspects. Grounded in the Son and upheld and perfected by the Holy Spirit, the created world belongs to the Father. In His love God the Father sent His only Son into the world in order to accomplish its salvation; in the same love God the Son came and worked out the world's salvation; in the same love again God the Holy Spirit

perfects the salvation thus given. All these are manifestation at different levels of the same activity of God in relation to the world. (1)

The meaning of Holy Trinity (Pope Shenouda III)

The Mystery of the Incarnation

The incarnation of God the Son is primarily for the salvation of the world. Salvation means to restoration of the world to its direct and unimpeded relation with God.

As God made it, the world was very good. But evil came there in it. God who made the world is ever concerned and active to save it from the clutches of evil and restore it to the destiny for which it has been created. Incarnation is God's supreme act in saving the world.

God the Son entered the earthly realm of existence in a unique way by taking over Himself a perfectly real human life. This is incarnation by which God the Father who created the world through God the Son and perfects it through God the Holy Spirit, manifests through the Son His saving work for the world and completes it in the Holy Spirit. As creation is the work of God, redemption is also God's work.

God who created the world made man as the crown of creation. Made in God's image and endowed with creaturely freedom and autonomy, man seeks God and reflects on His being and nature. Through the wrong exercise of man's freewill there came on him and the world at large misery and suffering as well as sin and evil. The salvation of the world, therefore, required pre-eminently the healing of man. It is this healing which the Incarnation is believed by the Church to have aimed to accomplish.

In the Incarnation, God the Son united to Himself real and perfects manhood. Conceived in her womb by Mary the Virgin through the work of the Holy Spirit, He was born in the world as a real man. At the very moment of His conception, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, a personal manhood was formed in the Virgin's womb in union with God the Son. Thus God the Son united to Himself the manhood taken from the human mother and was born as perfect God and perfect man in the real sense.

Jesus Christ, the incarnate God the Son, is one Person, continuous with Godhead and continuous with manhood. In Him Godhead and manhood continue each in its integrity and perfection, in a state of indivisible and unconfused union.

On this ground the Church of Ethiopia, with the other Oriental Orthodox Churches, affirms that Jesus Christ is not two natures, but one incarnate nature of God the Word. The "one" here is not meant to ignore the dynamic continuance of either Godhead or manhood in the one Christ, but to confess a real incarnation whereby God the Son entered the world of ours as a man. He is indeed God the incarnate Son even while He is found to undergo the frailty of manhood.

Living as He did a life of unbroken communion with God, He was absolutely sinless. Maintaining

this union in the most inward and real sense, He entered into our battle with sin and evil as a man, and fell a victim to our death. By His suffering and ignominious death on the cross He scored a victory over the forces of evil, and by His resurrection from the dead He lives eternally in His natural unity with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, and in his unbroken and indivisible union with the manhood. In Jesus Christ, then, we have the incarnate, crucified and glorified God the Son, who is Himself our brother, signifying the final destiny awaiting the human race.

Regarding the Person of Jesus Christ also there have been serious discussions in Ethiopia. But the Church holds to the view that He is God the Son in His incarnate state. Born of God the Father eternally as God the Son, He was born of the Virgin Mother as a real man. There are a number of affirmations in the Anaphora regarding Him, some of which may be noted here.

1. Jesus Christ was born of Our Lady Mary for our salvation. He who does not believe in His birth from Holy Mary, let him be anathema.
2. In this way, after being conceived in the womb of the Virgin, God the Son was born as a man. By His conception, God the Son became incarnate "taking our nature." The Son who is born of the Father without a mother, was born as a man without a Father. "He put on mortal flesh and made it immortal," and He came truly into the world "clothed in the body which He took from us."
3. His human birth was a unique event, whereby God the Son "came down through the will of His Father" and was made man. "His humanity was not inferior because He had no Father to be born of His seed." This is incarnation, whereby God the Son entered the historical realm in order to save it forever.
4. In the Incarnation, God the Son united to Himself manhood and "made it one with his Godhead without mixture or confusion, without division or alternation." Therefore, "His Godhead was not separated from His manhood, not for an hour, nor for the twinkling of an eye."
5. God the Son came to us "without being separated from His Godhead." After being born, "He grew like an infant, and grew little by little until He matured like a man. At the age of thirty He was baptized in the Jordan." He was tempted by the devil; "He hungered and thirsted," He went about "preaching the gospel of the kingdom of Heaven." By this, who is perfect like God the Father and is His image walked among us in our image.
6. He suffered passion and death voluntarily on our behalf and for our sakes. He became hungry as man, and granted food to many with very little bread. He thirsted as a man who dies, but changed water into wine as being able to give life to all.

They bet Him on the head as a servant and He set free from the yoke of sin as Lord of all. He suffered all. He cured the blind with His spittle and gave us the Holy Spirit by receiving the spittle of the unclean. He who forgiveth sin was accused as a sinner by them. The judge of judges was judged by them. He was crucified on the tree to destroy sin, was crucified with the sinner to control with the righteous. He died through His will, and was buried willingly; He died to destroy death, He died to give life to the dead; He was buried to raise those who were buried, to keep the living, to justify the impure, to justify the sinners, to gather together those who were scattered, and to turn the sinners to glory and honour.

Such passages in the Anaphora are too numerous to be reproduced or even noted in the present context. They show that Jesus Christ was at once God and man without division or confusion. The same Christ, God the Son incarnate, expressed the divine actions as well as the human. He is one Christ, in whom God and man are indivisibly united.

7. As to the absolute reality of the suffering and death, there are passages almost without number. We shall reproduce here two of them, one taken from the Anaphora of St. James of Serug, and the other from the Anaphora of St. Dioscorus. The priest who celebrates using the first of these two Anaphora's says in prayer:

O Lord, Thou wast struck with the hands of a servant, beaten with sticks, pierced with a spear, and they caused Thee to drink a little gall with vinegar. While Thou was God able to prevent them, thou didst not prevent them, Thou didst become patient even to death; all this thou didst accept for the love of man.

The Anaphora of St. Dioscorus contains the following passages bearing on the point at issue in the present context. The priest says there in prayer:

He was laid in the manger of the cattle, received the presents of His kingdom, and wept as infants do, asking for food from the breast of His mother. As to suffering and death in particular, we have passages like the following. They crucified Him on the tree, nailed him with nails, beat Him on the head with sticks, pierced his side with a spear, to Him who gave drink to the Israelites from a rock they gave to drink gall mixed with myrrh in His thirst. The immortal died, died to destroy death, died to quicken the dead as He promised them with the word of covenant.

8. Death was not the end of His dispensation. "He rose from the dead, absolutely without corruption and set is free from the yoke of sin." The risen Christ ascended into heaven and is with God the Father. He has triumphed over death and decay.

These and the many other passages in the Liturgy show that the manhood of Christ was absolutely real and perfect. But everywhere the emphasis is on the unity of Jesus Christ. It is affirmed that He is God the Son in His incarnate state. As regards the Incarnation, it is clearly shown that He was conceived in the Virgin's womb, and that He was born as a real man. At the very moment of His conception, through the Holy Spirit, actual manhood was formed from the human mother in union with Himself. It is to Him who was thus conceived that the Virgin gave birth. Therefore, Jesus Christ is indivisibly one. The two natures of Godhead and manhood which came into union in Him continue in the one Christ, each in its absolute integrity and perfection with its respective properties, without change or division. Each of them continues in its dynamic reality, not in a quiescent state, so that Christ is God and man at the same time.

The Church of Ethiopia, with the other Oriental Orthodox Churches, has refused to accept the Chalcedonian Definition of the Faith with the affirmation that Christ is "made known in two natures." If by the expression the Churches which accept the Definition mean only that Godhead and manhood continue in the one Christ dynamically, this is the teaching of the Ethiopian Orthodox

Church. On the other hand, if the expression is taken in the sense that Godhead and manhood continue in Christ only in a state of moral union, there is a basic difference on this issue between the churches of the Chalcedonian tradition and the Church of Ethiopia, which should be noted. (1)

[The Incarnation \(St. Athanasius\)](#)

The Mystery of Baptism

"He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned." (Mk. 16:6). Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the spirit he can not enter the kingdom of God." (John 3:5).

In accordance with such writings of the Holy Scriptures, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church baptizes male infants at the age of 40 days and female infants at the age of 80 days, (Lev. 12:2-7). Yet if an infant is sick, so that the infant may not die before being baptized and be subjected to the unchangeable order of the Lord Jesus Christ, "unless one is born of water and the spirit he can not enter the kingdom of God", the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church baptizes infants just as they come even prior to the above fixed baptismal dates. In addition, if an adult believes and requests baptism, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church willingly complies and baptizes him or her.

Few words from the Holy Scriptures that testify Baptism

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt. 28:19). And Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of the Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts. 2:38). "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts. 10:48). "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into His death" (Rome 6:3). "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free- and all were made to drink of one spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13). "Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves us (you), not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a clear conscience..." (1 Pet. 3:12). Such words testify to the usefulness of our Baptism. (2)

The Mystery of the Holy Communion; what is Holy Communion?

It is a sacrament through which we are far off from the domination of sin and get nearer of attain to communion with God. It originates from the rites conducted by the children of Israel when they attained their freedom from the bondage of slavery and so killed a ritual sheep and sprinkled its blood on the door posts to protect themselves from sudden death and destruction. Based on this example, Jesus Christ, who is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world has founded the Mystery of the Holy Communion by offering. Himself as a true sacrifice on the cross. (Ex. 5-15 Isa. 53: 7 Jn. 1:29). "For the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God," (Heb. 7:19)

The Preparation and Presentation of the Holy Communion is in the form of bread and wine; i.e. like that of Melchizedek, King of Salem's presentation to Abraham (Gen. 14:18). Why the Holy Communion is called Mystery is that by partaking of the visible Bread and Wine, we attain to invisible heavenly blessings and eternal life. "...Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, you have no life in you; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in Me; and I in him," (Jn. 6: 53-57). "Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, (will be examined by the Blessed Holy Trinity of being unworthy) and will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the Bread and drink of the Cup. For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment upon himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. But if we judged ourselves truly, we should not be judged' (1 Cor. 11:27-32). It is, therefore, based on this teaching that the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church calls upon her followers to be pure from sin, reveille strange thoughts, fornication etc. and to receive the true flesh and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ who was crucified upon the cross on Holy Friday for the salvation of the world.

The priest when putting the bread on the plate and the wine in the cup (chalice) blesses them. During the service of the Holy Liturgy, the bread turns into the true flesh of the Son of God and the wine into the true blood of the Son of God. Athanasius said, "we believe that the bread and wine before the priest blesses them are simple bread and wine, but after the blessing they are truly turned into the flesh and the blood of the Son of God," "Therefore, what the Apostles received on the night of Good Thursday, and what has been sacrificed upon the cross on Good Friday, and what is still being offered today and to the end of the world in the four corners of the world is one and the same. St. John of Chrysostom said that, the poor sacrifice which the priests offer every time is one and the same sacrifice, which has been offered upon the cross.

He (St. John) also confirms that it is not a symbol, but the real and blood of the Son of God.

Supporting scriptural words about the teaching Of the Holy Communion "Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, take, eat; this is my Body. And He took a cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, saying, drink of it, all of you; for this is my Blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins," (Mt. 26: 26-29; Mk, 14: 22; Lk. 22: 19). "Truly truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven, and gives life to the world" (Jn. 6: 32; 35; 51-59), such passages confirm the doctrine of the Holy Communion. (2)

The Mystery of the Resurrection

"Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear His voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment" (Jn. 5: 28-29). St. Paul said. "There is one glory of the Sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. So it is with the resurrection of the dead. (1 Cor. 15: 41-42).

Supporting Scriptural Words Concerning the Resurrection

“ For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the son and believes in Him should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day” (Jn. 5: 25, 6: 40, 11:25) “ Knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into His presence” (2 Cor. 4:14). “ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel’s call; and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first,” (1 Thess. 4:16). “Having a hope in God which these themselves accept that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust.” (Acts 24: 15, Dan. 12: 2). The Resurrection of those already raised in the Scripture is an evidence of our Resurrection.

Elijah raised one child (1 Kg. 17: 21-22) Elisha raised the Son of the Shunammite (2 Kg 4:35) a dead man raised on the touch of the bone of Elisha (2 Kg. 13: 21).

A daughter of a ruler was raised by the Lord (Mt. 9: 25). The dead who were raised on the crucifixion day of the Lord. (Mt. 27:52)

The Son of a widow at Nail was raised by the Lord (Lk. 7:15).

The raising of Lazarus at Bethany by the Lord (Jn. 11: 43-44)

Dorcas was raised by Peter (Acts 9: 40) .

The bodily living (life) of Enoch and Elijah is one indication of our resurrected eternal life. But our fundamental understanding of our raising is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. As Amoniyos and Awsabeyos stated in the introduction of the Gospel, “He is risen so as to teach the Resurrection, of our bodies”

Based on the above teachings, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church offers belief and worships the High God who creates and rules. In this teaching, our church is in accordance with the ancient churches; such as Alexandrian, Syrian, Armenian, and Indian Orthodox Churches. (2)

Hunan Salvation

The Incarnation is first and foremost for the salvation of the world, The salvation of the world means pre-eminently the redemption of the human race. The saving work of God accomplished through the Incarnation is to be appropriated by man, both individually and corporately. It is when this is done with reference to the entire human race that the work of salvation of the world will have been perfected. God Himself is carrying on this work through the Holy Spirit.

In his life and existence man includes both the individual and the corporate dimensions. The saving work accomplished by God in the Incarnation should, therefore, be assimilated and perfected in both these dimensions. It is to carry on this divine work that the Church is founded by God. The incarnate, crucified and risen Christ is in the Church, which is His body on earth, through the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit works in the Church through individual members as well as its community as a corporate body, in order to make the saving activity of God real to them. This is done through the various ministries of the Sacraments, preaching and teaching. In this way individual persons are inspired to dedicate their lives, and both individuals and communities are guided to carry forward the ministry of Jesus Christ in the social, economic, political and such other spheres of human life for the well-being of man and the world at large.

This concern is giving expression to in the Anaphora's of the Church of Ethiopia by including prayers for all these areas of life in the world. Thus prayers are offered for rains, that God may send them where they are needed; for waters of the rivers, that "God should fill them unto their due measure and bounds"; for the fruits of the earth, that "God may grant to the earth her fruit for sowing and for harvest"; and for the prevailing of the spirit of peace for the people. In the same way every liturgical celebration includes intercession for the Emperor as the Head of the State and for ecclesiastical leaders. Besides, traders, farmers and craftsmen, as well as those in need, sickness or oppression are specially remembered. Prayers are also offered for those who have fallen in any manner of sin. All these show that the entire realm of nature and all conditions of men and women are committed to divine protection and care at every service of worship.

The Christian's ultimate concern in life is not understood in terms merely of the hope for a blessed life in the world to come. On the other hand, this world itself is affirmed to belong to God. But the fact of evil in it is admitted, both in the natural realm and in the moral realm. Salvation is a present experience consisting in man's complete confidence and communion with God as well as his perfect peace and harmony with his fellow beings. This state of being which should be ours here and now should grow till it reaches its final culmination in the eternal realm. Thus salvation is a present reality which has a future reference. The Church has the responsibility to inspire its member to work for the well being of life in the world here and now and to proclaim the hope of eternal life in the world to come.

In this world man is entitled to individual freedom, social justice, economic sufficiency and such other rights as will enable him to develop his talents for the good of himself and of others. The Church as a body should stand for the realization of these rights. However, the Church of Ethiopia does not agree with the view that the Christian's concern is only to work for the welfare of man in this world. This world and our lives in it are nothing but transitory. No man can be absolutely sure of what will happen to him tomorrow. Furthermore, material prosperity does not as a rule lead to peaceful life, either for the individual or for peoples and nations. In any case, the Church of Ethiopia does not think that its mission is to build up exclusively a city in this world. The hope in the life of the world to come is an integral part of its faith.

The Apostolic Creed which is in use in the Church of Ethiopia has three sections bearing on our discussion in the present context. The first of them insists that "all creatures of God are good and there is nothing to be rejected, and the spirit, the life of the body, is pure and holy in all." The entire natural realm has been made pure and holy by God and all that is for man's regular use. The second passage affirms that "marriage is pure, and childbirth is undefiled, because God created Adam and Eve to multiply." This is a clear statement which shows that in the faith of the Church of Ethiopia,

human society is of divine creation, so that the social, economic political and other such ties of man are divinely instituted. In the third passage there is the confession that we "believe in the resurrection of the dead, the righteous and sinners; and in the Day of Judgment when everyone will be recompensed according to his deeds." This statement affirms the eschatological hope in the Church's faith.

Putting the three ideas together, we can say that according to the faith of the Church of Ethiopia, the natural realm has been created by God, who has Himself placed man in the world as a member of society. There is a destiny awaiting man, and that is to be attained by him in the risen life in the world to come. In the face of evil and sin in this world of our God has worked out man's salvation through His incarnate Son, who rose from the dead and lives eternally offering us the assurance of a resurrection that will be ours also. (1)

A word in conclusion

The eternal and triune God who is beyond time and space has created the world in time and space. He has redeemed the world and continues His work of perfecting the saving act. The salvation was accomplished by God through the suffering, death and resurrection of His incarnate Son and is perfected through His Holy Spirit.

It is this saving work of God that is represented in every celebration of the Holy Eucharist, which is not merely a memorial service to commemorate the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But in it the Church offers itself and the whole-redeemed human race together with the natural realm of earthly existence to the triune God. This is why in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, as also in its various other acts of worship, the Church calls to remembrance the living and the departed sections of the communion of saints. This is done in the context of remembering the saving acts of God, not merely as past events, but as events which happened actually in the realm of history and which signify the continuous work of God for the salvation of the world. The Service of the Holy Eucharist brings to us above all the assurance of the eschatological dimension of the Christian faith.

We proclaim Thy death, Lord and Thy holy resurrection, we believe in Thine ascension and Thy second coming, we glorify Thee, we offer our prayer unto Thee and supplicate Thee our Lord and our God.

Grant us, Lord, to do Thy will and Thy good pleasure at all times, and write our names in the book of life in the kingdom of heaven with all saints and martyrs, through Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom, to Thee, with Him and with the Holy Spirit be glory and dominion, both now and ever and world without end.

Amen. (1)

The Martyrdom of Abba Samuel of Waldebba

On Tahisas 12/ November 22, the Ethiopian church commemorates the passing away of Abba Samuel of Waldebba. The brief memory of this great saint recorded in Ethiopic is Synaxarium as follows.

In the Name of the Father, the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, One God, amen.

On this day died Abba Samuel of Waldebba. He was born of Stephen, and Amata Mariam around 1295 Eth.ca. At his early age, his parent took him to the country of Aksum and taught him the Holy Scriptures. When his father and mother died, he went to Dabra Bankol to Abba Madhanina Egzi'e, and he put on the garb of the monastic life, and fought the fight with fasting and prayer. He ate nothing except withered and decayed herbs, and his drink was water, and he became the servant of the monks, in the grinding of corn, and the drawing of water.

When his family came to visit him repeatedly, he departed to another place and devoted himself to rigorous monastic life. Thence he departed to the desert, and he ate no food whatsoever for forty days and forty nights. There, the lions, and the leopards, and all kinds of terrifying wild beasts came and bowed down before him, and licked the dust at his feet.

One day as he was going along the road, he arrived at a valley which was full of water. At this time he had with him a book and some fire. After making a prayer, he entered and crossed the water by the power of God although the water engulfed him and dragged him down and found the fire not extinguished, and the book uninjured.

Satan used to try him with phantoms of every kind of wild beast, but he was not frightened because his mind was bound up with confidence in his God. As Abba Samuel was praying our Lord Jesus Christ came to him, and sealed his whole body and each limb thereof with His spittle, and he became filled with power. From that day he bound his feet with fetters, and wore sackcloth. And he thrust all his limbs into water, and he recited the Psalms of David five times each day, and he scourged his back frequently with strips. The lions used to peer into his cave like sheep, and of some he used to stroke their bodies, and of others he used to dress their wounds; and he pluck out the thorns from their paws.

During his lifetime, many disciples attached themselves to him, and of these the first was Abba Zarufael. One day Abba Samuel met Abba Gabra Maskal, of Dabra Laggaso and they passed the day in describing the great works of God. At the time for supper, when they were making their prayers, a table came down to them from heaven, and they ate and gave thanks to God.

Then one day he met a certain monk from the desert, and when they began to talk about the Mysteries which God had made for them, Abuna Samuel said, "Behold, for twelve years I have been standing in the heights and censing the throne of God with the Four and Twenty Priests of Heaven." When he went in to consecrating the Offerings, there came down to him bread and a chalice from heaven; and when he was reading the Praises of our Lady Maryam, he was lifted up off the ground to the height of a cubit, and our Holy Lady, the Virgin Maryam, came and gave him a precious stone which shot out light from it, and some pure incense.

When the time of his departure drew nigh Michael the Archangel came unto him, and he caught him up on his wings and showed him all the delights of the heavenly Jerusalem. And he brought him

before the throne of God, and then Abba Samuel received from him the promise concerning the man who should invoke his name or celebrate his commemoration. When he returned to his bed he told his disciples everything, which he had seen, and then he died in peace.

Salutation to Abba Samuel!

Waldebba monastery is one of the oldest and famous Ethiopian monasteries where the monks abstain entirely from eating food for ascetic life except "Rolled Quarf" which is made up of immature banana mixed with the root of a certain tree. According to the tradition of the monastery, Waldebba monastery is believed to have been established around five centuries earlier. Later on Abba Samuel of Waldebba expanded and formed a monastic order and drew up a set of rules in the 14th century.

May the intercession of Abba Samuel be with us and glory be to God!

The Acts of the Apostles of Light

The **Acts of the Apostles of Light** could represent a conceptual or speculative text that emphasizes the apostolic mission to spread the Gospel as the "light of the world" (Matthew 5:14) and to bear witness to Christ, who is the "Light of Life" (John 8:12). While no text explicitly titled this way exists, such a work aligns with the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church's rich tradition of honoring the apostles as bearers of divine truth and light to all nations.

Theological Foundations

1. Christ as the Light:

- The apostles' mission is grounded in Jesus' identity as the Light of the World, who dispels darkness and reveals God's truth.
- **John 1:9:** "The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world."

2. The Apostolic Mandate:

- Christ commissioned the apostles to carry His light to the ends of the earth, illuminating hearts and minds through the Gospel.
- **Matthew 28:19-20:** "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

3. The Holy Spirit as the Source of Light:

- The descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost empowered the apostles to carry out their mission as bearers of divine light.
- **Acts 2:3-4:** "They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them."

Themes in the Acts of the Apostles of Light

1. The Light of Christ in the Apostles:

- The narrative would highlight how the apostles reflected Christ's light through their teachings, miracles, and martyrdom.
- **Example Verse:** "Through their hands, the blind saw, the lame walked, and the hearts of many were illuminated."

2. Spreading the Light to the Nations:

- Emphasis on the apostles' journeys to bring the Gospel to diverse peoples, overcoming cultural and spiritual darkness.
- **Example Verse:** "From Jerusalem to the ends of the earth, they carried the flame of truth."

3. Persecution and the Unquenchable Light:

- Despite trials and opposition, the apostles' light could not be extinguished, symbolizing the enduring power of the Gospel.
- **Example Verse:** "Though imprisoned and beaten, their words shone brighter than the stars."

4. Unity in the Light:

- The apostles' mission fostered a community of believers united by the light of Christ, forming the early Church.
- **Example Verse:** "They broke bread together, and their fellowship was a beacon in the darkness."

5. The Call to Walk in the Light:

- Encouraging believers to live as children of the light, spreading the Gospel through word and deed.
- **Example Verse:** "You are the light of the world; let your light shine before all people."

Structure of the Acts

A conceptual **Acts of the Apostles of Light** could be divided into key sections:

I. The Commissioning by the Light

- "O apostles, you are the chosen lamps of the Lord, sent to illumine the nations with His truth."

II. Pentecost: The Ignition of the Flame

- "The Spirit descended as tongues of fire, and their words became light to the nations."

III. Miracles of Illumination

- "Through their touch, the blind received sight, both of the eyes and the soul."

IV. Persecution and Resilience

- "Though darkness rose against them, the light they bore could not be overcome."

V. The Apostolic Legacy

- "From generation to generation, their words have shone, guiding many to the eternal Light."

VI. The Eternal Light of Christ

- "The light they carried will never fade, for it shines in the glory of the Risen Lord."

Key Stories and Narratives

1. Peter's Illumination of the Crowds:

- At Pentecost, Peter's sermon brings 3,000 souls to faith, symbolizing the spread of divine light.

2. Paul's Encounter with the Light:

- Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus exemplifies the transformative power of Christ's light.

3. Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch:

- Philip's guidance brings light to the Ethiopian, who carries the Gospel to his homeland.

4. The Miracles of Healing:

- Stories of apostles healing the sick and raising the dead as acts of bringing light to those in despair.

Liturgical and Devotional Context

1. Feasts of the Apostles:

- Ethiopian Orthodox Christians commemorate the apostles through feast days, reflecting on their roles as bearers of light.

2. Hymns of Illumination:

- Hymns from the *Deggwa* (liturgical hymnal) often praise the apostles as carriers of divine wisdom and light.

3. Iconography:

- Ethiopian icons depict apostles with halos or torches, symbolizing their roles as bringers of Christ's light.
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Synbolism in the Acts

1. The Lanp:

- Representing the apostles as vessels of God's light, shining in a darkened world.

2. Fire:

- Symbolizing the Holy Spirit, empowering the apostles to spread the Gospel.

3. Stars:

- Reflecting the apostles' guidance and constancy in leading people to Christ.
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Spiritual Lessons

1. Living as Children of the Light:

- Believers are called to reflect Christ's light in their lives, just as the apostles did.

2. Perseverance in Darkness:

- The apostles' unwavering faith amid persecution inspires resilience and hope.

3. Unity in the Gospel:

- Their mission reminds the Church of the importance of unity in spreading the light of Christ.
-

Conclusion

The **Acts of the Apostles of Light** would serve as a celebration of the apostles' mission to illuminate the world with the Gospel of Christ. Through their teachings, miracles, and sacrifices, they reflected the unquenchable light of God's truth and love. This conceptual work would inspire believers to walk in the light, carry the Gospel to others, and remain steadfast in their faith, shining brightly in a darkened world.

The Gospel of the Savior's Wisdom

In 1967, the Berlin Egyptian Museum obtained 33 fragments of papyri that had been part of the Oxyrhynchus discovery. The fragments were simply labeled as P22220. They were unceremoniously placed in metal boxes and forgotten for decades. Then, in the early 1990s, two American scholars

began to independently decipher some of these texts. The first scholar, Paul Mirecke, pulled fragments at random out of the box in which they had been stored. He spent the next few years restoring and translating these Coptic texts. Included among them were two longer fragments of P22220. At first, he thought the verses were a sermon paraphrased from the existing gospels; this wasn't his focus, so he sort of dismissed them. He placed the fragments in a paper folder, intending to come back to them for additional study.

In 1995, the second scholar, Charles Hedrick, came upon the folders, and took it upon himself to count and number the fragments. Both scholars took extensive photographs of the (now) 34 fragments belonging to P22220. As they continued to work on it, they pared the fragments down to 28, which, from then on, were properly stored and conserved between glass plates. Several of the fragments included page numbers that ranged from 97 through 114, though several pages were missing. Scholars estimate that this gospel might have been 30 or more pages long. Because so much is missing, the first order of business was to put the fragments in order. Needless to say, there was more than one possibility, which has led to some lively discussions.

As they worked on the fragments, they realized that these weren't just paraphrases, but actual sayings of Jesus recorded in an unknown gospel. Initially, the fragments were referred to as the "Unknown Gospel of Berlin," but later scholars began to call the work "The Gospel of the Savior" because the speaker is identified as the "Savior." It is a gospel in that it is comprised of sayings attributed to Jesus and short stories about him, as well as longer passages about his career. However, scholars are quick to point out that neither Jesus' name nor the title, The Christ, appears in any of the verses. Some of these sayings are entirely new; others resemble what we have in the canonical writings.

The sayings are most like what one might find in the Gospel of John, though several also parallel Matthew (more so than Mark). One example of this would be the familiar verse in Matt 5:13, "You are the salt of the earth." This gospel, however, continues, "You are the lamp that illuminates the world." (p97:19) The latter phrase, while different from Matthew's, has some affinities with a saying in the Gospel of Thomas (24). Many other sayings are also quite familiar: I and my Father are a single one; I am the Good Shepherd; It is written: I will strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered."

These sayings are followed by admonitions to not "sleep nor slumber," again reminiscent of Jesus' commands to his disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane. Shortly thereafter, there is a new speaker named Andrew (references to two other apostles, John and Jude, occur later in the text). But, since the context is lost, it is uncertain whether he is asking or answering a question.

Then comes a change in subject wherein the speaker now talks about going down to Hades, though the purpose is not entirely clear. Nonetheless, the Savior will soon joyfully appear to them. And while they are in the body, they should not allow matter to rule over them. (Such hints of Gnosticism can be found throughout the text.) Then, they all arise because "the betrayer" is at hand. Predictably, the Savior anticipates that the disciples will all flee, but affirms that God will always be present.

Indeed, shortly thereafter is a visionary ascent "upon the mountain," in which the disciples accompany the Savior. This alarms those who are already in heaven and creates a considerable

disturbance. Nonetheless, the Savior "pierced through all the heavens," thus opening the gates for his followers and making them eyewitnesses to what transpired. Though the text is quite difficult to decipher, it appears that the Savior is speaking. Different scholars arrange fragments differently, leaving some discussion as to whether the Savior is addressing God or the cross at this point.

There is a section in which the Savior addresses the cross directly. He acknowledges that the purpose of the cross is to be raised. The cross should not be afraid. "I am rich. I will fill you with my wealth. I will mount you....Do not weep, O cross, but rather rejoice and recognize your Lord as he is coming to you." Later on, the Savior adds, "What is lacking will become complete ...what is empty will become full....what has fallen will arise." He continues, "I will precede you....Whoever is far from you is far from me." Scholars assume that promises of wealth have to do with the power and Spirit of God. In this exchange, it appears that the Savior is eager for the cross in that poverty, lack, emptiness, and "fallen" will be replaced with wealth, fullness, completion, and "will arise." These terms and images are common in gnostic texts, and describe the physical giving way to the spiritual.

In another section, the Savior and the apostles are standing in the throne room before God. There are the usual references to hymn singing, crowns, and robes. The Savior, however, falls down before God and speaks directly to him. He apparently does this three times, but again, much is missing from the text. It does appear that the Son is "weeping and distressed," which might also account for the departure of the angels and the disturbance in heaven. The Savior seems to be upset about "the people of Israel." When he begins speaking, he asks, "O my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." This is very close to the synoptic account in Matthew. The conversation then returns to the people of Israel for whom he is praying.

Unfortunately, much is missing at this point. When the text is resumed, it appears that salvation will be granted to Israel and the world in consequence of the Savior's intercession. The Father continues to address the Son, but the answer remains unknown except for occasional words – "Come my Son...Be strong, Son...Come, my Son and you..." Scholars would love to know more about the Father's response.

Such phrases and words obviously indicate that this was part of a larger narrative. Clearly, many of the phrases are similar to verses from the passion narratives. In this gospel, the disciples are witnessing Jesus' transfiguration after the Last Supper. That would mean, if the fragments had been correctly placed in chronological order, in this Gospel, the transfiguration would have occurred after Gethsemane. On p108, the crucifixion is still a future possibility, but it is probably described around page 114; unfortunately, those pages are missing.

The occasional scholar has also thrown out the possibility that all these conversations could already be post-resurrection appearances, though there is no consensus on this. The Gnostic flavor includes teachings that salvation comes through a higher understanding and the Savior's conversation with his disciples in which secret "visionary" truths about the universe are revealed.

Scholars are delighted with this new gospel. It presents a Savior (Jesus) that is both familiar and different while it elaborates upon Jesus' farewell discourse with his disciples. The highlight is their telling of their ascent to the heavens. Needless to say, this brings an added dimension to the study and reconstruction of the early Church.

The Apocalypse of Thomas (Extended Fragments)

Here beginneth the epistle of the Lord unto Thomas.

Hear thou, Thomas, the things which must come to pass in the last times: there shall be famine and war and earthquakes in divers places, snow and ice and great drought shall there be and many dissensions among the peoples, blasphemy, iniquity, envy and villainy, indolence, pride and intemperance, so that every man shall speak that which pleaseth him. And my priests shall not have peace among themselves, but shall sacrifice unto me with deceitful mind: therefore will I not look upon them. Then shall the priests behold the people departing from the house of the Lord and turning unto the world (?) and setting up (or, transgressing) landmarks in the house of God. And they shall claim (vindicate) for themselves many [things and] places that were lost and that shall be subject unto Caesar (?) as also they were aforetime: giving poll-taxes of (for) the cities, even gold and silver and the chief men of the cities shall be condemned (here Verona ends: Munich continues) and their substance brought into the treasury of the kings, and they shall be filled.

For there shall be great disturbance throughout all the people, and death. The house of the Lord shall be desolate, and their altars shall be abhorred, so that spiders weave their webs therein. The place of holiness shall be corrupted, the priesthood polluted, distress (agony) shall increase, virtue shall be overcome, joy perish, and gladness depart. In those days evil shall abound: there shall be respecters of persons, hymns shall cease out of the house of the Lord, truth shall be no more, covetousness shall abound among the priests; an upright man (al. an upright priesthood) shall not be found.

On a sudden there shall arise near the last time a king, a lover of the law, who shall hold rule not for long: he shall leave two sons. The first is named of the first letter (A, Arcadius), the second of the eighth (H, Honorius). The first shall die before the second (Arcadius died in 408- Honorius in 423).

Thereafter shall arise two princes to oppress the nations under whose hands there shall be a very great famine in the right-hand part of the east, so that nation shall rise up against nation and be driven out from their own borders.

Again another king shall arise, a crafty man (?), and shall command a golden image of Caesar (?) to be made (al. to be worshipped in the house of God), wherefore (?) martyrdoms shall abound. Then shall faith return unto the servants of the Lord, and holiness shall be multiplied and distress (agony) increase. The mountains shall be comforted and shall drop down sweetness of fire from the facet, that the number of the saints may be accomplished.

After a little space there shall arise a king out of the east, a lover of the law, who shall cause all good things and necessary to abound in the house of the Lord: he shall show mercy unto the widows and to the needy, and command a royal gift to be given unto the priests: in his days shall be abundance of all things.

And after that again a king shall arise in the south part of the world, and shall hold rule a little space: in whose days the treasury shall fail because of the wages of the Roman soldiers so that the substance of all the aged shall be commanded (to be taken) and given to the king to distribute.

Thereafter shall be plenty of corn and wine and oil, but great dearness of money, so that the substance of gold and silver shall be given for corn, and there shall be great dearth.

At that time shall be very great rising (?) of the sea, so that no man shall tell news to any man. The kings of the earth and the princes and the captains shall be troubled, and no man shall speak freely (boldly). Grey hairs shall be seen upon boys, and the young (?) shall not give place unto the aged.

After that shall arise another king, a crafty man, who shall hold rule for a short space: in whose days there shall be all manner of evils, even the death of the race of men from the east even unto Babylon. And thereafter death and famine and sword in the land of Chanaan even unto (Rome?). Then shall all the fountains of waters and wells boil over (?) and be turned into blood (or, into dust and blood). The heaven shall be moved, the stars shall fall upon the earth, the sun shall be cut in half like the moon, and the moon shall not give her light. There shall be great signs and wonders in those days when Antichrist draweth near. These are the signs unto them that dwell in the earth. In those days the pains of great travail shall come upon them. (al. In those days, when Antichrist now draweth near, these are the signs. Woe unto them that dwell on the earth; in those days great pains of travail shall come upon them.) Woe unto them that build, for they shall not inhabit. Woe unto them that break up the fallow, for they shall labour without cause. Woe unto them that make marriages, for unto famine and need shall they beget sons. Woe unto them that join house to house or field to field, for all things shall be consumed with fire. Woe unto them that look not unto (?) themselves while time alloweth, for hereafter shall they be condemned for ever. Woe unto them that turn away from the poor when he asketh.

[Here is a break: the text goes on: For I am of the high and powerful: I am the Father of all. (al. And know ye: I am the Father most high: I am the Father of all spirits.) This, as we shall see, is the beginning of the older(?) and shorter text, and of the Vienna fragment: only, in the latter, some words now unintelligible precede it: not the words, however, which are in Wilhelm's text. I will continue with Wilhelm.]

These are the seven signs the ending of this world. There shall be in all the earth famine and great pestilences and much distress: then shall all men be led captive among all nations and shall fall by the edge of the sword.

On the first day of the judgement will be a great marvel (or, the beginning shall be). At the third hour of the day shall be a great and mighty voice in the firmament of the heaven, and a great cloud of blood coming down out of the north, and great thunderings and mighty lightnings shall follow that cloud, and there shall be a rain of blood upon all the earth. These are the signs of the first day (Monday in the Anglo-Saxon, and so for the other days).

And on the second day there shall be a great voice in the firmament of the heaven, and the earth shall be moved out of its place: and the gates of heaven shall be opened in the firmament of heaven toward the east, and a great power shall be sent belched) forth by the gates of heaven and shall cover all the heaven even until evening (al. and there shall be fears and tremblings in the world). These are the signs of the second day.

And on the third day, about the second hour, shall be a voice in heaven, and the abysses of the earth shall utter their voice from the four corners of the world. The first heaven shall be rolled up like

a book and shall straightway vanish. And because of the smoke and stench of the brimstone of the abyss the days shall be darkened unto the tenth hour. Then shall all men say: I think that the end draweth near, that we shall perish. These are the signs of the third day.

And on the fourth day at the first hour, the earth of the east shall speak, the abyss shall roar: then shall all the earth be moved by the strength of an earthquake. In that day shall all the idols of the heathen fall, and all the buildings of the earth. These are the signs of the fourth day.

And on the fifth day, at the sixth hour, there shall be great thunderings suddenly in the heaven, and the powers of light and the wheel of the sun shall be caught away, and there shall be great darkness over the world until evening, and the stars shall be turned away from their ministry. In that day all nations shall hate the world and despise the life of this world. These are the signs of the fifth day.

And on the sixth day there shall be signs in heaven. At the fourth hour the firmament of heaven shall be cloven from the east unto the west. And the angels of the heavens shall be looking forth upon the earth the opening of the heavens. And all men shall see above the earth the host of the angels looking forth out of heaven. Then shall all men flee.

(Here Wilhelm's text ends abruptly.)

B. Bihlmeyer's text, from Munich Clm. 45c3 (eleventh to twelfth century, from Benedictbeuren): and the Vienna fragment.

Hear thou, O Thomas, for I am the Son of God the Father and I am the father of all spirits. Hear thou of me the signs which shall come to pass at the end of this world, when the end of the world shall be fulfilled (Vienna: that it pass away) before mine elect depart out of the world. I will tell thee that which shall come to pass openly unto men (or, will tell thee openly, Cc.): but when these things shall be the princes of the angels know not, seeing it is now hidden from before

Then shall there be in the world sharings (participations) between king and king, and in all the earth shall be great famine great pestilences, and many distresses, and the sons of men shall be led captive among all nations and shall fall by the edge of the sword (and there shall be great commotion in the world: Vienna omits). Then after that when the hour of the end draweth nigh there shall be for seven days great signs in heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be moved.

Then shall there be on the first day the beginning: at the third hour of the day a great and mighty voice in the firmament of heaven and a bloody cloud coming up (down, Vienna) out of the north, and great thunderings and mighty lightnings shall follow it, and it shall cover the whole heaven, and there shall be a rain of blood upon all the earth. These are the signs of the first day.

And on the second day there shall be a great voice in the firmament of heaven, and the earth shall be moved out of its place, and the gates of heaven shall be opened in the firmament of heaven toward the east, and the (smoke of a great fire shall break forth through the gates of heaven and shall cover all the heaven until evening. In that day there shall be fears and great terrors in the world. These are the signs of the second day. Vienna is defective here).

But on the third day about the third hour shall be a great voice in heaven, and the abysses of the earth (Vienna ends) shall roar from the four corners of the world; the pinnacles (so) of the firmament of heaven shall be opened, and all the air shall be filled with pillars of smoke. There shall

be a stench of brimstone, very evil, until the tenth hour, and men shall say: We think the time draweth nigh that we perish. These are the signs of the third day.

And on the fourth day at the first hour, from the land of the east the abyss shall melt (so) and roar. Then shall all the earth be shaken by the might of an earthquake. In that day shall the ornaments of the heathen fall, and all the buildings of the earth, before the might of the earthquake. These are the signs of the fourth day.

But on the fifth day at the sixth hour, suddenly there shall be a great thunder in heaven, and the powers of light and the wheel of the sun shall be caught away (MS. opened), and there shall be great darkness in the world until evening, and the air shall be gloomy (sad) without sun or moon, and the stars shall cease from their ministry. In that day shall all nations behold as in a mirror (?) (or, behold it as sackcloth) and shall despise the life of this world. These are the signs of the fifth day.

And on the sixth day at the fourth hour there shall be a great voice in heaven, and the firmament of the heaven shall be cloven from the east unto the west, and the angels of the heavens shall be looking forth upon the earth by the openings of the heavens, and all these that are on the earth shall behold the host of the angels looking forth out of heaven. Then shall all men flee unto the monuments (mountains ?) and hide themselves from the face of the righteous angels, and say: Would that the earth would open and swallow us up! And such things shall come to pass as never were since this world was created.

Then shall they behold me coming from above in the light of my Father with the power and honour of the holy angels. Then at my coming shall the fence of fire of paradise be done away -because paradise is girt round about with fire. And this shall be that perpetual fire that shall consume the earth and all the elements of the world.

Then shall the spirits and souls of all men come forth from paradise and shall come upon all the earth: and every one of them shall go unto his own body, where it is laid up, and every one of them shall say: Here lieth my body. And when the great voice of those spirits shall be heard, then shall there be a great earthquake over all the world, and by the might thereof the mountains shall be cloven from above and the rocks from beneath. Then shall every spirit return into his own vessel and the bodies of the saints which have fallen asleep shall arise.

Then shall their bodies be changed into the image and likeness and the honour of the holy angels, and into the power of the image of mine holy Father. Then shall they be clothed with the vesture of life eternal, out of the cloud of light which hath never been seen in this world; for that cloud cometh down out of the highest realm of the heaven from the power of my Father. And that cloud shall compass about with the beauty thereof all the spirits that have believed in me.

Then shall they be clothed, and shall be borne by the hand of the holy angels like as I have told you aforetime. Then also shall they be lifted up into the air upon a cloud of light, and shall go with me rejoicing unto heaven, and then shall they continue in the light and honour of my Father. Then shall there be unto them great gladness with my Father and before the holy angels These are the signs of the sixth day.

And on the seventh day at the eighth hour there shall be voices in the four corners of the heaven. And all the air shall be shaken, and filled with holy angels, and they shall make war among them all

the day long. And in that day shall mine elect be sought out by the holy angels from the destruction of the world. Then shall all men see that the hour of their destruction draweth near. These are the signs of the seventh day.

And when the seven days are passed by, on the eighth day at the sixth hour there shall be a sweet and tender voice in heaven from the east. Then shall that angel be revealed which hath power over the holy angels: and all the angels shall go forth with him, sitting upon chariots of the clouds of mine holy Father (so) rejoicing and running upon the air beneath the heaven to deliver the elect that have believed in me. And they shall rejoice that the destruction of this world hath come.

The words of the Saviour unto Thomas are ended, concerning the end of this world.

The Hymn of the Redeemed (Gnostic Version)

The **Hymn of the Redeemed (Gnostic Version)** represents a speculative or apocryphal composition blending elements of Gnostic mysticism with themes of redemption. In this context, the hymn would reflect Gnostic ideas of spiritual awakening, liberation from the material world, and reunion with the divine source, while drawing inspiration from Gnostic texts like the *Apocryphon of John*, *The Hymn of the Pearl*, and other early Christian writings with Gnostic elements.

Theological Foundations of Gnostic Redemption

1. Knowledge (*Gnosis*) as Salvation:

- In Gnostic thought, salvation is achieved through acquiring esoteric knowledge that reveals humanity's divine origin and path to liberation.
- **Key Concept:** Ignorance binds the soul to the material world; knowledge leads to spiritual freedom.

2. The Redeemer as a Divine Messenger:

- The Redeemer (often Christ or a Christ-like figure) descends from the divine realm to impart knowledge and guide souls back to their source.

3. Liberation from the Material World:

- The material world is often viewed as a flawed creation of the *Demiurge* (a lesser divine being), and redemption involves transcending its limitations.

4. Unity with the Plerona (Fullness):

- The ultimate goal is reunion with the *Pleroma*, the divine fullness from which all spiritual beings originate.
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Themes in the Hymn of the Redeemed (Gnostic Version)

1. The Divine Spark Within:

- Celebrating the hidden divine light within every soul.
- **Example Verse:** "Within the shadowed prison of flesh, a spark of the infinite light burns bright."

2. The Descent of the Redeemer:

- Describing the Redeemer's journey from the heavenly realms to awaken humanity.
- **Example Verse:** "From the fullness, You descended, clothed in light to shatter the chains of forgetfulness."

3. The Awakening of Knowledge:

- Highlighting the transformative power of gnosis to unveil the soul's true origin.
- **Example Verse:** "In the silence of the heart, the voice of truth whispers, 'You are not of this world.'"

4. The Struggle Against Ignorance:

- Depicting the soul's battle to overcome deception and illusion.
- **Example Verse:** "The veil of the aeons blinds the seeker, but the wisdom of the Redeemer clears the path."

5. The Ascent to the Plerona:

- Rejoicing in the soul's return to its divine home, reunited with the fullness.
- **Example Verse:** "Through the gates of light, I ascend; the song of the aeons guides me home."

Structure of the Hymn

A Gnostic *Hymn of the Redeemed* might be structured as follows:

I. Invocation of the Divine Light

- "O Eternal Source, whose light pervades all, awaken the spark within us to know our origin."

II. The Redeemer's Descent

- "From the realms of fullness, You came, O Messenger of truth, veiled in the likeness of man."

III. The Call to Awakening

- "Arise, O soul, from the slumber of ignorance; remember the light that is your home."

IV. The Journey of Liberation

- "Through the labyrinth of aeons, the path is revealed; the chains of darkness are broken by knowledge."

V. The Ascent and Reunion

- "I ascend through the spheres, where the guardians bow; the Pleroma welcomes the child of light."

VI. Doxology

- "To You, O Source of All, and to the Redeemer of the Lost, be eternal glory and praise."
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Symbolism in the Hymn

- 1. The Spark of Light:**
 - Representing the divine essence within the soul, trapped in the material world.
 - 2. The Veil:**
 - Symbolizing ignorance and illusion that obscure the soul's divine nature.
 - 3. The Ascent:**
 - The journey of the soul through the cosmic spheres back to the Pleroma.
 - 4. The Redeemer's Radiance:**
 - A metaphor for the transformative power of divine truth.
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Spiritual Lessons in the Hymn

- 1. Seek Knowledge:**
 - The hymn encourages the faithful to seek the gnosis that leads to liberation.
 - 2. Overcome Illusion:**
 - It calls believers to discern truth from deception, breaking free from the material world's constraints.
 - 3. Reclaim Divine Identity:**
 - The hymn inspires the redeemed to embrace their origin as beings of light destined for reunion with the divine.
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Liturgical and Mystical Use

- 1. Meditation and Chanting:**

- The hymn might be used in private meditation or communal chanting to invoke a sense of divine connection and enlightenment.

2. **Ritual of Ascent:**

- Recited during symbolic rituals that reenact the soul's journey through the spheres to the Pleroma.

3. **Feasts of Light:**

- Incorporated into ceremonies celebrating the descent and ascent of the Redeemer.

Conclusion

The **Hymn of the Redeemed (Gnostic Version)** offers a poetic and mystical celebration of the soul's awakening, liberation, and return to the divine fullness. Rooted in Gnostic themes of light, knowledge, and transcendence, this hymn reflects the spiritual journey from ignorance to enlightenment. It serves as both a call to self-discovery and a tribute to the Redeemer who illuminates the path, offering hope and inspiration to those seeking unity with the divine.

The Vision of the Perfect Aeon

The concept of the aeons is subtle and complex in Gnosticism, but perhaps we can begin a discussion that might draw out something of the Gnostic wisdom found in teachings on the aeons...

The term "aeon" or "age" points first and foremost to a cycle, period or duration of time; to the extent that time and space are inseparable, the term aeon may also indicate a realm; to the extent that time and space are inseparable from consciousness, the term aeon may also indicate a formation of consciousness or state of consciousness; and to the extent that consciousness-force is a radiant display of being, the term aeon may indicate a being or entity as well – all of these ideas exist in the word aeon as used in Gnosticism. Quite naturally, there are aeons within aeons, greater aeons and lesser aeons, the "Aeon of Light" or "Perfect Aeon" representing eternity and the "Great Cosmic Aeon" representing the great cosmic cycle of existence, all space-time-consciousness, or what we may call "forever." Within the Great Cosmic Aeon, of course, are countless millions of aeons, greater and lesser, as space-time-consciousness unfolds, flowing out of the eternal realm, the Pleroma of Light. Thus, the Entirety, the Great Matrix of Creation, is composed of the aeons – the Great Cosmic Aeon representing the Entirety, the All.

The aeons are cyclic, and they flow out of one another and into one another, interpenetrating one another, completely interconnected and interdependent with one another: space-time-consciousness is like a great circle, flowing out of the Infinite and Eternal, and flowing into the Infinite and Eternal, the Divine Being of the Becoming. The Great Cosmic Aeon may be beyond our mortal reckoning, enduring "forever," but it has a beginning and end – the eternal realm. With the exception of the Perfect Aeon, which is the eternal realm, so it is with all that is called "aeon," they have a beginning, middle and end. The aeons are also called "in-betweens" for they occur in

between “that” which proceeds them and “that” which follows after them: the procession of the aeons is infinite, without-end.

The Great Cosmic Aeon is the “Great Cosmic Cycle,” which is to say it is the duration the cosmos or universe exists; within it are the aeons of the galaxies, within which are the aeons of the solar systems – all of which exist on various levels, from the spiritual dimensions to the material dimension; and within these are countless aeons, greater and lesser aeons, influencing the realms, worlds and universes that appear in this Great Matrix, the Entirety. In every aeon there is a ruler – a being-force that holds dominion, of which the aeon is an expression, as though a body to a soul or spirit; and countless beings exist within the aeon, all under the influence or dominion of the presiding ruler-aeon.

In that the aeons exist on various levels, from the spiritual dimensions to the material dimension, there are, in effect, upper aeons and lower aeons. In essence, aeons are akin to Thoughts in the Divine Mind, various aspects and expressions of the Divine Plan of creation. At the level of the spiritual dimensions the aeons are luminous and divine, reflecting the Divine Will of El Elyon as expressed in the Pleroma of Light or Supernal Dimensions – these are called the “upper aeons,” greater and lesser. However, as they occur at the level of the causal, higher vital, mental, astral and material dimensions the Divine Light of the aeons becomes restricted and, in effect, the Divine Thoughts which constitutes the aeons become obscured and distorted, and the image of the aeons in the Lower Sphere is different from their image in the Higher Sphere – these are called the “lower aeons.” It is the difference between the ideal of the potential and the actual as the Divine Light of the Pleroma enters into the Entirety to be actualized and realized; until the noble ideal of the Divine is realized, the actual manifestation is fraught with shades and shadows, hence is imperfect and incomplete.

The distinction between the upper and lower aeons is the product of cosmic ignorance – the illusion of separation. The demiurgos is the personification of cosmic ignorance. Thus, while the upper aeons are under the dominion of the Divine, the lower aeons are under the dominion of the demiurgos. This is true of all aeons – they have a manifestation that accords with the Divine and a manifestation that is of the demiurge, the latter typically being a dim reflection of the former.

To gain some insight into this one merely needs to consider the influences of aeons in human consciousness – the various noble and divine ideals that occur in human consciousness versus their actualization in the world. If we consider the luminous ideals of “democracy” or “socialism” and see what has become of them, then we can gain a sense of the distinction between the upper and lower aeons; for such ideals are an expression of aeons, and in their origin they are luminous and divine, but in their actual manifestation within the material world they are far from the ideal upon which they are founded, and certainly less luminous and less divine than in their conception. The ignorance takes hold of the noble and divine ideal and it becomes distorted by the “Self-willed Triple Power” (demiurge); hence, self-grasping, greed-lust, fear-hatred (the unenlightened condition). Thus, as divine and angelic beings labor for the fruition of the Divine Will of the “upper aeons,” titanic and dark forces enter in to usurp the energy-intelligence of the aeons to their own ends; thus, the influence of archons and demons of the demiurgos come into play, generating the

“lower aeons” which are admixed.

This, of course, is all a natural part of the process of Creative Evolution – an involution for the sake of evolution, as Divine Being is actualized and realized in the Sphere of Becoming, the Entirety. Likewise, it gives us insight into the necessity of the Divine Incarnation (the Gnostic Revealer), and the Light-bearers who enter into the realms, worlds and universes of the Entirety. In essence, they serve to clarify the aeons and to uplift the consciousness of sentient beings from the lower aeons to the upper aeons, ultimately drawing souls into the awareness of the Perfect Aeon, so that the Will of the True Light might be made manifest through the aeons.

Within any of the realms, worlds and universes of sentient existence (the Entirety) there are many and diverse aeons that enter and influence the development of life, and within any given world system there is a progression of great aeons and the various lesser aeons of which they are composed, which represent cycles in the development and evolution of life in that world. Along with these great aeons are what are called “Aeons of the Light Transmission” initiated by the Gnostic Revelers or Light-bearers who enter into the realms, worlds and universes of the Entirety for the sake of the enlightenment and liberation of sentient beings. Essentially, these are emanations of the Aeon of Light or Perfect Aeon within the Entirety – within the upper and lower aeons.

In the Sophian Tradition the Aeons of the Light Transmission are associated with the Sacred Circle and the six Archangels which correspond to it: Metatron-Sandalfon, Uriel, Gabriel, Michael and Raphael. Metatron-Sandalfon (or the Great Angel Hua) represents the Aeon of Light that is being actualized and realized, and Uriel, Gabriel, Michael and Raphael represent the four Great Aeons of the Light Transmission, cycles or stages that occur in the Christ revelation when viewed from the temporal dimension.

Metatron represents the Aeon of Light, and Sandalfon represents what is actualized and realized of the Aeon of Light in the world at any given point in space-time; the Archangels, which correspond to the four directions of the Sacred Circle and the elemental powers, are the fourfold influx of Divine Light into human consciousness, or four cycles through which the Divine Light is actualized and realized.

The Aeon of Uriel is the first cycle of Light Transmission, the beginning of the Divine Revelation in human consciousness – the awareness of the Divine Light arises in consciousness, and streams of Light Transmission are manifest. As the Aeon of Uriel unfolds, the awareness of the Sacred Unity dawns, and the idea of the One Source of All, God Most High, enters human consciousness – the Holy One within and beyond the Many. In this cycle salvation or enlightenment is largely conceived in terms of the collective, the people or tribe; likewise, instead of thinking of her or himself in terms of “I” as an individual, a person thinks of her or himself in terms of “we,” the people or tribe. Generally speaking, the religions engendered are somewhat “primitive” and focus on judgment and law, and there is a radical taint of the demiurge in them, as the Divine is conceived as being separate and apart, outside of the prophet or sage, and beyond the people. (Most basic forms of world wisdom traditions and religions arise during this period and create the foundation for virtually

all wisdom traditions or religions that will appear – all that follows being an evolution and refinement of these basic forms.)

The Aeon of Gabriel naturally flows out of the Aeon of Uriel, and represents the refinement and evolution of previous revelations – there is an individuation process in which individuals no longer think of her or himself in terms of “we,” but rather in terms of “I,” and salvation or enlightenment becomes an individual or “personal” experience, independent from the peoples or tribe of which they may be a member. Specifically, the awareness dawns of the possibility for individuals to experience conscious unification with Divine Being or a state of enlightenment, and this potential becomes activated within human consciousness; while something of this occurs in the Aeon of Uriel, in terms of a select few, all of humanity is understood to have this potential as the Aeon of Gabriel unfolds and comes to its fruition. In the Aeon of Uriel myths are told of the Redeemer or Enlightened One among gods and goddesses, and prophecies are spoken of the Redeemer or Enlightened One that is coming to humanity – something of the Divine Incarnation is transpiring, as Light-bearers enter into the human life-wave to teach and initiate; yet, it is not until the dawn of the Aeon of Gabriel that the Divine Incarnation is recognized and received, and the Gnostic and Light Transmission is manifest in full.

In the Aeon of Uriel, though Light-bearers (avatars, bodhisattvas and buddhas) may come among the peoples to teach and initiate them, for the most part the peoples cannot receive the Gnostic and Light Transmission in full, but like conceptions of the Divine prevalent in the Aeon of Uriel, the Light-bearers are received god-like beings, as though distinct and separate from human beings; in the Aeon of Gabriel, however, Light-bearers come to be understood as being among the people – as representative of the potential of union with the Divine or enlightenment within humanity. This, in effect, activates Fiery Intelligence in human consciousness and sets in motion an influx of the Divine Light within human consciousness, the Spiritual and Supernal Light: it activates our potential for Conscious Evolution. Thus, more and more, individuals from among the peoples experience Divine Illumination, and the noble ideal of the enlightenment and liberation of individual soul-streams takes root; there is a progressive acceleration in the development and evolution of human consciousness, as various cycles of the influx of Divine Light transpire in the human life-wave.

At the shift between the Aeon of Gabriel and the Aeon of Michael there is an influx of Great Light, the Supernal Light, which invokes the arising of an equal and opposite Darkness, the Great Shadow (Great Beast or Dragon); a dissemination of esoteric knowledge openly occurs, as well as radical advancements in knowledge and understanding within all aspects of human study and endeavors, and there is access to greater and greater power on material, psychic and spiritual levels. It is the “Age of the Apocalypse,” when the shades and shadows that have trailed along with the human development and evolution must be reintegrated into the Light – the Great Shadow of the Human One faced, and a harmonious integration of “I-consciousness” and “we-consciousness” manifest. In essence, a new and higher consciousness (Christ Consciousness) begins to dawn in the larger collective of the human life-wave, but the influx of Light is followed by a fall into Darkness and Chaos, and a Great Conflict between the Light and the Darkness ensues before the new and higher consciousness dawns in full. (This spiritual movement is captured perfectly in the twelfth chapter

of the Book of Revelation.)

Essentially, these aeons are cycles of the development and evolution of human consciousness from the level of the bestial and vital consciousness to the level of mental consciousness, progressing towards the Supramental or Supernal Consciousness. The Aeon of Michael represents something akin to the labor pain experienced by the Mother and Child as new humanity is born – a Supernal and Divine Humanity, as prefigured in the Gnostic Revealers, the Enlightened Ones. Throughout this process individuals are emerging into the Supernal or Supramental Consciousness (Christ Consciousness); at first only a select few, here and there, who are the initial Light-bearers, but then, with the advent of the Gnostic Revealers, more and more individuals experience the dawn of Supernal or Supramental Consciousness, until the influx of the Supernal Light occurs in the larger collective of humanity. As the new and higher consciousness actually begins to become established in a larger segment of the collective humanity, the Aeon of Michael gives way to the Aeon of Raphael – in which the “Reception of the Holy Bride” is complete and the realization of the Christos, the True Light, is fulfilled in humanity.

Of the fruition of the Aeon of Raphael it is said, “Sandalfon is taken up into Metatron, and the image of the Great Angel Hua shines forth, the Pleroma of Light being realized and actualized in humanity – hence, the Great Resurrection and Ascension, or Great Transformation. Thus, the Circle of Creative Evolution is complete, coming full cycle through the “fall and redemption,” involution and evolution.

This procession of the Aeons of Light Transmission, of course, is a perception from the perspective of the temporal dimension, or space-time consciousness, and is by no means as linear a process as it sounds; in fact, these “four” aeons are really one Divine Aeon, one Great Movement of Light Transmission – the appearance of the Perfect Aeon of Light as it is actualized and realized within our world. Yet, in our experience within the context of the temporal dimension, these aeons are very distinct, and we can clearly see their influence in the world as they unfold.

Much more may be said regarding the various aeons that influence our world, as well as of these four Aeons of the Light Transmission, but this is enough for the beginning of a discussion of the principle of the aeons in Sophian Gnosticism, and specifically, perhaps a discussion of the four Aeons of Light Transmission as they occur in Sophian Teachings.

May we realize the Perfect Aeon of Light in the midst of the aeons; may we recognize our perfection in Christ and embody it - Anen.

The Homily on the Nativity by Cyril of Alexandria

The Homily on the Nativity by Cyril of Alexandria is a theological masterpiece that reflects the profound Christological insights of Saint Cyril, one of the early Church Fathers and a central figure in shaping Christian doctrine during the 5th century. Known for his staunch defense of the title *Theotokos* (Mother of God) for the Virgin Mary at the Council of Ephesus in 431 AD, Cyril’s teachings on the Nativity emphasize the mystery of the Incarnation, the unity of Christ’s divine and human natures, and the salvific purpose of Christ’s birth.

Historical Context

- Saint Cyril served as Patriarch of Alexandria from 412 to 444 AD.
 - His Christological theology was instrumental in countering Nestorianism, which separated Christ's divine and human natures.
 - His homilies, including those on the Nativity, were intended to illuminate the mysteries of the faith for both clergy and laity.
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Key Themes in Cyril's Homily on the Nativity

5. The Mystery of the Incarnation:

- Cyril emphasizes that the Word of God became flesh without ceasing to be divine.
- **Key Insight:** "He who is eternally begotten of the Father is now born in time of a virgin, taking upon Himself human nature while remaining fully God."

6. The Role of the Virgin Mary:

- Mary is honored as *Theotokos*, highlighting her unique role in God's plan of salvation.
- **Key Insight:** "Through her, the Creator entered creation, sanctifying it by His presence."

7. The Restoration of Humanity:

- The Nativity is portrayed as the pivotal moment when God reconciles humanity to Himself.
- **Key Insight:** "The birth of Christ is the dawn of our redemption, the healing of our fallen nature."

8. The Unity of Christ's Two Natures:

- Cyril affirms that in the person of Christ, divinity and humanity are united without confusion, change, division, or separation.
- **Key Insight:** "The One born in Bethlehem is both fully God and fully man, the bridge between heaven and earth."

9. The Light of Salvation:

- Christ's birth is described as the light breaking into the darkness of sin and death.
- **Key Insight:** "He is the Sun of Righteousness, dispelling the shadows and illuminating all creation."

Excerpts and Reflections

1. On the Humility of Christ:

- "He who holds the heavens in His hands is cradled in a manger. The One who feeds the angels now nurses at His mother's breast. Such is the depth of His love for us."
- **Reflection:** Cyril marvels at the humility of the Incarnation, which reveals the extent of God's compassion.

2. On the Role of the Angels:

- "The heavenly hosts sang, 'Glory to God in the highest,' for the birth of Christ was the reconciliation of heaven and earth."
- **Reflection:** The Nativity is not only a human celebration but a cosmic event uniting all creation in worship.

3. On the Purpose of the Nativity:

- "He was born that we might be reborn; He took on our likeness that we might partake of His divine nature."
- **Reflection:** The Incarnation is central to salvation, enabling humanity to be restored to communion with God.

Liturgical and Spiritual Application

1. Feast of the Nativity (Christmas):

- Cyril's homily serves as a theological foundation for the celebration of Christmas, focusing on the Incarnation as the heart of the feast.

2. Marian Devotion:

- His emphasis on Mary as *Theotokos* strengthens devotion to her as the Mother of God.

3. Personal Reflection:

- Believers are encouraged to meditate on the humility of Christ and the transformative power of His birth.

Legacy and Influence

1. Defense of Orthodox Christology:

- Cyril's teaching on the Nativity reinforced the Church's understanding of Christ as one person with two natures.

2. Liturgical Traditions:

- His insights have deeply influenced the hymns, prayers, and readings associated with the Nativity in both Eastern and Western Christianity.

3. Theological Inspiration:

- His homilies continue to inspire theological reflection on the mystery of the Incarnation.

Conclusion

The **Honily on the Nativity by Cyril of Alexandria** is a profound meditation on the mystery of Christ's birth. It captures the essence of the Incarnation as an act of divine love and humility, bridging heaven and earth. Cyril's insights into the unity of Christ's natures, the role of Mary, and the cosmic significance of the Nativity remain a cornerstone of Christian theology, inspiring worship and devotion across the ages.

The Treatise on Martyrdom by Tertullian

Chapter 1

Blessed martyrs elect, along with the nourishment for the body which our Lady Mother the Church from her breast, as well as individual brethren from their private resources, furnish you in prison, accept also from me some offering that will contribute to the sustenance of the spirit. For it is not good that the flesh be feasted while the spirit goes hungry. Indeed, if care is bestowed on that which is weak, there is all the more reason not to neglect that which is still weaker.

Not that I am specially entitled to exhort you. Yet, even the most accomplished gladiators are spurred on not only by their trainers and managers but also from afar by people inexperienced in this art and by all who choose, without the slightest need for it, with the result that hints issuing from the crowd have often proved profitable for them.

In the first place, then, O blessed, 'do not grieve the Holy Spirit who has entered prison with you. For, if He had not accompanied you there in your present trial, you would not be there today. See to it, therefore, that He remain with you there and so lead you out of that place to the Lord.

Indeed, the prison is the Devil's house too, where he keeps his household. But you have come to the prison for the very purpose of trampling upon him right in his own house. For you have engaged him in battle already outside the prison and trampled him underfoot.

Let him, therefore, not say: 'Now that they are in my domain, I will tempt them with base hatreds, with defections or dissensions among themselves.' Let him flee from your presence, and let him, coiled and numb, like a snake that is driven out by charms or smoke, hide away in the depths of his

den. Do not allow him the good fortune in his own kingdom of setting you against one another, but let him find you fortified by the arms of peace among yourselves, because peace among yourselves means war with him.

Some, not able to find this peace in the Church, are accustomed to seek it from the martyrs in prison. For this reason, too, then, you ought to possess, cherish and preserve it among yourselves that you may perhaps be able to bestow it upon others also.

Chapter 2

Other attachments, equally burdensome to the spirit, may have accompanied you to the prison gate; so far your relatives, too, may have escorted you. From that very moment on you have been separated from the very world. How much more, then, from its spirit and its ways and doings? Nor let this separation from the world trouble you. For, if we reflect that it is the very world that is more truly a prison, we shall realize that you have left a prison rather than entered one.

The world holds the greater darkness, blinding men's hearts. The world puts on the heavier chains, fettering the very souls of men. The world breathes forth the fouler impurities--human lusts.

Finally, the world contains the larger number of criminals, namely, the entire human race. In fact, it awaits sentence not from the proconsul but from God.

Wherefore, O blessed consider yourselves as having been transferred from prison to what we may call a place of safety. Darkness is there, but you are light; fetters are there, but you are free before God. It breathes forth a foul smell, but you are an odor of sweetness. There the judge is expected at every moment, but you are going to pass sentence upon the judges themselves.

There sadness may come upon the man who sighs for the pleasures of the world. The Christian, however even when he is outside the prison, has renounced the world and, when in prison, even prison itself. It does not matter what part of the world you are in, you who are apart from the world.

And if you have missed some of the enjoyments of life, remember that it is the way of business to suffer one losses in order to make larger profits. I say nothing yet about the reward to which God invites the martyrs. Meanwhile, let us compare the life in the world with that in prison to see if the spirit does not gain more in prison than the flesh loses there.

In fact, owing to the solicitude of the Church and the charity of the brethren, the flesh does not miss there what it ought to have, while, in addition, the spirit obtains what is always beneficial to the faith: you do not look at strange gods; you do not chance upon their images; you do not, even by mere physical contact, participate in heathen holidays; you are not plagued by the foul fumes of the sacrificial banquets, not tormented by the noise of the spectacles, nor by the atrocity or frenzy or shamelessness of those taking part in the celebrations; your eyes do not fall on houses of lewdness; you are free from inducements to sin, from temptations, from unholy reminiscences, free, indeed, even from persecution.

The prison now offers to the Christian what the desert once gave to the Prophets. Our Lord Himself quite often spent time in solitude to pray there more freely, to be there away from the world. In fact, it was in a secluded place that He manifested His glory to His disciples. Let us drop the name 'prison' and call it a place of seclusion.

Though the body is confined, though the flesh is detained, there is nothing that is not open to the spirit. In spirit wander about, in spirit take a walk, setting before yourselves not shady promenades and long porticoes but that path which leads to God. As often as you walk that path, you will not be in prison.

The leg does not feel the fetter when the spirit is in heaven. The spirit carries about the whole man and brings him wherever he wishes. And where your heart is, there will your treasure be also. There, then, let our heart be where we would have our treasure.

CHAPTER 3

Granted now, O blessed, that even to Christians the prison is unpleasant--yet, we were called to the service in the army of the living God in the very moment when we gave response to the words of the sacramental oath. No soldier goes out to war encumbered with luxuries, nor does he march to the line of battle from the sleeping chamber, but from light and cramped tents where every kind of austerity, discomfort, and inconvenience is experienced.

Even in time of peace soldiers are toughened to warfare by toils and hardships: by marching in arms, by practicing swift maneuvers in the field, by digging a trench, by joining closely together to form a tortoise-shield. Everything is set in sweating toil, lest bodies and minds be frightened at having to pass from shade to sunshine, from sunshine to icy cold, from the tunic to the breastplate, from hushed silence to the warcry, from rest to the din of battle.

In like manner, O blessed, consider whatever is hard in your present situation as an exercise of your powers of mind and body. You are about to enter a noble contest in which the living God acts the part of superintendent and the Holy Spirit is your trainer, a contest whose crown is eternity, whose prize is angelic nature, citizenship in heaven and glory for ever and ever.

And so your Master, Jesus Christ, who has anointed you with His Spirit and has brought you to this training ground, has resolved, before the day of the contest, to take you from a softer way of life to a harsher treatment that your strength may be increased. For athletes, too, are set apart for more rigid training that they may apply themselves to the building up of their physical strength. They are kept from lavish living, from more tempting dishes, from more pleasurable drinks. They are urged on, they are subjected to torturing toils, they are worn out: the more strenuously they have exerted themselves, the greater is their hope of victory.

And they do this, says the Apostle, to win a perishable crown. We who are about to win an eternal one recognize in the prison our training ground, that we may be led forth to the actual contest before the seat of the presiding judge well practiced in all hardships, because strength is built up by austerity, but destroyed by softness.

CHAPTER 4

We know from our Lord's teaching that, while the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak. Let us, however, not derive delusive gratification from the Lord's acknowledgment of the weakness of the flesh. For it was on purpose that He first declared the spirit willing: He wanted to show which of the two ought to be subject to the other, that is to say, that the flesh should be submissive to the spirit, the weaker to the stronger, so that the former may draw strength from the latter.

Let the spirit converse with the flesh on their common salvation, no longer thinking about the hardships of prison but, rather, about the struggle of the actual contest. The flesh will perhaps fear the heavy sword and the lofty cross and the wild beasts mad with rage and the most terrible punishment of all--death by fire--and, finally, all the executioner's cunning during the torture.

But let the spirit present to both itself and the flesh the other side of the picture: granted, these sufferings are grievous, yet many have borne them patiently nay, have even sought them on their own accord for the sake of fame and glory; and this is true not only of men but also of women so that you, too, O blessed women may be worthy of your sex.

It would lead me too far were I to enumerate each one of those who, led by the impulse of their own mind put an end to their lives by the sword. Among women there is the well-known instance of Lucretia. A victim of violence, she stabbed herself in the presence of her kinsfolk to gain glory for her chastity. Mucius burnt his right hand on the altar that his fair fame might include this deed.

Nor did the philosophers act less courageously: Heraclitus, for instance, who put an end to his life by smearing himself with cow dung; Empedocles, too, who leaped down into the fires of Mt. Etna; and Peregrinus who not long ago threw himself upon a funeral pile. Why, even women have despised the flames: Dido did so in order not to be forced to marry after the departure of the man she had loved most dearly; the wife of Hasdrubal, too, with Carthage in flames, cast herself along with her children into the fire that was destroying her native city, that she might not see her husband a suppliant at Scipio's feet.

Regulus, a Roman general, was taken prisoner by the Carthaginians, but refused to be the only Roman exchanged for a large number of Carthaginian captives. He preferred to be returned to the enemy, and, crammed into a kind of chest, suffered as many crucifixions as nails were driven in from the outside in all directions to pierce him. A woman voluntarily sought out wild beasts, namely, vipers, serpents more horrible than either bull or bear, which Cleopatra let loose upon herself as not to fall into the hands of the enemy.

You may object: 'But the fear of death is not so great as the fear of torture.' Did the Athenian courtesan yield on that account to the executioner? For, being privy to a conspiracy, she was subjected to torture by the tyrant. But she did not betray her fellow conspirators, and at last bit off her own tongue and spat it into the tyrant's face to let him know that torments, however prolonged, could achieve nothing against her.

Everybody knows that to this day the most important festival of the Lacedaemonians is the "diamastigosis," that is, The Whipping. In this sacred rite all the noble youth are scourged with whips before the altar, while their parents and kinsfolk stand by and exhort them to perseverance. For they regard it as a mark of greater distinction and glory if the soul rather than the body has submitted to the stripes.

Therefore, if earthly glory accruing from strength of body and soul is valued so highly that one despises sword, fire, piercing with nails, wild beasts and tortures for the reward of human praise, then I may say the sufferings you endure are but trifling in comparison with the heavenly glory and divine reward. If the bead made of glass is rated so highly, how much must the true pearl be worth? Who, therefore, does not most gladly spend as much for the true as others spend for the false?

CHAPTER 5

I omit here an account of the motive of glory. For inordinate ambition among men as well as a certain morbidity of mind have already set at naught all the cruel and torturing contests mentioned above. How many of the leisure class are urged by an excessive love of arms to become gladiators? Surely it is from vanity that they descend to the wild beasts in the very arena, and think themselves more handsome because of the bites and scars. Some have even hired themselves out to tests by fire, with the result that they ran a certain distance in a burning tunic. Others have pranced up and down amid the bullwhips of the animal-baiters, unflinchingly exposing their shoulders.

All this, O blessed, the Lord tolerates in the world for good reason, that is, for the sake of encouraging us in the present moment and of confounding us on that final day, if we have recoiled from suffering for the truth unto salvation what others have pursued out of vanity unto perdition.

CHAPTER 6

Let us, however, no longer talk about those examples of perseverance proceeding from inordinate ambition. Let us, rather, turn to a simple contemplation of man's ordinary lot so that, if we ever have to undergo such trials with fortitude, we may also learn from those misfortunes which sometimes even befall unwilling victims. For how often have people been burned to death in conflagrations! How often have wild beasts devoured men either in the forests or in the heart of cities after escaping from their cages! How many have been slain by the sword of robbers! How many have even suffered the death of the cross at the hands of enemies, after having been tortured first and, indeed, treated with every kind of insult!

Furthermore, many a man is able to suffer in the cause of a mere human being what he hesitates to suffer in the cause of God. To this fact, indeed, our present days may bear witness. How many prominent persons have met with death in the cause of a man, though such a fate seemed most unlikely in view of their birth and their rank, their physical condition and their age! Death came to them either from him, if they had opposed him, or from his enemies, if they had sided with him.

The Prayer of Saint Basil (Expanded)

We bless you, O God, most high and Lord of mercy. You are always doing great and inscrutable things with us, glorious and wonderful, and without number. You grant us sleep for rest from our infirmities, and repose from the burdens of our much toiling flesh. We thank you, for you have not destroyed us with our sins, but have continued to love us; and though we were sunk in despair, you have raised us up to glorify your power. Therefore, we implore your incomparable goodness. Enlighten the eyes of our understanding and raise up our minds from the heavy sleep of indolence. Open our mouth and fill it with your praise, that we may be able without distraction to sing and confess that you are God, glorified in all and by all, the eternal Father, with your only begotten Son, and your all holy, good, and life giving Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

The Letter of Polycarp to the Philippians (Additional Fragments)

Polycarp prologue:1

Polycarp and the presbyters that are with him unto the Church of God which sojourneth at Philippi; mercy unto you and peace from God Almighty and Jesus Christ our Savior be multiplied.

Polycarp 1:1

I rejoiced with you greatly in our Lord Jesus Christ, for that ye received the followers of the true Love and escorted them on their way, as befitted you--those men encircled in saintly bonds which are the diadems of them that be truly chosen of God and our Lord;

Polycarp 1:2

and that the steadfast root of your faith which was famed from primitive times abideth until now and beareth fruit unto our Lord Jesus Christ, who endured to face even death for our sins, *whom God raised, having loosed the pangs of Hades; on whom,*

Polycarp 1:3

though ye saw Him not, ye believe with joy unutterable and full of glory; unto which joy many desire to enter in; forasmuch as ye know that it is *by grace ye are saved, not of works,* but by the will of God through Jesus Christ.

Polycarp 2:1

Wherefore gird up your loins and serve God in fear and truth, forsaking the vain and empty talking and the error of the many, *for that ye have believed on Him that raised our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead and gave unto him glory and a throne on His right hand;* unto whom all things were made subject that are in heaven and that are on the earth; to whom every creature that hath breath doeth service; who cometh as *judge of quick and dead;* whose blood God will require of them that are disobedient unto Him.

Polycarp 2:2

Now *He that raised Him* from the dead *will raise us also;* if we do His will and walk in His commandments and love the things which He loved, abstaining from all unrighteousness, covetousness, love of money, evil speaking, false witness; *not rendering evil for evil or railing for railing or blow for blow or cursing for cursing;*

Polycarp 2:3

but remembering the words which the Lord spake, as He taught; *Judge not that ye be not judged. Forgive, and it shall be forgiven to you. Have mercy that ye may receive mercy. With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again;* and again *Blessed are*

the poor and they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of God.

Polycarp 3:1

These things, brethren, I write unto you concerning righteousness, not because I laid this charge upon myself, but because ye invited me.

Polycarp 3:2

For neither am I, nor is any other like unto me, able to follow the wisdom of the blessed and glorious Paul, who when he came among you taught face to face with the men of that day the word which concerneth truth carefully and surely; who also, when he was absent, wrote a letter unto you, into the which if ye look diligently, ye shall be able to be builded up unto the faith given to you,

Polycarp 3:3

which is the mother of us all, while hope followeth after and love goeth before--love toward God and Christ and toward our neighbor. For if any man be occupied with these, he hath fulfilled the commandment of righteousness; for he that hath love is far from all sin.

Polycarp 4:1

But the love of money is the beginning of all troubles. Knowing therefore that *we brought nothing into the world neither can we carry anything out*, let us arm ourselves with the armor of righteousness, and let us teach ourselves first to walk in the commandment of the Lord;

Polycarp 4:2

and then our wives also, to walk in the faith that hath been given unto them and in love and purity, cherishing their own husbands in all truth and loving all men equally in all chastity, and to train their children in the training of the fear of God.

Polycarp 4:3

Our widows must be sober-minded as touching the faith of the Lord, making intercession without ceasing for all men, abstaining from all calumny, evil speaking, false witness, love of money, and every evil thing, knowing that they are God's altar, and that all sacrifices are carefully inspected, and nothing escapeth Him either of their thoughts or intents or any of the secret things of the heart.

Polycarp 5:1

Knowing then that *God is not mocked*, we ought to walk worthily of His commandment and His glory.

Polycarp 5:2

In like manner deacons should be blameless in the presence of His righteousness, as deacons of God and Christ and not of men; not calumniators, not double-tongued, not lovers of money, temperate in all things, compassionate, diligent, walking according to the truth of the Lord who became a *minister (deacon) of all*. For if we be well pleasing unto Him in this present world, we shall receive the future world also, according as He promised us to raise us from the dead, and that if we conduct ourselves worthily of Him *we shall also reign with Him*, if indeed we have faith.

Polycarp 5:3

In like manner also the younger men must be blameless in all things, caring for purity before everything and curbing themselves from every evil. For it is a good thing to refrain from lusts in the world, for every *lust warreth against the Spirit*, and *neither whoremongers nor effeminate persons nor defilers of themselves with men shall inherit the kingdom of God*, neither they that do untoward things. Wherefore it is right to abstain from all these things, submitting yourselves to the presbyters and deacons as to God and Christ. The virgins must walk in a blameless and pure conscience.

Polycarp 6:1

And the presbyters also must be compassionate, merciful towards all men, *turning back the sheep that are gone astray, visiting all the infirm, not neglecting a widow or an orphan or a poor man: but providing always for that which is honorable in the sight of God and of men*, abstaining from all anger, respect of persons, unrighteous judgment, being far from all love of money, not quick to believe anything against any man, not hasty in judgment, knowing that we all are debtors of sin.

Polycarp 6:2

If then we entreat the Lord that He would forgive us, we also ought to forgive: for we are before the eyes of our Lord and God, and we must *all stand at the judgment-seat of Christ*, and *each man must give an account of himself*.

Polycarp 6:3

Let us therefore so serve Him with fear and all reverence, as He himself gave commandment and the Apostles who preached the Gospel to us and the prophets who proclaimed beforehand the coming of our Lord; being zealous as touching that which is good, abstaining from offenses and from the false brethren and from them that bear the name of the Lord in hypocrisy, who lead foolish men astray.

Polycarp 7:1

For every one *who shall not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is antichrist*: and whosoever shall not confess the testimony of the Cross, is of the devil; and whosoever shall pervert the oracles of the Lord to his own lusts and say that there is neither resurrection nor judgment, that man is the firstborn of Satan.

Polycarp 7:2

Wherefore let us forsake the vain doing of the many and their false teachings, and turn unto the word which was delivered unto us from the beginning, *being sober unto prayer* and constant in fastings, entreating the all-seeing God with supplications that *He bring us not into temptation*, according as the Lord said, *The Spirit is indeed willing, but the flesh is weak*.

Polycarp 8:1

Let us therefore without ceasing hold fast by our hope and by the earnest of our righteousness, which is Jesus Christ who *took up our sins in His own body upon the tree, who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth*, but for our sakes He endured all things, that we might live in Him.

Polycarp 8:2

Let us therefore become imitators of His endurance; and if we should suffer for His name's sake, let us glorify Him. For He gave this example to us in His own person, and we believed this.

Polycarp 9:1

I exhort you all therefore to be obedient unto the word of righteousness and to practice all endurance, which also ye saw with your own eyes in the blessed Ignatius and Zosimus and Rufus, yea and in others also who came from among yourselves, as well as in Paul himself and the rest of the Apostles;

Polycarp 9:2

being persuaded that all these *ran not in vain* but in faith and righteousness, and that they are in their due place in the presence of the Lord, with whom also they suffered. For they *loved not the present world*, but Him that died for our sakes and was raised by God for us.

Polycarp 10:1

Stand fast therefore in these things and follow the example of the Lord, *being firm in the faith and immovable, in love of the brotherhood kindly affectioned one to another*, partners with the

truth, *forestalling one another* in the gentleness of the Lord, despising no man.

Polycarp 10:2

When ye are able to do good, defer it not, for Pitifulness delivereth from death. Be ye all subject one to another, having your conversation unblamable among the gentiles, that your good works both ye may receive praise and the Lord may not be blasphemed in you.

Polycarp 10:3

But woe to him through whom the name of the Lord be blasphemed. Therefore teach all men soberness, in which ye yourselves also walk.

Polycarp 11:1

I was exceedingly grieved for Valens, who aforetime was a presbyter among you, because he is so ignorant of the office which was given unto him. I warn you therefore that ye refrain from covetousness, and that ye be pure and truthful. Refrain from all evil.

Polycarp 11:2

But he who cannot govern himself in these things, how doth he enjoin this upon another? If a man refrain not from covetousness, he shall be defiled by idolatry, and shall be judged as one of the Gentiles who *know not the judgment of the Lord, Nay, know we not, that the saints shall judge the world*, as Paul teacheth?

Polycarp 11:3

But I have not found any such thing in you, neither have heard thereof, among whom the blessed Paul labored, who were his *letters* in the beginning. For *he boasteth of you in all those churches* which alone at that time knew God; for we knew Him not as yet.

Polycarp 11:4

Therefore I am exceedingly grieved for him and for his wife, unto whom may the Lord grant true repentance. Be ye therefore yourselves also sober herein, and *hold not such as enemies* but restore them as frail and erring members, that ye may save the whole body of you. For so doing, ye do edify one another.

Polycarp 12:1

For I am persuaded that ye are well trained in the sacred writings, and nothing is hidden from you. But to myself this is not granted. Only, as it is said in these scriptures, *Be ye angry and sin not, and Let not the sun set on your wrath*. Blessed is he that remembereth this; and I trust that this is in you.

Polycarp 12:2

Now may the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the eternal High-priest Himself the [Son of God Jesus Christ, build you up in faith and truth, and in all gentleness and in all avoidance of wrath and in forbearance and long suffering and in patient endurance and in purity; and may He grant unto you a lot and portion among His saints, and to us with you, and to all that are under heaven, who shall believe on our Lord and God Jesus Christ and on His Father *that raised him from the dead*.

Polycarp 12:3

Pray for all the saints. Pray also for kings and powers and princes and for them that persecute and hate you and for the enemies of the cross, that your fruit may be manifest among all men, that ye may be perfect in Him.

Polycarp 13:1

Ye wrote to me, both ye yourselves and Ignatius, asking that if any one should go to Syria he might carry thither the letters from you. And this I will do, if I get a fit opportunity, either I myself, or he whom I shall send to be ambassador on your behalf also.

Polycarp 13:2

The letters of Ignatius which were sent to us by him, and others as many as we had by us, we send unto you, according as ye gave charge; the which are subjoined to this letter; from which ye will be able to gain great advantage. For they comprise faith and endurance and every kind of edification, which pertaineth unto our Lord. Moreover concerning Ignatius himself and those that were with him, if ye have any sure tidings, certify us.

Polycarp 14:1

I write these things to you by Crescens, whom I commended to you recently and now commend unto you: for he hath walked blamelessly with us; and I believe also with you in like manner. But ye shall have his sister commended, when she shall come to you. Fare ye well in the Lord Jesus Christ in grace, ye and all yours. Amen.

The Discourse on Eternal Life by Augustine

The day now approaching whereon she was to depart this life (which day Thou well knewest, we knew not), it came to pass, Thyself, as I believe, by Thy secret ways so ordering it, that she and I stood alone, leaning in a certain window, which looked into the garden of the house where we now lay, at Ostia; where removed from the din of men, we were recruiting from the fatigues of a long journey, for the voyage. We were discoursing then together, alone, very sweetly; and forgetting those

things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, we were enquiring between ourselves in the presence of the Truth, which Thou art, of what sort the eternal life of the saints was to be, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man. But yet we gasped with the mouth of our heart, after those heavenly streams of Thy fountain, the fountain of life, which is with Thee; that being bedewed thence according to our capacity, we might in some sort meditate upon so high a mystery.

And when our discourse was brought to that point, that the very highest delight of the earthly senses, in the very purest material light, was, in respect of the sweetness of that life, not only not worthy of comparison, but not even of mention; we raising up ourselves with a more glowing affection towards the "Self-same," did by degrees pass through all things bodily, even the very heaven whence sun and moon and stars shine upon the earth; yea, we were soaring higher yet, by inward musing, and discourse, and admiring of Thy works; and we came to our own minds, and went beyond them, that we might arrive at that region of never-failing plenty, where Thou feedest Israel for ever with the food of truth, and where life is the Wisdom by whom all these things are made, and what have been, and what shall be, and she is not made, but is, as she hath been, and so shall she be ever; yea rather, to "have been," and "hereafter to be," are not in her, but only "to be," seeing she is eternal. For to "have been," and to "be hereafter," are not eternal. And while we were discoursing and panting after her, we slightly touched on her with the whole effort of our heart; and we sighed, and there we leave bound the first fruits of the Spirit; and returned to vocal expressions of our mouth, where the word spoken has beginning and end. And what is like unto Thy Word, our Lord, who endureth in Himself without becoming old, and maketh all things new?

We were saying then: If to any the tumult of the flesh were hushed, hushed the images of earth, and waters, and air, hushed also the pole of heaven, yea the very soul be hushed to herself, and by not thinking on self surmount self, hushed all dreams and imaginary revelations, every tongue and every sign, and whatsoever exists only in transition, since if any could hear, all these say, We made not ourselves, but He made us that abideth for ever—If then having uttered this, they too should be hushed, having roused only our ears to Him who made them, and He alone speak, not by them but by Himself, that we may hear His Word, not through any tongue of flesh, nor Angel's voice, nor sound of thunder, nor in the dark riddle of a similitude, but might hear Whom in these things we love, might hear His Very Self without these (as we two now strained ourselves, and in swift thought touched on that Eternal Wisdom which abideth over all);—could this be continued on, and other visions of kind far unlike be withdrawn, and this one ravish, and absorb, and wrap up its beholder amid these inward joys, so that life might be for ever like that one moment of understanding which now we sighed after; were not this, Enter into thy Master's joy? And when shall that be? When we shall all rise again, though we shall not all be changed?

Such things was I speaking, and even if not in this very manner, and these same words, yet, Lord, Thou knowest that in that day when we were speaking of these things, and this world with all its delights became, as we spake, contemptible to us, my mother said, "Son, for mine own part I have no further delight in any thing in this life. What I do here any longer, and to what I am here, I know not, now that my hopes in this world are accomplished. One thing there was for which I desired to linger for a while in this life, that I might see thee a Catholic Christian before I died. My God hath done this for me more abundantly, that I should now see thee withal, despising earthly happiness, become His servant: what do I here?"

The Ethiopian Hymn of Faith

The **Ethiopian Hymn of Faith** represents the deep spiritual and theological convictions of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, expressed through poetic and liturgical traditions. While no single hymn bears this explicit title, the Church's rich liturgical heritage, including the *Deggwa* (Ge'ez hymnal), contains numerous hymns celebrating the steadfastness of faith, the power of God, and the triumph of Christ.

The **Hymn of Faith** could be envisioned as a powerful anthem of belief, hope, and devotion, rooted in the Church's Christological theology, veneration of saints, and commitment to enduring through trials.

Theological Foundations

1. Faith as the Foundation of Salvation:

- Faith (*Haymanot*) is central to Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity, emphasizing trust in God's promises and the redemptive work of Christ.
- **Hebrews 11:1**: "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."

2. Christ as the Object of Faith:

- The hymn would highlight Christ as the incarnate Word and the fulfillment of God's covenant.
- **John 14:6**: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

3. The Power of Endurance:

- Faith is portrayed as the strength to overcome trials, reflecting the Church's historical resilience through persecution and hardship.

Themes in the Ethiopian Hymn of Faith

1. Faith in the Trinity:

- Acknowledging the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as the source and sustainer of faith.
- **Example Verse**: "O Holy Trinity, one in essence, we place our trust in Your eternal light."

2. The Victory of Christ:

- Celebrating Christ's triumph over sin, death, and evil, which strengthens the believer's faith.

- **Example Verse:** "By the cross, You conquered; by Your blood, You redeemed us, O Lamb of God."
3. **Endurance Through Trials:**
- Expressing the unshakable nature of faith, even in the face of suffering.
 - **Example Verse:** "The storms may rage, yet my soul is steadfast, for my hope is in the Lord."
4. **The Saints as Examples of Faith:**
- Honoring the martyrs, prophets, and saints who upheld the faith and serve as inspirations.
 - **Example Verse:** "The righteous have gone before us, their lives a testament to unwavering faith."
5. **Hope in Eternal Life:**
- Proclaiming faith in the promise of resurrection and the eternal kingdom.
 - **Example Verse:** "In Your kingdom, O Lord, we shall see the fullness of Your glory."

Structure of the Hynn

A conceptual **Ethiopian Hynn of Faith** might follow this structure:

I. Invocation

- "O God of our fathers, the Rock of ages, strengthen our hearts to trust in You."

II. Proclamation of God's Power

- "You stretched the heavens by Your Word; You sustain all things by Your will."

III. Christ's Redemption

- "In the fullness of time, You sent Your Son, who bore our sins and gave us life."

IV. The Role of the Church

- "The Church, the Bride of Christ, upholds the faith, a beacon of light to the nations."

V. The Witness of the Saints

- "The blood of the martyrs cries out in testimony; their faith endures forever."

VI. Doxology

- "To You, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be glory, now and forevermore. Amen."
-

Liturgical and Devotional Context

1. The Divine Liturgy (Qidase):

- Hymns of faith are sung during the Eucharistic celebration, particularly in the context of the Nicene Creed and the Anaphoras.

2. Feasts of Martyrs and Saints:

- Hymns celebrating the faith of saints are central to the Church's liturgical calendar.

3. Daily Prayers:

- The *Hours of Prayer* include invocations and hymns reinforcing faith in God's promises.

4. Processions and Festivals:

- During festivals like **Tinket** (Epiphany) and **Meskel** (Finding of the True Cross), hymns of faith are chanted as part of the celebrations.
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Symbolism in the Hymn

1. The Cross:

- Representing Christ's sacrifice and victory, the foundation of Christian faith.

2. Light:

- Symbolizing divine truth, guidance, and the illumination of faith.

3. The Rock:

- Reflecting the unshakable nature of faith in God.
-

Spiritual Lessons

1. Trust in God:

- The hymn encourages unwavering trust in God's providence and plan.

2. Perseverance in Trials:

- It inspires believers to endure difficulties with the assurance of God's faithfulness.

3. Living Faith in Action:

- The hymn calls Christians to embody their faith through love, service, and witness.
-

Conclusion

The **Ethiopian Hymn of Faith** would serve as a timeless testament to the Church's unwavering belief in God's promises, Christ's redemptive work, and the sustaining power of the Holy Spirit. Rich in theological depth and liturgical beauty, such a hymn would inspire the faithful to persevere in hope, stand firm in trials, and live as shining examples of faith in a world longing for light. Through its poetic expressions and profound truths, this hymn would reflect the enduring spirit of Ethiopian Orthodoxy, rooted in the unshakable foundation of faith.

The Prayer of Thanksgiving (Expanded)

The **Prayer of Thanksgiving (Expanded)** is a profound expression of gratitude, reflecting the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church's deep spiritual tradition. Thanksgiving (*Tewahido Amassagnet*) in Ethiopian worship is central to recognizing God's providence, mercy, and grace in every aspect of life. This expanded version would incorporate elements of praise, humility, and acknowledgment of God's gifts in creation, salvation, and daily sustenance.

Theological Foundations

1. Gratitude for Creation:

- Acknowledging God as the Creator who sustains all life.
- **Psaln 100:4**: "Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His name."

2. Thanksgiving for Salvation:

- Celebrating Christ's redemptive work through His incarnation, death, and resurrection.
- **Colossians 3:17**: "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."

3. Recognition of God's Daily Providence:

- Expressing gratitude for the blessings of food, shelter, health, and community.
 - **Janes 1:17**: "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights."
-

Themes in the Prayer of Thanksgiving

1. Praise for God's Sovereignty:

- Glorifying God as the ruler of all creation.
- **Example Verse**: "O Lord of hosts, the heavens declare Your majesty, and the earth is filled with Your goodness."

2. Acknowledgment of God's Mercy:

- Thanking God for His forgiveness and compassion toward sinners.
- **Example Verse:** "Though we are unworthy, Your mercy surrounds us; though we falter, Your grace sustains us."

3. Gratitude for Redemption:

- Rejoicing in Christ's victory over sin and death.
- **Example Verse:** "Through the cross, You have redeemed us; through Your resurrection, You have given us life eternal."

4. Recognition of Divine Providence:

- Thanking God for His guidance and provision in daily life.
- **Example Verse:** "You open Your hand and satisfy the needs of every living creature."

5. Petition for Continued Blessings:

- Asking for God's continued care and guidance while remaining thankful for His past blessings.
- **Example Verse:** "May Your light guide our steps, and may our hearts remain ever grateful."

Structure of the Prayer

An expanded **Prayer of Thanksgiving** could follow this structure:

I. Invocation and Praise

- "O Lord, God of all creation, we lift our hearts to You in praise and thanksgiving, for You are the source of all good things."

II. Thanksgiving for Creation

- "You stretched out the heavens and established the earth; You formed us in Your image and breathed into us the breath of life."

III. Gratitude for Salvation

- "Through Your Son, You redeemed us from sin and death; through the Holy Spirit, You sanctify and strengthen us."

IV. Acknowledgment of Providence

- "You feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and shelter the weary. In every moment, Your hand sustains us."

V. Petition for Blessings

- "Grant us wisdom to walk in Your ways, hearts that overflow with gratitude, and lives that reflect Your love."

VI. Doxology

- "To You, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be glory and thanksgiving forever and ever. Amen."
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Liturgical and Devotional Context

1. The Divine Liturgy (Qidase):

- Thanksgiving prayers are central to the Eucharist, where the faithful express gratitude for Christ's sacrifice.

2. Daily Prayers:

- The *Hours of Prayer* include thanksgiving as an essential element, particularly in morning and evening devotions.

3. Festivals and Feasts:

- Major celebrations, such as **Fasika** (Easter) and **Meskel** (Finding of the True Cross), incorporate hymns and prayers of thanksgiving.
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Symbolism in the Prayer

1. Light:

- Representing God's guidance and truth.

2. The Cross:

- A symbol of redemption and the ultimate gift of love.

3. Bread and Wine:

- Symbolizing God's provision and the Eucharist as the culmination of thanksgiving.
-

Spiritual Lessons

1. Cultivating Gratitude:

- The prayer encourages a constant attitude of thankfulness, recognizing God's hand in all aspects of life.

2. Trust in Providence:

- It inspires believers to trust in God's care, even in times of uncertainty.

3. Living a Thankful Life:

- The prayer calls Christians to express their gratitude through acts of kindness, service, and worship.

Conclusion

The **Prayer of Thanksgiving (Expanded)** embodies the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church's profound sense of gratitude to God for His creation, redemption, and daily blessings. Rich in theological depth and poetic expression, it serves as a timeless reminder of the importance of thanksgiving in the Christian life. This prayer invites believers to acknowledge God's goodness, celebrate His mercy, and live with hearts full of gratitude, offering glory to Him in all things.

The Song of the Holy Angels

4. "Glory to God!" the holy angels sing,
With peals of joy the heav'nly arches ring;
"Peace on the earth," how sweet the strains of love,
Peace and good will from him who reigns above.

Chorus:

Glory! Glory! Glory to God!
Glory! Glory! Glory to God!
Glory to God! Glory to God!
"Glory to God in the highest!"
Peace from heaven, Peace from above.
Peace from heaven, Oh, matchless love!
Glory be to God! Glory be to God!
Glory be to God in the highest!

5. "Glory to God!" the King of Peace is born,
Let praises ring to God this happy morn;
Bright Star of Hope, we hail thy welcome light,
Day dawns at last to drive away our night. [Chorus]

6. "Glory to God!" how sweet the heav'nly strain,
Let earth reply and join the glad refrain;
All hail the King, the Christ of Bethlehem,
Place on his head the royal diadem. [Chorus]

The Ethiopian Book of Intercessions

The **Ethiopian Book of Intercessions** could serve as a conceptual or liturgical collection of prayers, hymns, and supplications within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, emphasizing the practice of intercessory prayer. Intercession is a cornerstone of Ethiopian Orthodox spirituality, reflecting the Church's belief in the communion of saints, the power of the Virgin Mary's prayers, and the role of Christ as the ultimate mediator between God and humanity.

This book would represent the Church's theological and devotional approach to interceding for others—whether for forgiveness, healing, peace, or guidance.

Theological Foundations

7. Christ as the High Priest and Intercessor:

- Jesus Christ is the ultimate intercessor, offering prayers on behalf of humanity.
- **Hebrews 7:25**: "Therefore He is able to save completely those who come to God through Him, because He always lives to intercede for them."

8. The Communion of Saints:

- Saints, angels, and especially the Virgin Mary are believed to intercede for the faithful.
- **Revelation 5:8**: "The prayers of the saints are offered before God."

9. The Power of Prayer:

- Intercessory prayer is seen as a powerful expression of love and solidarity with others, uniting believers in faith.
 - **Janes 5:16**: "The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective."
-

Themes in the Ethiopian Book of Intercessions

1. Intercession Through Christ:

- Prayers offered in the name of Christ, acknowledging Him as the mediator of all grace.
- **Example Prayer**: "O Lord, You who bore our sins upon the cross, intercede for us before the throne of the Father."

2. The Virgin Mary's Prayers:

- Emphasizing Mary's role as *Theotokos* (Mother of God) and her powerful intercession.

- **Example Prayer:** "O holy Mother, who bore the Light of the world, pray for us sinners and guide us to Your Son."

3. The Saints and Angels:

- Invoking the prayers of saints and angels for protection, guidance, and blessings.
- **Example Prayer:** "O Michael, captain of the heavenly hosts, defend us in our struggles and present our prayers before God."

4. Intercession for the Living and the Dead:

- Prayers for the faithful, both alive and departed, reflecting the unity of the Church across time and space.
- **Example Prayer:** "Grant rest, O Lord, to those who have fallen asleep, and may Your light shine upon them forever."

5. Intercession for the World:

- Supplications for peace, justice, and the well-being of creation.
- **Example Prayer:** "Lord of all nations, bring peace to the earth and unite Your children in harmony and love."

Structure of the Book

A conceptual *Ethiopian Book of Intercessions* might include the following sections:

I. Prayers to Christ the Mediator

- "O Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, hear our cries and intercede for us."

II. Prayers Through the Virgin Mary

- "Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you; may your prayers shield us in times of trial."

III. Prayers to the Saints and Angels

- "O holy apostles, who witnessed the resurrection, pray for us that we may remain steadfast in faith."

IV. Prayers for the Living

- "Lord, bless our families, strengthen the weak, heal the sick, and comfort the sorrowful."

V. Prayers for the Departed

- "May their souls rest in peace, O Lord, and may they behold Your glory forever."

VI. Prayers for the Church and the World

- "Strengthen Your Church, O Lord, and bring Your light to those who dwell in darkness."

VII. Doxology

- "Glory to You, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen."
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Liturgical and Devotional Context

1. The Divine Liturgy (Qidase):

- Intercessory prayers are central to the Eucharistic celebration, where the priest and congregation pray for the Church, the faithful, and the departed.

2. Feasts and Festivals:

- Intercessory prayers are integral during celebrations such as **Tinket** (Epiphany) and **Meskel** (Finding of the True Cross).

3. Daily Prayers:

- The *Hours of Prayer* include intercessory elements, particularly in the evening and night prayers.

4. Private Devotion:

- Believers often recite intercessory prayers at home, invoking the saints and Mary for their needs and the needs of others.
-

Symbolism in Intercessory Prayer

1. Incense:

- Representing the prayers of the faithful rising to heaven.
- **Revelation 8:4**: "The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of God's people, went up before God."

2. Light:

- Symbolizing the divine presence and the guidance of the Holy Spirit in prayer.

3. The Cross:

- The ultimate sign of Christ's intercession for humanity.
-

Spiritual Lessons

1. Unity in Prayer:

- Intercession fosters a sense of solidarity, reminding believers that they are part of a larger spiritual family.

2. Faith in Divine Mercy:

- It teaches trust in God's compassion and His willingness to respond to the prayers of His children.

3. A Life of Love:

- Intercession reflects a heart that seeks the well-being of others, embodying Christ's love.

Conclusion

The **Ethiopian Book of Intercessions** would be a profound resource for the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, encapsulating the Church's deep reliance on prayer and its belief in the power of intercession. Through its structure, themes, and spiritual richness, it would inspire believers to pray not only for themselves but for others, fostering a spirit of love, unity, and faith in God's providence. This conceptual book would reflect the enduring strength of the Church's tradition of intercession, uniting heaven and earth in a continuous dialogue of prayer.

The Hymn of the New Covenant

1

"I will impart My laws into their mind,"
Our covenanting God revealed to mankind;
"I will inscribe My laws upon their heart,"
God's highest law of life in us to impart.

Christ is the title deed of all God is;
Christ is a testament with all its bequests;
Now the New Testament is ours to claim,
As we, in spirit, call upon His name.

2

"I will be God to them" declares the Lord,
Christ, our inheritance, described in the Word;
"And they will be to Me a people," possessed,
As God's inheritance, His riches, expressed.

3

"For all will know Me," and consecrate,
Even the little ones and also the great;

All have capacity to live such a life,
All live in oneness, abiding in Christ.

4

"I will propitiate," forgiving all sin,
Cleansing the inward parts and washing within;
Christ's efficacious blood has set us free,
Restoring fellowship, for eternity.

The Vision of the New Creation

The biblical story reaches all the way from creation to new creation. In between, the fall corresponds to redemption in Christ. The Bible does not reveal a large amount of information about heaven and the new creation, but we do find a scintillating vision of the new heaven and the new earth in the final two chapters of Revelation. In what follows, we will seek to answer three questions: (1) How should we think of the new heavens and the new earth? (2) What will precede the establishment of the new heavens and the new earth? (3) What does the new creation mean with regard to our mission?

How should we think of the new heavens and the new earth?

We should think of God's new creation in the following ways.

10. Heaven and earth will be replaced, not merely renewed.

- Isa 65:17-18 speaks of new creation (cf. Isa 43:19). There will be a qualitatively new kind of existence.
- Matthew 5:18 and Mark 13:31 record Jesus as saying that "heaven and earth will pass away."
- 1 Cor 7:31 records Paul saying that "the present form of this world is passing away"
- 2 Pet 3:10-11 speaks graphically of the destruction of the heaven and earth: "the heavens will pass away with a roar and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be ...?"

11. Heaven and earth will be united as one; there will be no more separation.

- Rev 21:3 says, "the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them..."

12. God's purpose is not only to redeem his creation but to make a new creation.

- Things are not merely going back to the way things were.
- Life started in a garden; it'll end up in a city.
- It started with only Adam and Eve; it'll end with a multitude from every tribe and nation worshipping God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

13. Heaven will mark the fulfillment of the new covenant.

- Rev 21:3 alludes to Jer 31:33b: "They will be his people. He will be ... their God."

14. Heaven, in a sense, has already begun.

- We are already a "new creation" (2 Cor 5:17).

15. Heaven is exclusive.

- Rev 21:8 includes a warning that "the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars" will be cast into the lake of fire.

16. This has important implications:

- For how we view our material possessions
- For how we view our stewardship of this earth in relation to evangelism and mission
- For how we view Christian social action over against gospel preaching

What will precede the establishment of the new heavens and new earth?

Our hope is that one day at the end of time Jesus will return in great power (Second Coming; Revelation 19). He will reign for 1,000-years (the Millennium; Revelation 20). After one great final battle (Armageddon), Jesus will cast the devil and his demons into hell. He will judge all people (the Great White Throne judgment): those who trusted him in this life will go to heaven and those who didn't will go to hell.

What does the new creation mean with regard to our mission?

1. Right now, *mission* is primary; mission helps move human history toward the new creation

At the beginning, at creation, there was no need for mission; now, after the fall, and after redemption, we're called to join Jesus on his mission. He's *already accomplished* redemption; all that's left is to proclaim it, so people can know and respond. That's all part of creation moving toward its original God-intended purpose.

2. In heaven, the primary activity will be *worship*

Like creation in Genesis 1-2 prior to the fall, we're hardly able to comprehend the worship scenes in Revelation 5 and to conceive what life in heaven according to Revelation 21 will be like. We live in the period between Jesus' first and second comings, and are called to proclaim the gospel to those who haven't heard.

What are the implications?

1. God is God of all the nations
2. All people will have to give an account to God

3. Not only is heaven real, hell is real as well (contra annihilationism, conditional immortality, etc.): we must preach the gospel
4. We need to be anchored in the story of Scripture so we can live the way God wants us to (mission)
5. As John Piper says, "mission exists because worship doesn't"; so let's spread the gospel to the ends of the globe!

461. The Ethiopian Song of the King of Kings

The **Ethiopian Song of the King of Kings** is a conceptual hymn that celebrates the majesty, sovereignty, and eternal reign of God, specifically in the person of Jesus Christ as the "King of Kings and Lord of Lords" (Revelation 19:16). In the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, hymns that exalt God's kingship are central to worship, emphasizing His authority over creation, His victory over sin and death, and His role as the ultimate ruler who brings justice and peace.

Theological Foundations

1. **Christ as the King of Kings:**
 - Jesus Christ is glorified as the ruler of all, whose reign is eternal and universal.
 - **1 Timothy 6:15:** "God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords."
2. **God's Sovereignty:**
 - The hymn emphasizes God's supreme power and authority over heaven and earth.
 - **Psaln 24:10:** "Who is this King of glory? The Lord Almighty—He is the King of glory."
3. **The Fulfillment of Prophecy:**
 - Christ's kingship is seen as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies, such as those about the Messiah reigning on David's throne.
 - **Isaiah G:7:** "Of the greatness of His government and peace there will be no end."

Themes in the Song of the King of Kings

1. **The Majesty of God:**
 - Celebrating God's greatness, wisdom, and power as the King above all.
 - **Example Verse:** "The heavens declare Your glory, O Lord; the earth is Your footstool, and the stars sing Your praise."

2. Christ's Victory:

- Proclaiming Christ's triumph over sin, death, and evil through His death and resurrection.
- **Example Verse:** "You conquered death and broke its chains; the nations bow before Your name."

3. The Eternal Kingdom:

- Anticipating the establishment of God's everlasting kingdom of peace and righteousness.
- **Example Verse:** "Your throne endures forever, O King of Kings; justice and mercy are the pillars of Your reign."

4. The Role of the Faithful:

- Calling believers to live as citizens of God's kingdom, reflecting His light in the world.
- **Example Verse:** "Teach us to walk in Your ways, O Lord, and to serve You as loyal subjects of Your kingdom."

5. The Universal Reign of Christ:

- Celebrating Christ's rule over all nations, uniting the world under His peace.
- **Example Verse:** "From the rising of the sun to its setting, Your name is praised among the nations."

Structure of the Song

The Ethiopian Song of the King of Kings could be structured as follows:

I. Invocation of God's Majesty

- "O Lord of hosts, King of glory, we lift our voices to honor Your holy name."

II. Praise for Christ's Victory

- "By Your cross, You have triumphed; by Your resurrection, You reign forever."

III. The Universal Reign of God

- "The nations proclaim Your greatness, and the heavens resound with Your praise."

IV. Anticipation of the Eternal Kingdom

- "Come, O King of Kings, and establish Your throne; let Your light shine forever."

V. The Role of the Faithful

- "Make us vessels of Your kingdom, O Lord, that we may reflect Your justice and love."

VI. Doxology

- "Glory and honor to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen."
-

Liturgical and Devotional Context

1. **The Divine Liturgy (Qidase):**
 - Hymns proclaiming Christ as King are central to the Eucharist, particularly in the anaphoras, where His victory and reign are celebrated.
 2. **Festivals and Feasts:**
 - Major celebrations, such as **Epiphany (Tinket)** and **Easter (Fasika)**, emphasize Christ's kingship through hymns and processions.
 3. **Processions and Ceremonies:**
 - During grand processions, the faithful chant hymns glorifying God's sovereignty, often carrying *Tabots* (replicas of the Ark of the Covenant).
 4. **Daily Devotion:**
 - Believers invoke Christ's kingship in personal prayers, seeking His guidance and protection.
-

Symbolism in the Song

1. **The Crown:**
 - Representing Christ's authority and victory as the King of Kings.
 2. **The Scepter:**
 - Symbolizing His just rule and divine power.
 3. **Light:**
 - Reflecting the divine presence and the truth of His kingdom.
 4. **The Throne:**
 - Signifying the eternal and unshakable reign of God.
-

Spiritual Lessons

1. **Trust in God's Sovereignty:**

- The hymn reminds believers of God's ultimate control over all things, offering hope and assurance.
2. **Living as Kingdom Citizens:**
- It calls Christians to reflect God's justice, mercy, and love in their daily lives.
3. **Worshipping with Reverence:**
- The song encourages awe and adoration for the majesty of God.
-

Conclusion

The **Ethiopian Song of the King of Kings** is a magnificent hymn of praise that exalts God's sovereignty and celebrates Christ's eternal reign. Rooted in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church's rich liturgical tradition, it inspires the faithful to worship God with reverence, live as citizens of His kingdom, and anticipate the day when His eternal throne will be established in fullness. Through its profound theology and poetic beauty, this hymn serves as a timeless proclamation of God's glory, power, and love.

The Martyrdom of Saint Philip

The **Martyrdom of Saint Philip** is a story celebrated within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and other Christian traditions, honoring the apostle Philip's unwavering faith and ultimate sacrifice for Christ. Saint Philip, one of the twelve apostles, is remembered as a fervent evangelist who spread the Gospel in challenging regions and faced persecution for his faith. The Ethiopian Orthodox tradition holds him in high regard, particularly for his missionary work in Ethiopia and other parts of Africa.

Theological Significance

4. **Faithfulness to Christ:**
- Philip's martyrdom reflects his steadfast commitment to Christ's mission, even in the face of death.
 - **Matthew 10:22:** "You will be hated by everyone because of Me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved."
5. **Proclamation of the Gospel:**
- His life and death exemplify the apostolic mission to spread the Gospel to all nations.
 - **Acts 1:8:** "You will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

6. The Triumph of Faith:

- Philip's martyrdom is seen as a victory of faith over fear and the power of God's truth over human opposition.

The Life and Mission of Saint Philip

1. Call to Apostleship:

- Philip was called by Jesus early in His ministry and immediately followed Him.
- **John 1:43:** "The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, He said to him, 'Follow Me.'"

2. Evangelism in Ethiopia and Beyond:

- Ethiopian Orthodox tradition holds that Philip preached in parts of Africa, including Ethiopia, as well as in Asia Minor.
- He is credited with converting many to Christianity, performing miracles, and confronting pagan practices.

3. Key Moments in Scripture:

- **Feeding of the 5,000** (John 6:5-7): Philip plays a role in this miracle, showcasing his practical yet limited understanding of Jesus' power.
- **Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch** (Acts 8:26-40): While this Philip is traditionally understood as Philip the Evangelist (distinct from the apostle), the Ethiopian tradition often conflates the two, emphasizing his connection to Ethiopia.

The Martyrdom of Saint Philip

1. Preaching in Hierapolis:

- Philip traveled to Hierapolis in Phrygia (modern-day Turkey), a region steeped in idolatry, where he preached the Gospel and performed miracles.

2. Confrontation with Paganism:

- Philip's preaching challenged the local worship of a serpent deity. His rebuke of idolatry angered the priests and city officials.

3. Imprisonment and Execution:

- Philip was arrested and subjected to torture for refusing to renounce Christ.
- He was eventually crucified upside-down, a form of execution that mirrored the martyrdom of Peter. Some accounts also suggest he was stoned alongside his crucifixion.

4. Final Witness:

- As he was dying, Philip prayed for his persecutors, embodying Christ's teaching to love one's enemies.
 - His death inspired many onlookers to convert to Christianity.
-

Liturgical Commemoration

1. Feast Day:

- The Ethiopian Orthodox Church commemorates Saint Philip on the 8th day of the Ethiopian month of *Hedar* (November 17 Gregorian).

2. Prayers and Hymns:

- Special prayers and hymns honor his missionary work, miracles, and martyrdom, emphasizing his role as a model of faith and courage.

3. Processions and Celebrations:

- On his feast day, Ethiopian Orthodox churches may hold processions with icons of Saint Philip, accompanied by chants and hymns.
-

Symbolism in the Story

1. The Cross:

- Philip's inverted crucifixion signifies humility and his unwavering faith in Christ.

2. The Serpent:

- His confrontation with the serpent deity symbolizes the triumph of Christ over evil and false worship.

3. The Open Scroll:

- Representing his dedication to spreading the Gospel and teaching the truth.
-

Spiritual Lessons from the Martyrdom of Saint Philip

1. Boldness in Faith:

- Philip's courage inspires Christians to proclaim the Gospel fearlessly, even in hostile environments.

2. Sacrificial Love:

- His willingness to die for Christ reflects the ultimate act of love and devotion.

3. Victory Over Idolatry:

- His mission challenges believers to confront and renounce modern forms of idolatry, staying true to God.

Legacy of Saint Philip

1. Apostolic Mission:

- Philip's life and death highlight the apostolic commitment to spreading the Gospel to all nations, fulfilling Christ's Great Commission.

2. Faithful Witness:

- His martyrdom serves as a powerful testimony to the transformative power of the Gospel and the strength of unwavering faith.

3. Connection to Ethiopia:

- His association with Ethiopia reinforces the historical and spiritual bond between the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and the early apostolic mission.

Conclusion

The **Martyrdom of Saint Philip** is a moving account of faith, courage, and devotion that continues to inspire Ethiopian Orthodox Christians and believers worldwide. His life exemplifies the call to preach the Gospel boldly, live with humility, and remain steadfast in the face of persecution. As a cornerstone of apostolic tradition, Saint Philip's legacy reminds us of the transformative power of Christ and the eternal reward awaiting those who remain faithful to Him.

The Gospel of Peter (Expanded Fragments)

Introduction

The early testimonies about this book have been set forth already. The present fragment was discovered in 1884 in a tomb at Akhmimin Egypt. The manuscript in which it is a little book containing a portion of the Book of Enoch in Greek, this fragment on the Passion and another, a description of Heaven and Hell, which is either (as I now think) a second fragment of the Gospel,

We have seen that the Gospel of Peter is quoted by writers of the latter end of the second century. It has been contended that Justin Martyr also used it soon after the middle of that century, but the evidence is not demonstrative. I believe it is not safe to date the book much earlier than A. D. 150.

It uses all four canonical Gospels, and is the earliest uncanonical account of the Passion that exists. It is not wholly orthodox: for it throws doubt on the reality of the Lord's sufferings, and by

consequence upon the reality of his human body. In other words it is, as Serapion of Antioch indicated, of a Docetic character.

Another characteristic of it is its extremely anti-Jewish attitude. Blame is thrown on the Jews wherever possible, and Pilate is white-washed .

In this case I give, in Roman and Arabic figures respectively, a double division into sections and verses. The first is that of Armitage Robinson, the second that of Harnack.

FRAGMENT I

I. 1 But of the Jews no man washed his hands, neither did Herod nor any one of his judges: and whereas they would not 2 wash, Pilate rose up. And then Herod the king commanded that the Lord should be taken into their hands, saying unto them: All that I commanded you to do unto him, do ye

II. 3 Now there stood there Joseph the friend of Pilate and of the Lord, and he, knowing that they were about to crucify him, came unto Pilate and begged the body of Jesus for burial. And Pilate sending unto Herod, begged his body. 5 And Herod said: Brother Pilate, even if none had begged for him, we should have buried him, since also the Sabbath dawneth; for it is written in the law that the sun should not set upon one that hath been slain (murdered).

III. 6 And he delivered him unto the people before the first day of (or on the day before the) unleavened bread, even their feast. And they having taken the Lord pushed him as they ran, and said: Let us hale the Son of God, now that 7 we have gotten authority over him. And they put on him a purple robe, and made him sit upon the seat of judgement, 8 saying: Give righteous judgement, thou King of Israel. And one of them brought a crown of thorns and set it upon the 9 Lord's head; and others stood and did spit in his eyes, and others buffeted his cheeks; and others did prick him with a reed, and some of them scourged him, saying With this honour let us honour (or at this price let us value) the son of God.

IV. 10 And they brought two malefactors, and crucified the 11 Lord between them. But he kept silence, as one feeling no pain. And when they set the cross upright, they wrote 12 thereon: This is the King of Israel. And they laid his garments before him, and divided them among themselves and 13 cast the lot upon them. But one of those malefactors reproached them, saying: We have thus suffered for the evils which we have done; but this man which hath become the 14 saviour of men, wherein hath he injured you? And they were wroth with him, and commanded that his legs should not be broken, that so he might die in torment.

V. 15 Now it was noonday, and darkness prevailed over all Judaea: and they were troubled and in an agony lest the sun should have set, for that he yet lived: for it is written for them that the sun should not set upon him that hath been 16 slain (murdered). And one of them said: Give ye him to drink gall with vinegar: and they mingled it and gave him 17 to drink: and they fulfilled all things and accomplished 18 their sins upon their own heads. And many went about with 19 lamps, supposing that it was night: and some fell. And the Lord cried out aloud saying: My power, my power, thou hast forsaken me. And when he had so said, he was taken up.

20 And in the same hour was the veil of the temple of Jerusalem rent in two.

VI. 21 And then they plucked the nails from the hands of the Lord and laid him upon the earth: and the whole earth was shaken, and there came a great fear on all.

22 Then the sun shone forth, and it was found to be the ninth 23 hour. And the Jews rejoiced, and gave his body unto Joseph to bury it, because he had beheld all the good things which 24 he did. And he took the Lord and washed him and wrapped him in linen and brought him unto his own sepulchre, which is called the Garden of Joseph.

VII. 25 Then the Jews and the elders and the priests, when they perceived how great evil they had done themselves, began to lament and to say: Woe unto our sins: the judgement and the end of Jerusalem is drawn nigh.

26 But I with my fellows was in grief, and we were wounded in our minds and would have hid ourselves; for we were sought after by them as malefactors, and as thinking to set 27 the temple on fire. And beside all these things we were fasting, and we sat mourning and weeping night and day until the Sabbath.

VIII. 28 But the scribes and Pharisees and elders gathered one with another, for they had heard that all the people were murmuring and beating their breasts, saying: If these very great signs have come to pass at his death, behold how 29 righteous he was. And the elders were afraid and came unto 30 Pilate, entreating him and saying: Give us soldiers that we (or they) may watch his sepulchre for three days, lest his disciples come and steal him away and the people suppose 31 that he is risen from the dead, and do us hurt. And Pilate gave them Petronius the centurion with soldiers to watch the sepulchre; and the elders and scribes came with them unto 32 the tomb, and when they had rolled a great stone to keep out (al. together with) the centurion and the soldiers, then all 33 that were there together set it upon the door of the tomb; and plastered thereon seven seals; and they pitched a tent there and kept watch.

IX. 34 And early in the morning as the Sabbath dawned, there came a multitude from Jerusalem and the region roundabout to see the sepulchre that had been sealed.

35 Now in the night whereon the Lord's day dawned, as the soldiers were keeping guard two by two in every watch, 36 there came a great sound in the heaven, and they saw the heavens opened and two men descend thence, shining with (lit. having) a great light, and drawing near unto the sepulchre. 37 And that stone which had been set on the door rolled away of itself and went back to the side, and the sepulchre was

X. 38 opened and both of the young men entered in. When therefore those soldiers saw that, they waked up the centurion and the elders (for they also were there keeping 39 watch); and while they were yet telling them the things which they had seen, they saw again three men come out of the sepulchre, and two of them sustaining the other (lit. the 40 one), and a cross following, after them. And of the two they saw that their heads reached unto heaven, but of him that 41 was led by them that it overpassed the heavens. And they 42 heard a voice out of the heavens saying: Hast thou (or Thou hast) preached unto them that sleep? And an answer was heard from the cross, saying: Yea.

XI. 43 Those men therefore took counsel one with another to go and report these things unto Pilate. And while they yet thought thereabout, again the heavens were opened and a 45 man descended and entered into the tomb. And they that were with the centurion (or the centurion and they that

were with him) when they saw that, hasted to go by night unto Pilate and left the sepulchre whereon they were keeping watch, and told all that they had seen, and were in great agony, saying: Of a truth he was the son of God.

46 Pilate answered and said: I am clear from the blood of 47 the son of God, but thus it seemed good unto you. Then all they came and besought him and exhorted him to charge the centurion and the soldiers to tell nothing of that they had 48 seen: For, said they, it is expedient for us to incur the greatest sin before God, rather than to (and not to) fall into 49 the hands of the people of the Jews and to be stoned. Pilate therefore charged the centurion and the soldiers that they should say nothing.

XII. 50 Now early on the Lord's day Mary Magdalene, a disciple (fem.) of the Lord-which, being afraid because of the Jews, for they were inflamed with anger, had not performed at the sepulchre of the Lord those things which women are accustomed to do unto them that die and are 51 beloved of them-took with her the women her friends and 52 came unto the tomb where he was laid. And they feared lest the Jews should see them, and said: Even if we were not able to weep and lament him on that day whereon he was 53 crucified, yet let us now do so at his tomb. But who will roll away for us the stone also that is set upon the door of the tomb, that we may enter in and sit beside him and perform 54 that which is due? for the stone was great, and we fear lest any man see us. And if we cannot do so, yet let us cast down at the door these things which we bring for a memorial of him, and we will weep and lament until we come unto our house.

XIII. 55 And they went and found the sepulchre open : and they drew near and looked in there, and saw there a young man sitting in the midst of the sepulchre, of a fair countenance and clad in very bright raiment, which said unto them: 56 Wherefore are ye come? whom seek ye? not him that was crucified? He is risen and is departed; but if ye believe it not, look in and see the place where he lay, that he is not here: for he is risen and is departed thither whence he was sent. 57 Then the women were affrighted and fled.

XV. 58 Now it was the last day of unleavened bread, and many were coming forth of the city and returning unto their 59 own homes because the feast was at an end. But we, the twelve disciples of the Lord, were weeping and were in sorrow, and each one being grieved for that which had befallen 60 departed unto his own house. But I, Simon Peter, and Andrew my brother, took our nets and went unto the sea: and there was with us Levi the son of Alphaeus, whom the Lord (For Fragment II see Apocalypse of Peter.)

The Hymn of the Resurrection (Extended)

1.

A man of sorrows, Jesus came
To conquer sin and death for man,
That by the power of His name
We might fulfill the Father's plan.

Though He has drunk our bitter cup,
And for our sake His blood was shed,
He is not here, but risen up,
Seek not the living with the dead!

He was lifted on the cross

That he might lift us to the Father;

He has risen from the tomb

That through him we so may rise.

2.

In the beginning was the Word,
The Christ who made the Earth and sky.
The Father's power was conferred
That He should live and choose to die.
He comprehended every pain,
Knew every weakness, every sin,
For only He could break the chains
And bring the captives home again.

He was lifted on the cross

That he might lift us to the Father;

He has risen from the tomb

That through him we so may rise.

3.

And when in sorrow we in prayer
Approach the Father willingly
To overcome temptations snare
Or to endure adversity,
The Holy Ghost can heal our souls,
For the Atonement paid the price.
The Savior came to make us whole:

O come receive the living Christ!

He was lifted on the cross

That he might lift us to the Father;

He has risen from the tomb

That through him we so may rise.

4.

Hosanna to the Lamb

Who is the firstfruits of the Father!

He will come again to reign,

And through him we all shall rise.

The Ethiopian Prayer of Light

The **Ethiopian Prayer of Light** represents a profound spiritual and theological reflection within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, emphasizing the divine light of God that guides, sanctifies, and illuminates the path of the faithful. While there may not be a specific text titled "The Prayer of Light," the themes align with the Church's liturgical and devotional traditions, which often focus on the imagery of light as a symbol of God's presence, Christ's salvation, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Theological Foundations

1. God as Light:

- The Bible describes God as the source of all light, representing His holiness, purity, and truth.
- **1 John 1:5:** "God is light; in Him there is no darkness at all."

2. Christ as the Light of the World:

- Jesus is celebrated as the light that dispels spiritual darkness and leads humanity to salvation.
- **John 8:12:** "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

3. The Holy Spirit as Illumination:

- The Spirit enlightens the hearts and minds of believers, revealing God's truth and will.

- **Psaln 11G:105:** "Your word is a lamp to my feet, a light on my path."

4. The Church as a Beacon of Light:

- The Church is called to reflect God's light in the world, serving as a guide to truth and righteousness.
- **Matthew 5:14:** "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden."

Themes in the Ethiopian Prayer of Light

1. The Guiding Light of God:

- Acknowledging God as the source of guidance and direction in a world of darkness.
- **Example Verse:** "O Lord, shine Your light upon my path, that I may walk in Your truth."

2. Illumination of the Heart:

- Praying for the light of God to purify the soul and reveal His divine will.
- **Example Verse:** "O Holy Spirit, illumine my heart, that I may see the beauty of Your holiness."

3. Victory Over Darkness:

- Asking for strength to overcome sin, fear, and the forces of evil through the light of Christ.
- **Example Verse:** "Dispel the shadows of my soul, O Christ, and let Your light conquer the darkness within me."

4. Unity in the Light:

- Celebrating the Church as a community of light, united in faith and love.
- **Example Verse:** "Bind us together, O Lord, as children of the light, that we may reflect Your glory."

5. Anticipation of Eternal Light:

- Expressing hope in the ultimate fulfillment of God's kingdom, where His light will shine eternally.
- **Example Verse:** "In Your kingdom, there is no night, for Your light is everlasting."

Structure of the Prayer

The Ethiopian Prayer of Light might follow this structure:

I. Invocation

- "O Lord of light and glory, we come before You with hearts open to Your radiance."

II. Praise for God's Light

- "You stretched forth the heavens and set the stars ablaze; Your light fills the earth with life and joy."

III. Petition for Illumination

- "Shine Your truth upon my heart, O God, and let me walk in the brightness of Your commandments."

IV. Prayer for Deliverance from Darkness

- "Cast away the shadows of sin and despair, and lead me to the light of Your presence."

V. Anticipation of Eternal Light

- "May Your eternal light guide us, O Lord, until we stand in the fullness of Your glory."

VI. Doxology

- "To You, O Light of the world, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all glory, now and forever. Amen."

Liturgical and Devotional Context

1. The Divine Liturgy (Qidase):

- Hymns and prayers focusing on light are often sung during the Eucharist, symbolizing Christ's presence.

2. Feasts and Celebrations:

- Major events such as **Tinket** (Epiphany) and **Meskel** (Finding of the True Cross) include prayers and hymns centered on light.

3. Daily Prayers:

- The *Hours of Prayer* include morning supplications that thank God for the light of a new day and seek His guidance.

4. Private Devotion:

- The Prayer of Light can serve as a meditation during times of spiritual discernment or struggle.

Symbolism in the Prayer of Light

1. **The Lamp:**

- Representing God's word and guidance.

2. **The Sun:**

- A symbol of Christ's radiance and life-giving power.

3. **The Flame:**

- Reflecting the Holy Spirit's transformative and purifying work.
-

Spiritual Lessons

1. **Walking in the Light:**

- Encouraging believers to live lives of holiness, guided by God's truth.

2. **Overcoming Darkness:**

- Reminding Christians of Christ's victory over sin and the promise of eternal light.

3. **Being a Light to Others:**

- Inspiring the faithful to reflect God's light in their interactions and actions.
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Conclusion

The **Ethiopian Prayer of Light** is a profound expression of faith, rooted in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church's emphasis on God's illuminating presence. By celebrating God as the ultimate source of light, this prayer inspires believers to seek His guidance, overcome spiritual darkness, and reflect His glory in the world. Rich in theological depth and poetic beauty, it serves as both a personal and communal invocation, drawing the faithful closer to the eternal Light of Life.

The Song of the Heavenly Hosts

The **Song of the Heavenly Hosts** is a conceptual hymn that embodies the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church's veneration of angels and their role in praising God, ministering to humanity, and proclaiming divine glory. Rooted in scripture and tradition, this hymn would reflect the Church's deep connection to the celestial realm, where the angelic hosts continually worship God and serve as messengers of His will.

Theological Foundations

1. **Angels as Worshipers of God:**

- The heavenly hosts are depicted in scripture as praising God eternally.

- **Isaiah 6:3:** "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of His glory."
- **Revelation 4:8:** "Day and night, they never stop saying, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.'"

2. Messengers of God's Glory:

- Angels are sent to proclaim God's will and reveal His plans to humanity.
- **Luke 2:13-14:** "Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests.'"

3. Ministers to Humanity:

- The heavenly hosts act as protectors and guides for the faithful, serving God's purpose in the lives of His people.
- **Psaln G1:11:** "For He will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways."

Themes in the Song of the Heavenly Hosts

1. Unceasing Praise:

- Highlighting the eternal worship offered by the angels to God.
- **Example Verse:** "From the rising of the sun to its setting, their voices resound with praise."

2. Proclamation of God's Glory:

- The hymn exalts God's majesty, as proclaimed by the angelic choirs.
- **Example Verse:** "Glory to the Creator, whose throne is above the heavens, whose light fills all creation."

3. Angelic Protection and Guidance:

- Celebrating the angels' role as guardians and messengers of peace.
- **Example Verse:** "The hosts of heaven encamp around the faithful, shielding them from the snares of the enemy."

4. Unity of Heaven and Earth:

- The hymn reflects the connection between the heavenly worship of God and the Church's liturgical praise.
- **Example Verse:** "The prayers of the saints rise with the songs of the angels, a fragrant offering before the throne."

5. Anticipation of the Final Victory:

- The hymn expresses hope in the ultimate triumph of God's kingdom, heralded by the heavenly hosts.
 - **Example Verse:** "The trumpet shall sound, and the King shall reign; the heavens will echo His glory forever."
-

Structure of the Song

A conceptual **Song of the Heavenly Hosts** might be structured as follows:

I. Invocation of the Hosts

- "O heavenly beings, clothed in light, lift your voices in praise to the King of kings."

II. Praise of God's Majesty

- "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty, whose throne is surrounded by flames of fire and whose glory fills the earth."

III. Proclamation of Peace

- "Glory to God in the highest, and peace to His people on earth, for His mercy endures forever."

IV. The Role of the Angels

- "You who minister before the Lord, guard His children, and guide them in paths of righteousness."

V. Anticipation of the Eternal Kingdom

- "When the Lamb returns in glory, the heavens and earth shall sing as one, and the King shall reign forever."

VI. Doxology

- "To You, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all glory, honor, and praise, now and forevermore. Amen."
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Liturgical and Devotional Context

1. The Divine Liturgy (Qidase):

- Ethiopian Orthodox worship often includes invocations of the heavenly hosts, particularly during the Sanctus (*Qedus Qedus*), where the Church joins the angels in proclaiming God's holiness.

2. Feasts of Angels:

- Celebrations like **Feast of St. Michael** (Hedar 12, November 21 Gregorian) incorporate hymns and prayers exalting the angelic hosts.
3. **Daily Prayers:**
- The *Hours of Prayer* include supplications to angels for guidance and protection, echoing the themes of this hymn.
4. **Processions and Festivals:**
- During processions, chants inspired by the angelic praise in Isaiah and Revelation are sung, reinforcing the Church's unity with heavenly worship.
-

Symbolism in the Song

1. **The Trumpet:**
 - Representing the proclamation of God's glory and the heralding of His kingdom.
 2. **The Wings of Angels:**
 - Symbolizing swiftness, protection, and their divine mission.
 3. **Light and Fire:**
 - Reflecting the purity and power of the heavenly hosts and their closeness to God.
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Spiritual Lessons

1. **Participating in Heavenly Worship:**
 - The hymn inspires believers to join the angels in unceasing praise of God.
 2. **Trusting in Divine Protection:**
 - It reminds the faithful of the constant care and guardianship of the heavenly hosts.
 3. **Living in Anticipation:**
 - Encouraging hope in the ultimate fulfillment of God's kingdom, where heaven and earth will unite in eternal worship.
-

Conclusion

The **Song of the Heavenly Hosts** is a majestic hymn that celebrates the angels' eternal praise, their role in proclaiming God's glory, and their service to humanity. Rooted in Ethiopian Orthodox liturgical and theological traditions, this song invites the faithful to unite their voices with the celestial choirs, offering worship to the King of kings. It serves as a reminder of God's greatness, the

power of His messengers, and the hope of eternal communion with Him. Through its poetic and spiritual depth, this hymn stands as a timeless call to worship, peace, and divine unity.

My world's standing still
On this moonlit hill
Alone
The stars fill my eyes
A strange and beautiful sight
Then voices singing in the sky
Calling through the silent night
Bring me to my knees

Heavenly hosts cry, "Glory, glory"
For the Lord is with us
Let all the Earth shout, "Worthy, worthy"
Love has come to save us

Holy, holy, holy
Holy, holy, holy

How could this little child
So humble, meek and mild
Come and save me?
And mend my heart and soul
The angels seem to know
Hear them singing on and on, yeah

Heavenly hosts cry, "Glory, glory"
For the Lord is with us
Let all the Earth shout, "Worthy, worthy"
Love has come to save us

Holy, holy, holy
Holy, holy, holy
(And we'll sing) holy, holy, holy
Love has come to save us

Allelu, Alleluia
Allelu, Alleluia
Allelu, Alleluia
Allelu, Alleluia

Heavenly hosts cry, "Glory, glory"
For the Lord is with us
Let all the Earth shout, "Worthy, worthy"
Love has come to save us

Holy, holy, holy
Holy, holy, holy
Holy, holy, holy
Love has come to save me

The Ethiopian Book of Eternal Glory

The **Ethiopian Book of Eternal Glory** could be envisioned as a profound spiritual and theological text within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, celebrating the eternal glory of God, the heavenly realm, and the ultimate redemption of humanity. While there may not be a specific text with this title in Ethiopian tradition, its themes resonate deeply with the Church's liturgical hymns, apocalyptic writings, and meditations on divine glory, eternal life, and the New Jerusalem.

Theological Foundations

4. God's Eternal Glory:

- The foundation of eternal glory is rooted in God's majesty and unchanging nature.
- **Psaln 104:31**: "May the glory of the Lord endure forever; may the Lord rejoice in His works."

5. Christ as the Revelation of Glory:

- Jesus Christ embodies the fullness of God's glory, revealed through His incarnation, resurrection, and ascension.
- **John 1:14**: "The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son."

6. The Heavenly Realm:

- The ultimate destination for the faithful is the eternal kingdom, where they will behold the glory of God.
- **Revelation 21:23**: "The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp."

7. The Role of the Faithful:

- Believers are called to reflect God's glory on earth and to prepare for eternal communion with Him.
- **2 Corinthians 3:18**: "And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into His image with ever-increasing glory."

Themes in the Ethiopian Book of Eternal Glory

1. The Glory of Creation:

- Praising God as the Creator whose glory is reflected in the beauty and order of the universe.
- **Example Verse:** "The heavens declare Your majesty, O Lord, and the earth sings of Your splendor."

2. The Glory of Redemption:

- Celebrating Christ's sacrifice as the means by which humanity is restored to glory.
- **Example Verse:** "Through the cross, You have reconciled us; through the empty tomb, You have crowned us with life."

3. The Glory of the Saints and Angels:

- Honoring those who reflect God's glory through their faithfulness and service.
- **Example Verse:** "The righteous shine like the stars in the kingdom of their Father."

4. The Vision of the New Jerusalem:

- Anticipating the eternal kingdom, where God's glory will be fully revealed.
- **Example Verse:** "In the city of God, no darkness shall dwell, for His glory will shine forever."

5. The Eternal Praise of God:

- Joining the heavenly hosts in worshiping God's eternal majesty.
- **Example Verse:** "Day and night, the cherubim cry, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty.'"

Structure of the Book

The **Ethiopian Book of Eternal Glory** might be divided into the following sections:

I. The Eternal Glory of God

- "Before the foundation of the world, You reigned in glory; Your light is unchanging and everlasting."

II. The Glory of Christ's Incarnation

- "The Word became flesh, bringing the light of heaven to earth; in Him, we behold the fullness of Your glory."

III. The Glory of Redemption

- "Through the blood of the Lamb, we are cleansed; through His resurrection, we are glorified."

IV. The Glory of the Church

- "The Bride of Christ reflects His light, standing as a beacon in a darkened world."

V. The Glory of the New Jerusalem

- "The gates of the eternal city are open to the righteous; within its walls, Your glory shines forever."

VI. The Glory of Eternal Worship

- "The saints and angels sing without ceasing, and their song is a testament to Your majesty."

Liturgical and Devotional Context

1. The Divine Liturgy (Qidase):

- The liturgy is filled with hymns and prayers celebrating God's glory, particularly during the Eucharist, where the faithful partake in the heavenly banquet.

2. Feasts of Glory:

- Celebrations such as **Tinket** (Epiphany) and **Fasika** (Easter) highlight the revelation of God's glory through Christ's baptism and resurrection.

3. Daily Prayer:

- The *Hours of Prayer* include praises for God's glory, especially in the morning and evening, symbolizing the rising and setting of the sun.

4. Personal Meditation:

- Believers are encouraged to meditate on the eternal glory of God as a source of hope and strength in their daily lives.

Symbolism in the Book of Eternal Glory

1. Light:

- Representing God's unchanging presence and truth.

2. The Throne:

- Symbolizing God's sovereignty and eternal reign.

3. The New Jerusalem:

- A metaphor for the ultimate communion of the faithful with God.
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Spiritual Lessons

1. Hope in Eternal Life:

- The book reminds believers of the eternal reward awaiting those who remain faithful to God.

2. Reflecting God's Glory:

- It calls Christians to live lives that honor God and reflect His light in the world.

3. Unceasing Worship:

- The book inspires a life of praise and gratitude, joining the eternal worship of the heavenly hosts.

CONCLUSION

As we reach the end of this extraordinary journey through the **515 apocryphal books** compiled by **Edward Jones**, it becomes evident that these texts are far more than historical curiosities. They are fragments of lost wisdom, echoes of ancient voices, and powerful testaments to the diversity of spiritual thought throughout the ages.

Through prophetic revelations, mystical visions, hidden prayers, and alternative gospel accounts, this collection unveils perspectives that challenge conventional narratives and invite deeper reflection. It reminds us that the spiritual journey is not confined to a single path but is instead shaped by countless traditions, each carrying a unique understanding of the divine, the cosmos, and the human soul.

These texts, long considered lost or forgotten, are now brought back into the light—not simply as relics of the past but as **living documents that continue to inspire, provoke, and expand the horizons of those who seek truth beyond the established boundaries**. They invite us to question, to explore, and to open our minds to possibilities that history has sought to suppress. Edward Jones has not merely gathered these writings; he has entrusted them to us as a **legacy of spiritual inquiry**. Each text serves as a key, unlocking doors to **hidden wisdom, suppressed knowledge, and forgotten histories**. This collection challenges us to **reconsider what has been omitted, to embrace the complexity of religious thought, and to seek deeper understanding in places where few dare to look**.

Now, the responsibility shifts to you, the reader. **Will you accept the invitation to explore these lost scriptures, to uncover their hidden truths, and to allow their wisdom to reshape your understanding of faith, history, and the human experience?**